



Canadian  
Federation of  
Independent  
Grocers

Fédération  
Canadienne  
des Épiciers  
Indépendants



The coronavirus (COVID-19) is now, as we are all aware, a global pandemic. We are seeing provincial bans on mass gatherings issued by Public health officials, suspension of international travel, the closing of schools, restaurants and other facilities and more stringent social distancing advisories here in Canada. Even within our own industry, companies have imposed travel bans on employees for any domestic non-essential travel. Last, but certainly not least, grocers and our partners in the supplier community, are dealing with huge challenges as panic buying by consumers has been seen across the country.

As all our members, associates and industry partners know, in late April CFGI was scheduled to hold our annual Grocery & Specialty Food West (GSF) show in Vancouver. Naturally, in the context of this current pandemic, CFGI and our Board of Directors reviewed the options around our April show and to consider a change in our plans. However, even that review was overtaken by the fact that provinces such as Ontario, Alberta and Quebec have implemented bans on mass gatherings of 250 people or more. British Columbia—the host province of GSF- yesterday directed that mass gatherings with numbers of 50 or more be cancelled. With those measures, having a GSF event in April became a moot point.

Notwithstanding the above, the health and well-being of our members, sponsors and industry stakeholders is our first priority. Therefore, after careful consideration, the CFGI Board of Directors has concluded that the most prudent course of action is for us to **postpone GSF 2020 until April 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 2021** and instead, focus our attention and resources on Grocery Innovations Canada, this coming October 27-28, 2020.

Canadians have confidence in our public health care system and CFGI is encouraged by the steps the federal and provincial governments have taken to address the economic challenges arising from this pandemic. More will need to be done in the months ahead. But we also believe in the inherent ability of Canadians to meet and overcome challenges—and no-one exemplifies this spirit better than the independent grocers of Canada. We believe that as has been the case with past pandemics, the Coronavirus too will be contained and recede in the months ahead.

On behalf of the CFGI Board of Directors, staff and our industry partners, we look forward to welcoming everyone to **GIC 2020** in October and at that time, sharing some of our plans for **GSF 2021**, which we promise will be one of the most enjoyable and memorable events we will experience—together! In the meantime, on behalf of the entire Board of Directors and staff of CFGI, we thank you for your continued support of *your* association.

Ron Welke

**CHAIR**

Tom Shurrie

**PRESIDENT & CEO**