

NEWS RELEASE

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Produce for Better Health Foundation President Elizabeth Pivonka to Keynote 106th Food Processor Convention

The future of the food industry rests firmly on how it does business today. Sustainability, security and health have been ever present challenges, but it is often difficult for food manufacturers to ascertain where these drivers will take the industry. Elizabeth Pivonka, President and CEO of the Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH), will join food industry leaders to discuss food trends in the United States, including the White House agenda on obesity and the government's efforts to encourage Americans to eat healthier.

The Midwest Food Processors Association ([MWFPA](http://www.mwfpa.org)) announced that Pivonka, who regularly interfaces with policy makers, regulators, academia and industry on increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, and co-author of "5 A Day: The Better Health Cookbook", will be one of the keynote speakers at the 106th Midwest Food Processors Convention, scheduled for November 30 – December 2, 2010 at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

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Nick George, president of MWFPA, notes that Pivonka's participation at the convention is intended to help food manufacturing leaders better understand the world of rapidly changing consumer attitudes and evolving regulatory interests.

"The country is growing in its understanding of how fruits and vegetables work to make people healthy and how processed fruits and vegetables are an important part of the mix" George said. "Dr. Pivonka has spent her career advocating greater consumption of fruits and vegetables for America's better health and her participation at the convention will add to our overall understanding of ways to improve the food supply for a healthier population and feed the future" he added.

According to Pivonka, obesity is a hot button issue for consumers. Obesity rates have ballooned in the US in recent years – 15 percent of the population was obese in 1980, compared to 34 percent today, according to figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The most frequent questions that PBH receives from consumers are how to lose weight and how mothers can get their kids to eat more fruits and vegetables.

In September, PBH partnered with first lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" childhood obesity initiative, and unveiled "America's More Matters Pledge: Fruits & Veggies . . . Today and Every Day!" The online campaign encourages people to pledge to eat more nutritious fruits and vegetables for their better health and gives them the tools they need to follow through on that pledge.

Both the state and federal governments have made the prevention and treatment of obesity the centerpiece in efforts to improve the health of America. Legislative proposals have attempted to influence such matters as school nutrition and physical education in an effort to provide children with a healthier diet and more exercise beginning in childhood.

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The 106th annual MWFPA food processors convention will include a meeting of the American Fruit & Vegetable Processors and Grower Coalition as well as a meeting of the MWFPA Board of Directors. Breakout sessions with discussions focused on federal food processing legislation, the utilization of biomass boilers, allergen detection, using performance competencies, and developments in Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) inspections are planned during the two-day convention.

Online registration for MWFPA Annual Convention will be open until November 24th. To register, or for more information, visit www.mwfpa.org.

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The Midwest Food Processors Association is the foremost voice of the food processing industry in the Midwest. The association lobbies on legislative and regulatory matters; promotes safe food processing practices; investigates new technologies; funds industry research; and plans industry events. It represents over 100 processing facilities in Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota.

Dr. Elizabeth Pivonka is President of the Produce for Better Health Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) foundation devoted to increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables. A nationally-recognized expert on nutrition and the role fruits and vegetables can play to promote better health, Dr. Pivonka was recently recognized as the one of the "Top Women in Grocery" by Progressive Grocer. She was recognized as one of the "Top 25" produce industry leaders in 2005. She is a Registered Dietitian, and holds a doctorate in food and nutrition science from Kansas State University. For more information, visit www.pbhfoundation.org.