

**John Mackey of Whole Foods Announced
as Keynote Speaker for SEPC's Southern Exposure 2018**

Millen, GA (November 27, 2017) – The Southeast Produce Council has announced that John Mackey, co-founder and co-CEO of Whole Foods Market, will be presenting the keynote address at Southern Exposure in Tampa, Florida on March 3, 2018. President and CEO of the SEPC, David Sherrod, states, “We are honored this year to have John Mackey share his insights on how the landscape will change and remain the same with the Whole Foods and Amazon merger. This exciting Keynote session should provide relevant information for all of our attendees, no matter what sector they represent.”



John Mackey has taken the natural and organic grocer from a single store in Austin, Texas in 1978, to a \$14 billion Fortune 500 company and a top U.S. supermarket with more than 400 stores and 87,000 Team Members in three countries. In 1981, Austin's worst flood in history almost bankrupted the original store, and community efforts to save it shaped Mackey's leadership philosophy to "do right by your stakeholders and they'll do right by you."

While devoting his entire career to providing shoppers with high quality natural and organic foods, Mackey has also focused on building a more conscious way of doing business. He led the company through more than 20 acquisitions, took Whole Foods Market public in 1992 and plans to grow to the company to 1,200 stores.

For 18 consecutive years, Fortune magazine has included Whole Foods Market on its "100 Best Companies to Work For" list. The company was named "America's Healthiest Grocery Store" by Health Magazine, the top retailer for seafood sustainability by Greenpeace and one of "America's 25 Most Inspiring Companies" by Forbes. Fortune also ranked Whole Foods Market first in the food and drug

store industry and No. 20 overall for the magazine's "Most Admired Companies" list.

Most recently, Mackey has focused on returning to the company's roots around healthy eating and lifestyle choices. A staunch advocate of healthy eating education, he laid the foundation for health and wellness programs for team members and customers.

Out of his respect for equity among Team Members, Mackey implemented a salary cap for all executives. He cut his own salary to \$1 annually in 2006, and forgoes stock options and bonuses. He continues to work for Whole Foods Market out of a passion to see the business realize the potential for deeper purpose, for the joy of leading a great company, and to answer the call to service he feels in his heart.

Registration numbers for Southern Exposure 2018 are climbing quickly, so if you haven't already done so, be sure to register now at southernexposure.seproducecouncil.com.