



## **Antitrust Statement**

The Annual Meat Conference Partners and Associates believe strongly in competition. Our antitrust laws are the rules under which our competitive system operates. It is the policy of the Annual Meat Conference Partners and Associates to comply in all respects with the antitrust laws.

Association meetings or workshops by their very nature bring competitors together. It is expected that all member representatives involved in the conference, as well as consultants and other participants, will be sensitive to the legal issues and act in compliance with applicable antitrust and competition laws. Accordingly, it is necessary to avoid discussions of sensitive topics that can create antitrust concerns. Agreement to fix prices, allocate markets, engage in product boycotts and to refuse to deal with third parties are illegal under the antitrust laws. At any association meeting, discussion of prices (including elements of prices such as allowances and credit terms), quality ratings of suppliers, and discussions that may cause a competitor to cease purchasing from a particular supplier, or selling to a particular customer, should be avoided. Also, there should be no discussion that might be interpreted as a dividing up of territories.

An antitrust violation does not require proof of a formal agreement. A discussion of a sensitive topic, such as price, followed by action by those involved or present at the discussion is enough to show a price fixing conspiracy. As a result, those attending an association sponsored meeting should remember the importance of avoiding not only unlawful activities, but even the appearance of unlawful activity.

As a practical matter violations of these rules can have serious consequences for a company and its employees. Antitrust investigations and litigation are lengthy, complex and disruptive. The Sherman Act is a criminal statute, and may even result in penalties punishable by steep fines and imprisonment. The Justice Department, state attorneys general and any person or company injured by a violation of the antitrust laws may bring an action for three times the amount of the damages, plus attorney's fees.

If you have any questions or concerns at this meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Annual Meat Conference staff.