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**Wholesaler Responses to:**

**What are your key priorities, concerns, and/or issues which affect you as a wholesale distributor?**

17 Companies Responded

Categories consistent with FMI Emerging Issues & Opportunities – identified by the FMI Board of Directors in December 2014

**Wholesaler issues that line up with overall FMI Emerging and Priority Issues:**

1. **Food Safety (3 mentions)**
   * FSMA Compliance
   * Food Safety
2. **Regulatory and Legislative issues (8 mentions)**
   * WIC- Difficult to Start for Single independent
   * Regulatory Issues that would impact the cost of our business or limit growth
   * Regulatory Issues
   * Regulatory including packaging and product labeling (e.g. own brands and perishables)
   * Product Labeling
   * Negative legislation at the state, federal and local level resulting in increased labor costs
   * Regulatory Compliance
   * Transportation Legislation
   * Government regulations and tax policies (ex: Ohio CAT tax)
3. **Crisis Management (1 mention)**
   * Security - Data breach specifically. How do we economically protect data and assist our customers with data security issues?
4. **Health and Wellness (0 mentions)**
5. **Changing Retail Landscape (7 mentions)**
   * Overall shrinking Independent Retailer base
   * Competitive challenges from other classes of trade ($store, drug stores, etc.)
   * Providing ability for independent retailers to connect direct with millennial consumers
   * Competitive threats from specialty or commodity specific retailers
   * Lack of new entries into independent space
   * Consolidating retail space
6. **Values-Driven Consumer Behavior (0 mentions)**
7. **Emerging Innovations in Food Science (0 mentions)**
8. **Sustainability (0 mentions)**
9. **Emerging Business Analytics & Communications Technologies (2 mentions)**

* Digital/Social media innovation
* Data Synchronization

**Additional Issues mentioned by Wholesalers:**

**Labor Force issues: (10 mentions)**

* Multi-employer pension plans, particularly those in severe underfunded positions like Central States.
* Labor force of the future in our distribution centers and fleets. Attracting, training and retaining warehouse workers
* Attracting talent to our many non-distribution jobs supporting the wholesale business
* What can be done industry wide to actively recruit non college high school graduates into the field?
* Not many colleges offer logistics majors or concentrations, can we impact that?
* Better ways to market our industry to retiring military personnel.
* Employees – finding and retaining, dedicated employees and staff
* Diversity – both supplier and associate
* Talent acquisition/development
* The availability of a good qualified labor pool
* Talent Management
* Driver Shortage
* Maintaining quality workforce – development and education

**Productivity/Improving efficiencies/Managing Costs: (12 mentions)**

* Warehouse Productivity
* Product/Carton Attributes
* Fuel Costs
* Health Care Costs
* Supply Chain Efficiencies
* Manufacturer cost shifting via cost-to-serve programs and leaning-out of supply chain
* Increased utility and insurance costs
* Data integration/harmonization with suppliers
* Lack of product inflation
* Identifying opportunities to leverage buying power and shared services
* Unsaleables

**Misc. Issues: (not categorized) (12 mentions)**

* FMI Connect
* FMI – Next Gen
* Own brand supplier development
* Engaging with retailers on the value – added services and capabilities of wholesalers/distributors including marketing and in store service
* Partnering with manufacturers and retailers to revitalize center store
* The role of the wholesaler in education of shoppers
* The risks and opportunities of partnering with other wholesalers and retailers
* CPG – Long Term Strategies
* Moving production out of the US to Mexico
* Industry Consolidation
* SKU proliferation
* Level the playing field for independent supermarkets
* Ensure that wholesalers receive pricing, item availability and communication from CPG’s equal to larger chains
* The growing concentration of DSD activity at Retail
* Not for resale “store supplies”