**MISSION STATEMENT**

**ARTISAN CHEESEMAKERS AND FOOD SAFETY**

We, as a group of retailers, agree to a fundamental level of food safety standards for cheese production as it relates to small and/or new cheese makers.  We want to ensure integrity with our suppliers, while keeping in mind the safety of our consumers. We want to establish parameters for food safety and agree to follow these standards. Our goal is to have all retailers and food service professionals adopt this level of food safety.  We will accomplish this goal through an integrated approach with multiple stakeholders to share mutual food safety objectives. Over time, we will continue to collaborate to create a step approach to further educate and move cheese makers to a higher level of food safety systems as they supply multiple outlets through central distribution channels. In addition, we will establish similar fundamental standards for handling cheeses at retail level, ensuring integrity of cheese and food safety standards at all levels.