



Traceability Committee Develops Standards

The Produce Traceability Initiative spearheaded by United Fresh, PMA and CPMA concluded that systematic and consistent application of common standards across the supply chain is needed to enhance chain-wide traceability. “It’s clear from the committee’s discussion that now is the time to move aggressively to adopt a consistent industry-wide approach to traceability,” said Committee Chairperson Cathy Green, chief operating officer, Food Lion LLC.

The committee reached agreement on four key elements for implementing industry-wide traceability standards:

First, the group confirmed past industry support that the GS1 produce traceability standard is the most ef-

ficient worldwide approach to achieve system-wide traceability, and should be widely adopted as the produce industry standard.

Second, it was agreed that a formal industry timeline for adoption of standards is needed, with committee participants agreeing to begin evaluating what might be required to implement GS1 standards within their own operations.

Third, the committee agreed to discuss ways in which companies could best show their support and commitment to adoption. “Implementation is sure to begin gaining momentum across the industry when both buying and selling companies start signaling their support for the business process changes that will be necessary,” Green said.

Fourth, the group agreed that traceability standards should be adopted at the case level initially, as the backbone of supply chain traceability. However, the committee encourages companies to move toward item-level coding, thereby offering a viable option for providing traceability to the item level.

Traceability will be a key criteria to the NWA food safety program to be unveiled later this year. Please stay posted to the NWA web site for more information in the coming months.

USDA Seeks Applications for Block Grants

The USDA seeks state departments of agriculture to submit applications for grant funds under the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will award block grants to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

These grants are to be used by state departments of agriculture solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and nursery crops (including floriculture).

Each state that submits an application that is reviewed and approved by AMS will receive a minimum grant amount of \$100,000. In addition, AMS will allocate the remainder of the grant funds based on the value of specialty crop production in each state in relation to the national value of specialty crop production using the latest available cash receipt data.

Now that the farm bill is complete and signed into law, the following levels of funding will be available in this program:

2008 (ending September 30, 2008) = \$10,000,000
2009 (ending September 30, 2009) = \$49,000,000
2010, 2011 and 2012 (ending September 30 of each year) = \$55,000,000 annually

Please contact your State(s) Department of Agriculture to see how your chapter can participate in this program. Promotions and Food Safety are key areas to explore.

the plans can be reviewed on the NWA’s web site. Click on the NWA Insurance icon to read through the attached materials, and call or email Cabell Vildibill from Odiorne Insurance. If you have a need, please contact Cabell to discuss how these new programs can help you.

NWA offers Insurance to its members

The NWA, in cooperation with Odiorne Insurance, is proud to offer a number of important insurance packages to all NWA members, families and businesses. Some of these programs are available to you in a group plan with discounts of up to 15% (determined by your resident state).

“We are excited to be able to add an important member service such as insurance coverage to our growing list of services for our Association members, their families, employees and businesses”, says Bob Morrissey, NWA Executive Director. “Many of our members are small business owners and operators that do not have the luxury of participating in group plans, which typically provide a discount on

insurance programs. This new service is a wonderful opportunity for the NWA to help to fill a vital need in the lives of some of our members.”

“We have developed a customized Workers Compensation program that will benefit every company in our association, and will provide advertising revenue to the NWA as well. Additionally, the Employment Practices Liability insurance is vital to any business, chapter and the NWA, and has been developed to protect against frivolous lawsuits that may come about and are not covered in most general liability plans.

Other coverage plans include Life, Disability, Critical Care and Long Term Care. All of the details of

NWA Board supports Sen. John McCain



The Board of Directors of the National Watermelon Association voted at our recent national convention to support Senator John McCain of Arizona in his bid for president of the U.S. by providing funds from the NWA Political Action Committee (PAC) account to the candidate’s election.

“Senator McCain has shown determination and exceptional leadership skills in support of policies and principles that are vitally important to agriculture across the country,” said Bob Morrissey, Executive Director. “He has promoted free markets, sensible fiscal policies, repairs of our immigration laws and knows how important fruit and vegetable production is to our national economy. We remain hopeful that Senator McCain will continue his strong efforts to bring our critical industry issues to the forefront as our next President.”

As a member of the National Watermelon Association, you have the ability to view our national membership listings and access committee minutes from previous meetings.

NWA Members can log in to NWA website as follows:

Username eat

Password watermelons

Please take a look at your web site regularly. It is full of key information that discusses the numerous services that the NWA provides to our members like you.



