



Statement of French Meadow Bakery & Café

July 19, 2020

We are shocked and saddened by statements and allegations against French Meadow Bakery & Café™ made over the past few days by certain disgruntled former employees. For over 35 years, our ownership and management team have been committed to a supportive workplace where everyone is treated fairly, equally, and with dignity and respect. Our dedicated employees are valued and respected. Amidst the challenges all restaurants are facing during this pandemic and struggling economy, French Meadow has continued our strong support for our staff and their well-being. We have arranged to meet with staff in a professional and orderly way to listen to any workplace concerns and we will continue to have open dialogue with our employees as we have done throughout the years.

In regard to specific inflammatory allegations, any challenge to the authenticity of the sourcing for our organic offerings is patently false and defamatory. We are in fact one of the pioneers of natural and organic food in the U.S. and have maintained a staunch commitment to this practice for more than three decades. In our region, as a trailblazer in the farm-to-table movement before that term even existed, we have forged lasting relationships with small farmers and suppliers who share our commitment to quality, organics, and environmental sustainability.

Additionally, any claim that we have not followed strict COVID 19 protocols is defamatory. Unsupported and reckless claims that French Meadow violated health codes are also false and defamatory on their face. As to racism, we strongly support the anti-racism movement underway in our community and across the country. We have publicly expressed our solidarity with the Black community and Black owned business. Black Lives Matter signs were displayed at French Meadow Café on Lyndale at the request of our owner, Lynn Gordon, and donations for the campaign organized by the First Universalist Church, which goes to local grassroots groups working to rebuild the community and support Black-owned businesses, have been – and continue to be -- promoted on the French Meadow website.

In 35 years there has only been two complaints of sexual harassment brought to management's attention. One was nearly 30 years ago that was fully investigated and deemed unsubstantiated and the other, much more recently, was immediately and fully investigated resulting in the perpetrator being fired. We have never received any complaints of sexual harassment against management. The allegations that have now surfaced have never been raised with anyone in the café to our knowledge.

Notwithstanding these very distressing attacks, French Meadow Bakery & Café™ will continue to serve our loyal customers the lovingly crafted, healthful food that we have been known for over the past several decades, and we will continue to provide the highest quality service that has become the signature of our business.