



Antitrust Statement

FMI - The Food Industry Association and Meat Institute believe strongly in competition. Our nation's antitrust laws govern competition in the economy. It is the policy of FMI and Meat Institute to comply in all respects with the antitrust laws.

Association meetings or workshops by their very nature bring competitors or potential competitors together. It is expected that all member representatives involved in FMI and Meat Institute activities, as well as FMI and Meat Institute consultants and other participants, will be sensitive to the legal issues and act in compliance with applicable antitrust and competition laws both at FMI and Meat Institute meetings and FMI and Meat Institute-sponsored events.

Accordingly, it is necessary to avoid discussions of sensitive topics that can create antitrust concerns. Agreements to fix prices, to allocate markets, to engage in product boycotts, to refuse to deal with third parties, and to fix employee wages or to agree not to hire one another's employees can be illegal under the antitrust laws. At any association meeting, discussions of prices (including elements of prices such as allowances and credit terms), employee compensation, quality ratings of suppliers, and discussions that may cause a competitor to cease purchasing from a particular supplier, selling to a particular customer, or competing to hire employees 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. Discussion of a sensitive topic, such as price, followed by action by those involved or present at the discussion, may be 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.

Allegations of wrongdoing can pose financial and reputational risk, and violations of the antitrust laws can have serious consequences, for FMI and Meat Institute, individual companies, and their 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, the Federal Trade Commission, 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 in some cases, attorney's fees.