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Border Inspections reviewed with DHS and CBP

Bob Morrissey recently participated in a joint meeting with the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) and Customs & Border Protection (CBP) to review their current inspection processes and training programs of inspectors, and discuss ways that can speed up the inspection process at our borders and ports.



Ralph Basham, Commissioner of CBP

Ralph Basham, Commissioner of CBP, stated, “The threat of agri-terrorism is as critical and possible as a plane being flown into a tower. The threat of pests and diseases and the inspection process is vital to protect American agriculture.” In 2007, CBP intercepted over 1.5 million incidents of pests and diseases at border stations and ports, with over 50,000 being plant diseased products.

CBP operates with the dual missions of ‘speed’ and ‘security’ by incorporating as much efficiency and a customer-friendly approach as they can, and our country can afford. They simply cannot afford to inspect every carton, bin or complete load that comes across our borders. As a result, they have instituted a fast track program that will help to speed the process up for some qualifying industries and commercial truckers.

The National Agricultural Release Program (NARP) is available to high volume commodities with a low pest potential and frequency. A commodity that follows the “SHIP CLEAN” ideals of ‘no pests’, ‘paperwork in order’ and ‘wood fumigation’, and stays in compliance can qualify for this program. NARP includes some reduced inspection rates, it helps to expedite traffic, saves money, and allows CBP to focus on high risk crops through an efficient use of inspectors.

The main program available to crop imports is called the Free and Secure Trade (FAST) program, which is offered to commercial truckers that frequently cross the Mexican and Canadian borders. The program was developed to conduct background checks on those frequent commercial travelers, and provide RFID chips that can be quickly read at the border stations to expedite the load as quickly as possible. FAST has been referred to as the “fast lane” or “E-Z Pass” at border stations, with some stations that have dedicated inspection lanes for these truckers, and others coming soon.

Options are available to importers to speed up the inspection process, and make the journey of importation a bit quicker. Additional details can be found on the Customs & Border Protection website, <http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/home>.

Black Japanese watermelon sold at record price

By Tomoko A. Hosaka, AP Writer

Premium black watermelon auctioned in Japan for a record \$6,100

TOKYO (AP) -- A jumbo black watermelon auctioned in Japan on Friday fetched a record \$6,100, making it one of the most expensive watermelons ever sold in the country.

In a society where melons are a luxury item commonly given as gifts, the watermelon’s hefty price tag followed another jaw-dropping auction last month, when a pair of “Yubari” cantaloupe melons sold for a record \$23,500.

The 17-pound, black-skinned “Densuke” watermelon, a variety grown only on the northern island of Hokkaido, was purchased Friday by a marine products dealer who said he wanted to support local agriculture, according to Kyodo News agency.

The price was the highest on record for a Densuke watermelon, said Kazuyoshi Ohira, a spokesman for



the Tohma Agricultural Cooperative in Hokkaido. Most retail at department stores and supermarkets for a more modest \$188 to \$283, Ohira said. And what makes a watermelon worth \$200, much less \$6,000?

Ohira says it’s the unusual black skin and unparalleled taste. “It’s a watermelon, but it’s not the same,” he said.

Emergency Agriculture Relief Act (Immigration)

Senator Dianne Feinstein (CA) has negotiated the Emergency Agriculture Relief Act (EARA) as a way to stabilize the agricultural labor crisis until Congress and a new President can revisit the issue of comprehensive immigration reform.

Senator Feinstein and other Democratic and Republican Senate champions will seek any and every opportunity to move EARA, most likely as an amendment to other legislation.

The labor emergency affecting American agriculture threatens our stable and reliable food supply. The emergency has many components—regional and local shortages; shortages of authorized workers; and

increased enforcement by federal state and local governments and no solution. At a time when much of the world is experiencing a food crisis, it is unthinkable that Congress would let one happen in our own back yard.

The Emergency Agriculture Relief Act (EARA) is a bipartisan compromise that provides a temporary solution to stabilize the experienced workforce and overhaul the H-2A temporary and seasonal alien farm worker program supported by agricultural producers and farm worker advocates. As a temporary solution, EARA does not provide permanent legal status. Because the program sunsets in five years, a final solution to a stable agricultural workforce will be deferred until Congress returns to comprehensive reform. As an emergency transition measure, EARA ensures that farmers and farm workers will be at the table fighting for comprehensive reform in the future.

