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NEW FOOD RESOURCES & EDUCATION INSTITUTE LAUNCHED TO UNITE FOOD INDUSTRY, ADDRESS FOOD SAFETY AND ENSURE COMPLIANCE

[Portland, Ore., January 29, 2014] – The Northwest Food Processors Association (NWFPFA) proudly announces the launch of the Food Resources & Education Institute (FREDi), an initiative designed to encourage collaboration, increase dialogue and create a platform to unite and educate food processors and food industry professionals around the country.

FREDi was officially unveiled to 4,000 food processors, suppliers, manufacturers and food industry professionals on January 15, 2014, during the Northwest Food Processor's EXPO and Conference at the Oregon Convention Center.

Founded in 2013, FREDi was created by the Northwest Food Processors Association as a unique, open-source business model providing a resource, both online and off, for food processors and suppliers to connect with colleagues to help expand innovation, increase productivity and grow business. FREDi combines the ease of online resources with the personalization that comes from face-to-face meetings, offering the food industry a unique experience designed specifically for its needs.

"Food Processors are constantly faced with changing government regulations, consumer demands, trends, and new technologies. Add in the challenge of finding a skilled or trained workforce, the constant need to reduce costs and improve productivity, and management of the sheer pace of change – it's a wonder how companies providing family-wage jobs can survive. With FREDi, there is a better, more efficient way to stay ahead of the game. FREDi improves the availability and quality of information by leveraging the wisdom of professionals in the food industry. Solutions and ideas are discovered much faster and applied with more confidence than before because FREDi sources from a global palate of knowledge. Food professionals can now stay ahead of the game while enjoying their life," said Dave Zepponi, president of NWFPFA. "FREDi serves to unite the industry on a national scale by sharing knowledge, one person at a time.

Through FREDi, employers can monitor their employees' food safety training progress, push content to specific employees and retain ownership of all documentation, making audits more efficient. Food processors have the ability choose a training method that best works with employee and management schedules while taking cost efficiency into account. Employers can choose between traditional on-site or public training courses or time-efficient online training courses, all of which comply with the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) standards.

Operated in partnership with Succeed Management Solutions, LLC (Succeed), an industry-leading risk management provider with the tools to improve efficiency, reduce risk factors, and protect the overall bottom line, FREDi offers users a range of services including discussion boards, directories, event calendars, a resource library, and a training and compliance center to document workplace safety.

FREDi also has a powerful directory of resource providers and a listing of food processors accessing solutions from around the world. FREDi gives the processor or supplier a place to ask questions or find opportunities, including a jobs board and chat room for professionals. Looking for a pump or packaging materials? FREDi can help. FREDi is based on the concept of sharing knowledge to improve decisions while reducing risk.

“Our industry is constantly evolving, and its members are continuously learning. By creating a community of interest, we can easily and efficiently continue to learn from our colleagues around the globe,” said Zepponi. “By learning how people around the world are improving their processes in the industry, we ultimately improve all food manufacturers willing to share.”

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The Northwest Food Processors Association (NWFPFA) represents the interests of food processors in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Headquartered in Portland, Oregon, the association represents nearly 500 member companies including 120 food processors with 200 production facilities throughout the Northwest region. Members include fruit and vegetable, seafood, dairy, specialty and fresh-cut food manufacturers. Membership runs the gamut of the foremost brand names in the United States, key producers of private label and institutional products, and locally-run family businesses