**\*\*NEWSFLASH\*\***

**MEMBER ALERT
ABC News Story on Imported Shrimp to Air Wednesday, May 16**

NFI has learned that ABC News is planning to air a story on imported shrimp tomorrow.  Late last week a producer for ABC News reporter Jim Avila contacted NFI and revealed that ABC News was developing a story about imported shrimp.  Jim Avila has made a cottage industry lately out of producing stories about what consumers don’t know is in their food.  He is the driver behind the “pink slime” stories and is expected to begin pushing the “meat glue” (transglutaminase) story soon.

ABC News had collected shrimp samples from grocery stores in NY, DC, CA & GA and found antibiotics in a number of samples.  According to the producer Nitrofuranzone, Enrofloxacin, Chloramphenico and Fluoroquinolones were found in various concentrations.  The producer did not reveal which stores sold the shrimp or which brands were involved.

The FDA’s Mike Taylor sat for an interview on this topic on Friday. NFI’s general messages are that we have a zero tolerance policy for unapproved antibiotics.  If it’s in the product it shouldn’t be on the shelf.  That said, the nature of what ABC found is not something that’s going to make consumers sick but it’s not something that should be in there. Our member companies have strong relationships with responsible suppliers and require testing, for them this is a case of trust but verify. We will plan to note that more testing from regulators at the border is not necessarily the answer to this challenge.  More targeted testing is. Having the FDA focus on certain countries or companies is a better use of resources than just testing everything that moves.

We will send further updates after the story airs.

Below are some talking points for your customers.  If you have any questions, please contact Gavin Gibbons at 703-752-8891 or ggibbons@nfi.org.

ABC News Shrimp Story

* We have a zero tolerance policy for unapproved antibiotics.  If it’s in the product it shouldn’t be on the shelf.
* The nature of what ABC News found is not something that is going to make consumers sick but it’s not something that should be in the product.
* The antibiotics that were reportedly found are not approved for use in seafood as part of FDA’s efforts to manage antibiotic resistance.
* Seafood has one of the safest food safety records and the lowest recall rates of any food group.
* The CDC recently looked at food borne illnesses from a 5 year period and found that imported seafood specifically was only responsible for one tenth of one percent of all the illnesses, which illustrates our good track record.
* Our member companies have strong relationships with responsible suppliers and require testing.  For them this is a case of trust but verify.
* More testing is not necessarily the answer.  More targeted testing is. Focusing on certain countries or companies is a better use of resources than just testing everything.
* The key to continued food safety is supporting FDA with proper resources and funding.