When Senator Feinstein submits the bill in the Senate, we will urge you to contact your U.S. Senators to cosponsor and support the Emergency Agriculture Relief Act amendment. At a very minimum, we need their assurance that they will vote for the amendment whenever it can be offered this year.

Country of Origin Labeling

Country of origin labeling of fresh produce also known as COOL – has been discussed for many years throughout the produce industry. Surveys indicate that more than 50% of produce commodities offered for sale in retail grocery stores today are labeled with country of origin on packaging or PLU stickers. And, many retailers provide country of origin information through in-store signage. But, beginning in the fall of 2008, all fresh produce sold in retail stores in the United States is likely to come under a mandatory COOL rule.

United Fresh Produce Association has prepared a white paper to help industry members understand the facts about COOL and what may be necessary to comply with the law.

There are currently many uncertainties in what specific provisions of law may go into effect, and many uncertainties in how the U.S. Department of Agriculture may interpret the law in future regulations. This makes it very difficult for industry

members throughout the supply chain to prepare for COOL. Because of this uncertainty, we believe it is critical that all supply chain partners work together to understand the facts and begin steps toward compliance that reduce total supply chain cost and potential for market disruption. We must all begin to adapt to new COOL laws. Working together with supply chain partners will help both retailers and produce suppliers minimize the potential regulatory and cost burden of the new law.

This White Paper represents the facts as of early spring 2008. We will continue to publish updates to this document as details change, and post the very latest information for our members on our website. I also want to point out that while country of origin labeling for produce is part of a larger labeling law for meat and other products, this White Paper deals only with the specific implications for produce. Please monitor the NWA website for updates as we move closer to the fall implementation of the COOL program.

The first-ever National Watermelon Month has come and gone. What did your company and chapter do to celebrate the month and promote watermelon? We would like to know! Please send copies of your Ads, Pictures and other materials to the NWA for our recap and archives.

Sweet Treasure

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National Report

Our 2008 National Watermelon Queen, Brittanie Faircloth has been very busy since our last printing! Her travels have taken her to into several states with numerous successful watermelon promotions. Brittanie is doing a first class job representing you and is enjoying every promotion!

NWA SPONSORS TO NWPB TRAINING SEMINAR

We attended this years NWPB training Seminar in Orlando April 12-13. This year’s event included a promotion coordinator roundtable discussion on Friday afternoon. It is so beneficial for all the Coordinators and Queens to have this learning opportunity provided by the NWPB board. We enjoyed the added benefit of having etiquette expert Deborah Kreiger address the group on Saturday. We thank the Promotion Board for all their efforts in making our seminar even better each year!

NWA AND BORDERS MELONS EAST SPONSOR

We were soon off to Las Vegas, Nevada to attend the United and FMI show. NWA Executive Director, Bob Morrissey also attended. We were joined by the Texas Queen runner-up Molly, Wanda and the Illiana Queen Maggie and fill in Coordinator, Elizabeth Coffman. We served up delicious slices of watermelon at the Hinkle Produce booth. We certainly appreciate all Mr. Dan Hinkle did for us; it was certainly a popular booth during the three day show! Brittanie and the girls received some excellent coverage in the Produce News. Special thanks to Barry Plotnick and Nowell Borders for helping sponsor us to United, and to Dan Hinkle and Hinkle Produce!

NWPB SPONSORS TO STOP & SHOP

Upon returning from Vegas, we just rechecked our bags and headed for Hartford, Connecticut and Springfield, Massachusetts for the grand opening of a Stop & Shop supermarket. We flew all night and arrived in Hartford, only to take a quick train trip into New York City! Brittanie loved getting to see New York City! We had an outstanding promotion at the Springfield Stop & Shop grand opening! We were greeted by Bill Brophy and others from the corporate offices! Brittanie did a fantastic job, helping the customers select the perfect melon, and informing them on what to look for when choosing a ripe one! The shoppers just loved Brittanie, and she really moved the melons! Special thanks to NWBP for sponsoring us to Stop & Shop!

McMELON SPONSORS TO CAPE COD FOR STOP & SHOP

We were soon off to beautiful Cape Cod, Massachusetts for another Stop & Shop grand opening, this time sponsored by Arnold, Chandler, and Jon Mack of McMelon. We were greeted royally by Scott Danis of Stop & Shop. The store was buzzing with customers and merchandisers and corporate headquarters. They loved Brittanie’s southern charm, as well as her delicious samples, stickers, recipes and coloring books! Thank You McMelon!

