

# FDA to Regulate Transportation



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**T**here have been little signs to indicate that the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) specifically targeted transport companies for enforcement under the revised Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

But, the FDA is in the process of preparing enforcement in transport, which means now is the time for trade organizations and transportation companies to update their transportation supply chain networks.

While different food safety laws have been laid out for many years, FSMA is different.

To start, the FDA will be one more entity regulating transportation. Under FSMA's Sanitary Transportation of Food (STF), the agency will be holding carriers to a standard of industry best practices "because it is our intent to pattern this rule on existing industry best practices."

This comes years after not having a unified best practice to ascribe to.

## Establishing industry practice

The board of directors for the International Refrigerated Transportation Association (IRTA) under the parent organization of the Global Cold Chain Alliance (GCCA), Alexandria, Va., recognized this challenge and commissioned a 2-year taskforce to bring key cold chain stakeholders from manufacturing, 3PLs, transport, warehous-

ing and the scientific community to establish a comprehensive industry best practice. The result was the issuance of the globally accepted IRTA's Refrigerated Transportation Best Practices Guide.

Food producers and retailers have commonly ascribed to one of the certification bodies from the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) to ensure food is being produced to the highest standards.

The IRTA board of directors recognized the need to take the next step toward certification and leverage the global acceptance of IRTA's Transportation Best Practice Guide. That's why it developed the Cold Carrier Certified designation.

## Cold Carrier Certified program

The Cold Carrier Certified program requires company participants to submit proof of conformance to, and adoption of, the Refrigerated Transportation Best Practices Guide

Second, the carrier management personnel must undergo proof of knowledge on specific requirements from the guide. The Cold Carrier Certified designation ensures shippers and receivers that the carrier has aligned their business and personnel to the highest industry standards for their commitment to sanitary and safe transportation of

perishable products.

In April 2019, the formal program was introduced with the following companies achieving the Cold Carrier Certified designation—Frozen Food Express (FFE) Transportation Services, Dallas, Texas; Great Plains Transport, Mapleton, N.D.; JB Hunt, Lowell, Ark.; Midwest Refrigerated Services, Inc., Pleasant Prairie, Wis.; Trailiner, Springfield, Mo.; WEL Cos., Joliet, Ill.; Charger Logistics Inc, Ontario, Calif.; Congebec, Mississauga, ON; and Selhmar Transportation Inc., Overland Park, Kan.; and KeHE Distributors, Naperville, Ill. (Go to page 14 to learn more about how KeHE became Cold Carrier Certified).

## Why get certified?

Just because your company may not have experienced enforcement of the STF yet doesn't mean you're in the clear.

As the FDA increases their reach for audits, the transportation sector will be impacted by the requirements in the future.

From a regulatory preparedness perspective, obtaining a Cold Carrier Certified designation will help companies and personnel prepare for such an audit.

As a carrier, obtaining the designation will be beneficial in competitive situations to demonstrate ascribing to the highest industry standards of transporting food in a sanitary and safe manner.

As a shipper of food, the STF Act designates the regulatory accountability to provide safe transport of food, and will look for companies to obtain the Cold Carrier Certified designation. **FL**

