Statement from the National Supermarket Association (NSA) in regards to the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic

(New York, NY) – William Rodriguez, President of the National Supermarket Association (NSA) and Elizabeth Peralta, Executive Director of the National Supermarket Association (NSA), which represents the interests of more than 400 independent supermarket owners in New York and other urban cities throughout the East Coast, released the following statement today following the COVID-19 epidemic in New York.

“In times like these of crisis, local independent supermarkets serve as the lifeline of their communities, providing customers and local residents with a place they can continue to get the things they need to survive. We are especially mindful of our most vulnerable customers: seniors and those with underlying health conditions. To that end, we continue to make every effort to ensure that our seniors have access to groceries and other items they need. We accomplish this through free delivery programs and providing no-cost transportation for seniors to get to and from the supermarket with ease. We continue to hold “senior days” promotions when senior citizens can take advantage of special discounts on many of the popular items we carry, and we are considering other measures to further accommodate our seniors.

As we work through this crisis, we are committed to ensuring that our seniors and other vulnerable populations are the highest priority. I’ll also add that at no greater time than this do we need to increase the availability and eligibility for SNAP and WIC programs so that individuals can continue to get access to food during what will be difficult economic times.

While the media has portrayed numerous amounts of photos and videos of supermarkets and other stores with empty shelves and customers fighting over items, we want to take a moment to ensure our customers that we are in constant contact with our supply chain partners including distributors and wholesale suppliers to make sure we can continue to restock our stores as quickly and efficiently as possible. Our network of independent owner-operators are uniquely positioned to handle this unprecedented and ever-evolving situation, and we are committed to utilizing every option available to make sure we keep up with the high demand while keeping costs low.

I would also like to address the inaccurate and blatantly false allegations made of widespread “price gouging” occurring in supermarkets throughout New York City. To be clear, we are not in the business of taking advantage of the customers we consider friends and family.
As I said before, we are the lifeline of many communities and have built a level of trust within these neighborhoods. We ask that elected officials and the media take the time to investigate these allegations before publishing damming remarks that in some cases cause irreparable harm to our members.

I’d like to close by focusing on the hardworking men and women who work in our stores everyday who do not have the option of telecommuting during this crisis and must put their health at risk to come in every day and man the stores. They are some of the unsung heroes of this crisis and it goes without saying that we are indebted to them.

Thank you to our customers who continue to support us. We urge all New Yorkers to shop local. I wish everyone and their families the best during this pandemic.

###
You will find our store Banners on the next page