BROWNING & SONS SPONSORS TO HARVEY’S

We headed to Richmond Hill, Georgia for the kick off of this year’s John Boy and Billy Grilling Contest, just south of Savannah. We were even able to have dinner at Paula Dean’s, “Lady and Son’s”, after quickie tour of beautiful Savannah.

We were joined by Georgia Queen Hannah, and Julie. What a super day! The grilling contest is an annual event for Harvey’s. The winner each year wins a trip to Charlotte, NC to appear on their show, in addition to some wonderful prizes. The Watermelon and the Queens were a huge hit at Harvey’s! They were interviewed by the Savannah Morning News as well the Richmond Hill paper. Thanks Browning & Sons!

BORDERS EAST SPONSORS TOUR EVENTS & ADELILLY FESTIVAL

We were sponsored to the Adel, GA area for some outstanding promotions by Barry and Christine Plotnick and Borders East, east coast operations of NWA President Nowell Borders. They hosted a picnic in the park at a mentally challenged day facility. The picnic was capped off with watermelon, and a seed spit contest, prizes, gifts and goodies for all! We also visited an assisted living facility, serving watermelon to the residents there. This was truly a heartwarming day! We were joined by Georgia Queen Hannah, and Coordinator Julie. Special thanks to Christine for taking such good care of us! We toured the beautiful Borders East facility, visited with their growers, dined on great food and worked the Adelilly Festival, serving watermelon slices to everyone attending. It was a hot day in the Georgia sun, and the watermelon was a delight to all! Thank You Borders Melons East! Best of the Season to You!

Eleanor T. Bullock
229.273.8638 / 229.322.9933 cell / 229.271.8111 fax / eleanor@websign.net



The Grand Tour from Barry



Sightseeing in Cape Cod



Barry and Christine pose with Hannah and Brittanie



Scott Danis, Produce Sales Manager welcomes Brittanie to the Stop & Shop Grand Opening!



what a fun group and day! Thanks Borders Melon East



Cape Cod Stop & Shop loved Brittanie!



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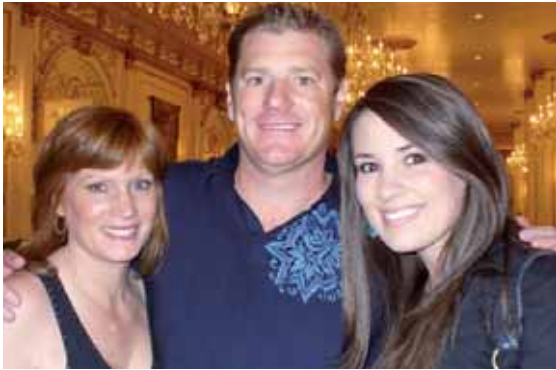
National Pictures



What a great group at the NWPB Seminar



Dinner at Paula Dean's restaurant in Savannah



Brittanie chats with NWA 2nd VP, Brent Harrison and wife Susan in Las Vegas



Thank You Mark and NWPB!



Hannah and Brittanie with young Harvey's shoppers



Brittanie and "Bob the Bowling Champ"!



Stephanie Serves Up Some Fun!



Harvey's Brand Manager, Lisa Overman in Richmond Hill



Thanks Dan Hinkle!



Brittanie meets NBC TODAY Show's, Ann Curry in New York City!



The winner and finalist in the John Boy and Billy Grilling contest



Mark and Gordon visit us at the booth!



They loved her at Stop & Shop



Thanks Harvey's and Browning & Sons



Stop & Shop's District Manager Ken Burroughs in Springfield, MA



Stop & Shop's Bill Brophy and Springfield Store Manager welcome Brittanie!



Thanks Barry, Christine, and Borders Melon East!



Josh Bailey and Brittanie at United



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Alabama Report

Greetings everyone from our Alabama Watermelon Association and our Queen Samantha,

Our AWA Queen Samantha finished her spring semester at Auburn University in early May then was off meeting our AWA Board Members while also making appearances at various elementary schools, festivals, farm field tours and much more!

On Monday, June 12th, Samantha began her first Florida Tour. Our first stop was with Mack Farms. Jason Turner toured us around the facility then we were off to Babson Park Elementary School to promote Watermelon Day for the 3rd and 4th Graders. Samantha gave all the students the “royal” treatment to include delicious watermelon slices, coloring book contests, seed spitting contests, auto-graph session and question and answer time. Everyone had a great time!

