



## December Legislative Highlights

### RI Legislative Updates At A Glance:

Rhode Island is reporting COVID numbers the state had hoped to never see again, with case counts topping 1,000 some days and patient hospitalizations topping 200. That has left **Governor McKee** caught between his desire to avoid going backwards on COVID restrictions and the calls of many medical leaders to reimpose an indoor mask mandate. "Right now we're not ready to do that," McKee told reporters Thursday. "We're certainly relying on the people of the state of Rhode Island ... to personally make the right decisions for them in terms of their safety." (On Friday evening, the governor's office said McKee "will be announcing actions" to address the COVID situation "early next week," but offered no details.)

McKee primary challengers **Seth Magaziner**, **Nellie Gorbea** and **Helena Foulkes** all spoke out in favor of a mask mandate this week, while GOP lawmakers condemned the idea. The bigger question, hanging over not only the mask decision but pandemic policy more generally, is how the winter will go for the hospital system. Hospitalizations are still running at less than half their level of a year ago, but there is also a major staffing

shortage, meaning capacity isn't what it was a year ago, either. And the relaxation of mitigation measures that were in place last winter means other illnesses like flu and RSV are circulating more. Health Department data shows 96% of Rhode Island's 215 staffed ICU beds were occupied Friday.

[Click here to learn more about Rhode Island Legislation.](#)

## National Legislative Updates At A Glance:

- **Updates on OSHA ETS:** OSHA's ETS remains Stayed by the Fifth Circuit until further judicial action. The various legal challenges to the ETS have been consolidated in the Sixth Circuit and DOL has filed a motion to lift the stay.
- **Congressional Review Act:** On December 8, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution under Congressional Review Act authority ([S.J.Res. 29](#)) to strike the ETS vaccine or testing mandate by a vote of 52-48.
- **FTC Releases New Data, Public Service Materials on Gift Card Scams:** This week, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) [reported data](#) to alert the public, retailers, and other stakeholders that gift card scams are on the rise. The data showed that the amount of money lost by consumers to gift card scams in the first nine months of 2021 surpassed the total amount lost in 2020.
- **AMS Declines Industry Request Regarding Unfilled Packaging and BE Rule:** Last month a number of FBIA members, [submitted a letter](#) to the Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) requesting additional flexibility with respect to the January 1, 2022 Bioengineered Food Disclosure compliance date.
- **FDA Releases Plan, Independent Review to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response:** On December 9, 2021, FDA released the Foodborne Outbreak Response Improvement Plan to "enhance the speed, effectiveness, coordination, and communication of investigations into outbreaks of foodborne illness."
- **NYC Mayor Announces Vaccine Mandate for Private Employers:** On Monday, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio [announced](#) a vaccine mandate for private-sector workers in the city. The mandate, which is the first in the nation at the state or local level, will take effect on December 27 and apply to roughly 184,000 businesses.

[Click here to learn more about National Legislation.](#)

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## Our Association Member Communications Sponsors



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## Industry News

### Business Trends to Keep Top of Mind in 2022

The path forward through the COVID-19 pandemic has not been easy, but it has showcased the resolve, adaptability, and resourcefulness of entrepreneurs across the country. Small business owners can proudly count themselves among that company. The recovery is in full-swing and according to a [study commissioned by NEXT Insurance](#), 84% of small business owners are somewhat, very, or extremely optimistic about the ongoing economic recovery — and for good reason.

[Read the Full Article](#)

### A year after its inception, Supermarket Employee Day will again honor frontline grocery workers on February 22, 2022

FMI—the Food Industry Association is proclaiming February 22, 2022, Supermarket Employee Day. A year after its enthusiastic launch that included participation from nearly every level of FMI's membership — retailers, wholesalers, suppliers and state association partners — the 2022 holiday will continue to celebrate employees at every level for the work they do to feed families and enrich lives.

[Read the Full Article](#)

### Time to review your 2021 and the impact you want in 2022

The end of the year is a good time to reflect on what you've learned and accomplished these past 12 months while creating values-based goals for the new year, says Denise Lee

Yohn in this blog post and [video](#). "I end my year-end reflection time by identifying a word or phrase to define or symbolize the year ahead -- and I use this word or phrase to stay centered throughout the next year," Yohn says.

[Read the Full Article](#)

## What Is The Future Of Technology For Independent Grocers?

NGA President and CEO Greg Ferrara says the COVID-19 pandemic taught grocers that e-commerce is not a novelty or luxury – it is a required component of your operation and something that consumers will expect in increasing numbers. See the Q&A with Ferrara about the pandemic and how it has affected independent grocers.

[Read the Full Article](#)

## Update to Vaccine Mandate Legal Challenges from NGA

The legal challenges to the Biden administration's private sector employer vaccine-or-test mandate have been consolidated and are now before the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals. The 6th Circuit could rule on the current temporary stay any day now, but the Supreme Court is expected to take up additional challenges following the circuit court's ruling, regardless of outcome. OSHA will likely be precluded from enforcing the current mandate until the Supreme Court takes up the case and makes a final ruling, which could take until late January at the earliest.

## Public health annual report details foodborne illnesses, impact of COVID

There was a decline in reports of four foodborne pathogens and the number of incidents and recalls in the past year, according to the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) annual report. It covers activities in 2020-2021 across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK leaving the European Union, as well...

[Read the Full Article](#)

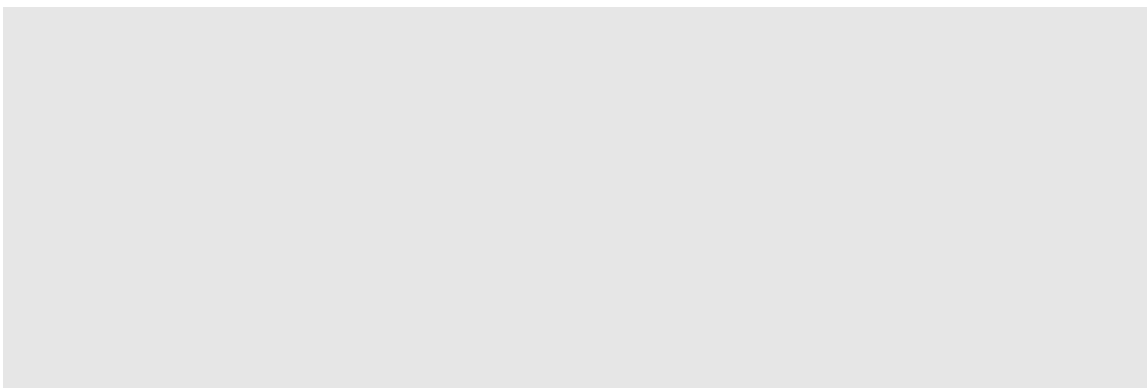
## Food Insecurity Remains High as Rhode Island's Economy Recovers

Food insecurity remains widespread in Rhode Island. But the economic disruption caused by the pandemic could have been much worse if it were not for the massive response of government to the emergency.

Among all households in Rhode Island, 18 percent (one in six households) cannot meet their basic food needs. **The risk of hunger is even higher for families with children: one in four.**

[Read the Full Article](#)

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Thank you to our December Supplier of the Month - Garelick Farms



Thank you to our December Retailer of the Month - McQuades Marketplace



## Industry Events

State of American Business 2022: Competition for the Future

Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022 | 11:00 am - 12:00 pm ET

The challenges, disruptions, and opportunities accelerated by the pandemic are creating a new economic era that American businesses will help define. During this virtual event, we will explore how competition — an essential force that drives achievement, innovation, and progress — helps to shape a better future for all of us.

We will delve into the multilayered dynamics businesses will confront in 2022.

- Competition for Talent in a Transforming Workforce
- Competition in the Global Economy
- Competition of ideas that will take shape in midterm elections
- And more

Join business leaders from across the country and around the world for this high-level dialogue to equip, inform, and inspire you to take on the challenges and opportunities ahead. Together, we will lead the competition for the future.

[Register Today](#)



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## Coming Soon - Meetings & Annual Events

### January 2022:

- Wed., Jan. 19th Legislative Committee Meeting
- Wed, Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2022 Board of Directors Meeting

### February 2022:

- Thurs. – Fri.: Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>: Distribution of Best Bagger Contest Kits to Retailers
- Thurs. Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>: Executive Committee Meeting @ 7:30 AM
- Thurs. Feb. 17 Distribution of Trade Day Invitations
- Mon. Feb. 21st: Presidents Day – Office Closed
- Wed. Feb. 23rd Legislative Committee Meeting (\*Bill Filling\*)

### March 2022:

- Wed. Mar. 16th Legislative Committee Meeting

- Thurs. Mar. 24th Executive Committee Meeting @ 7:30 AM

## April 2022:

- Wed. - April 6<sup>th</sup>: Legislative Committee Meeting @ 8 AM
- Thurs. April 14<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30 AM: Potential WIC/SNAP Meeting??
- Thurs. April 21st: RIFDA Trade Day (Best Bagger, Food Demos, Networking Reception, Industry Dinner) @ Kirkbrae Country Club, Lincoln RI
- Thurs. April 28th Executive Committee Meeting @ 7:30



SAVE THE DATE:

2022 Annual  
Trade Day:

Thursday, April 21st



**GIVING BACK**

**to our community for  
over a century.**

For more than 100 years, Stop & Shop has proudly supported our neighborhoods and the local organizations that empower them. We are proud to be a member of the Rhode Island Food Dealers Association.



## We Need Your Help

Please consider supporting RIFDA's legislative efforts by supporting our PAC fund.

Last year due to COVID the association did not have a PAC event and we did not solicit contributions as we had sufficient funds on hand and our strategy was to be very conservative with donations as it became clear that due to COVID there would be traditional fundraisers where you had the ability to attend and lobby those present. We had decided to do the same this year until we received a letter from the RI Board of

Elections, that noted a requirement (RI Gen. law 17-25) that we need to have 15 donations from individuals in an election cycle.

The association did, in the past 4 months, make three contributions for fundraisers for Senate Leadership, House Leadership and Rep. Bob Craven, Chair of House Judiciary, who has been an advocate and resource for our association for the past few years.

As a result of these donation from our PAC made this year and the need to be able to support those that have supported us next year in an election year, we are asking our members to please contribute to our fund so that we are in compliance with this regulation. We need to have at least 15 members make a donation of \$50 in order to accomplish this.

By way of review these checks must be personal checks and not corporate checks. In the past we asked for \$125 donations. If you could get two donations of \$50 from two different people, we would be able to achieve this goal. It should also be noted the if a personal check is from a joint account each person on the account can submit a separate check from the same account as long as they have two different signatures.

Checks can be mailed to:  
RIFDA PAC  
40 Higginson Ave  
Central Falls RI 02863

**Thanks for your consideration and support of  
the RI Food Dealers.**

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**Satisfied Member?**

**Spread the Word, Tell Your Industry Friends &  
Vendors.**



As a member, the benefit advantages such as our food safety renewal classes, WIC/EBT updates, legislative representation and updates, national industry affiliations and updates, networking events, energy programs and food industry camaraderie, as well as a number of other initiatives make RIFDA a great opportunity for new members.

Throughout each year there are exciting events as well as sponsorship and advertising opportunities. It is members like yourselves that make this all happen.

With new memberships RIFDA moves into the future as a stronger and more vibrant representative of the Rhode Island food community.

[Learn  
More](#)

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