Samantha was treated to a day off on Tuesday where she spent it at the beach with myself and Lisa Lapide. We had a blast walking the beach, collecting sea shells and taking lots of pictures. Check out the two beach pictures accompanying this article. What relaxing fun Samantha had...then back to the real world and work!

Tommy Smith was Samantha’s “Florida Tour Guide” for her First Florida Tour and what a tour guide he was! Samantha began her day with Tommy by visiting Ralph Chastain of JDI and touring his packing facility. We spent time with Brian Paul and toured his beautiful property. Tommy chauffeured Samantha to Mr. Phil Turner’s office and packing house facility. Wow! What fun to see Mr. Tommy and Mr. Phil sit around and talk about the watermelon industry’s plight during that time of the year. Their conversation was certainly an eye opener for our queen!

Samantha had the opportunity to visit with Wendy Cohen of The Plant Farm and was educated in all aspects of the watermelon industry to include seedlings, watermelon fields, packing houses and shipping. The highlight of this particular tour was the chance happening for Samantha to actually plant a watermelon seed into a plant tray. That afternoon Samantha and I met with Tom Holbert of the Wal*Mart Distribution Center in Winter Haven. Tom gave us an in depth tour of the facility.

Queen Samantha ended her tour by attending the Newberry Watermelon Festival. This is always a fun festival for our Alabama Watermelon Queens as we see many of our old friends and certainly make new ones while in Newberry. Thank you to Billy and Corliss Smith for opening your home and making Samantha feel very welcomed. Once again we have an outstanding Alabama Queen!

I would like to thank Tommy Smith, Billy Smith and Arnold Mack for sponsoring our AWA Queen during this tour. From your continued support for our queen program each of you have given Samantha confidence in her knowledge of the watermelon family and the wisdom of growth her role carries. Until next time, we hope all of you have a successful watermelon season!

Cindy Vaughn
AWA Promotion Coordinator
352-314-5988 home 407-448-3780 cell
ncv57@earthlink.net



Thanks to Jason Turner (Samantha’s right) and Jon David Mack (Samantha’s left) for touring Samantha around Mack Farms, Inc., packing facility. Wow, what a facility!



Mrs. Marston’s 3rd Grade class at Babson Park Elementary School, Lake Wales, FL, were treated to a fun filled afternoon of delicious watermelon slices...along with...



Mrs. Helen Keller’s 4th Grade class which also enjoyed reading books, seed spitting and having a great time with our Queen Samantha.



Future watermelon queens and king...Emily Grace and Lauralee Turner with Jay Allen Mack loved having their picture taken with our Queen Samantha. Arnold, your son is growing into a fine young man right



What a beautiful sunset with our beautiful queen!



Yes, the island sea shells tell of our secret getaway day...Samantha, AWA Queen! (Obviously a secret no longer!)



Oh my! Ralph Chastain, Queen Samantha, John Lapide, Rich Chastain and Tommy Smith. Thanks, Ralph, for giving Samantha a tour of JDI’s packing facility.



Phil Turner, Tommy Smith and Carr Hussey in Arcadia, Florida. Thank you, Phil, for taking time from your busy schedule to give Samantha a tour of your packing facility.



While touring The Plant Farm in Sarasota, Samantha was given the opportunity to directly plant a watermelon seed into a plant tray. Cool!



Thank you to Wendy Cohen, The Plant Farm, for touring Samantha through your greenhouses. This is a picture of a group of women that know how to get the job done, right Wendy?!



Our annual tour of the Wal*Mart Distribution Center is certainly educational. Thanks to Tom Holbert for touring Samantha throughout “Planet Wal*Mart”.



Cheryl Hicks...what can we say. Thank you so much for your continued loyal support for our Alabama Watermelon Queens. Samantha and I enjoyed our dinner with you at the beautiful Lakeside Inn in Mount Dora, FL.



Jess Locke serving Samantha a bite of delicious watermelon directly in the watermelon field. Ummm...sweet and juicy!




AWA Queen Samantha with her Knights in Shining Armor; Justin Alvarez, Trey Smith and Billy Owens. Trey, thanks for helping Samantha catch her first fish “by the tail”!



Year after year it is always our pleasure and great fun to hang out with Lisa Hughes during the Newberry Watermelon Festival. Here we have our Queen Samantha, Lisa, FWA Queen Kaley and Newberry Queen Jessica. A special thanks to Billy Smith for our sponsorship to attend the festival.



OK...what gives! Newberry Festival Auction was a blast bidding between Auburn Tigers and Florida Gators beach towels. Thanks Samantha and Jessica for a job well done!



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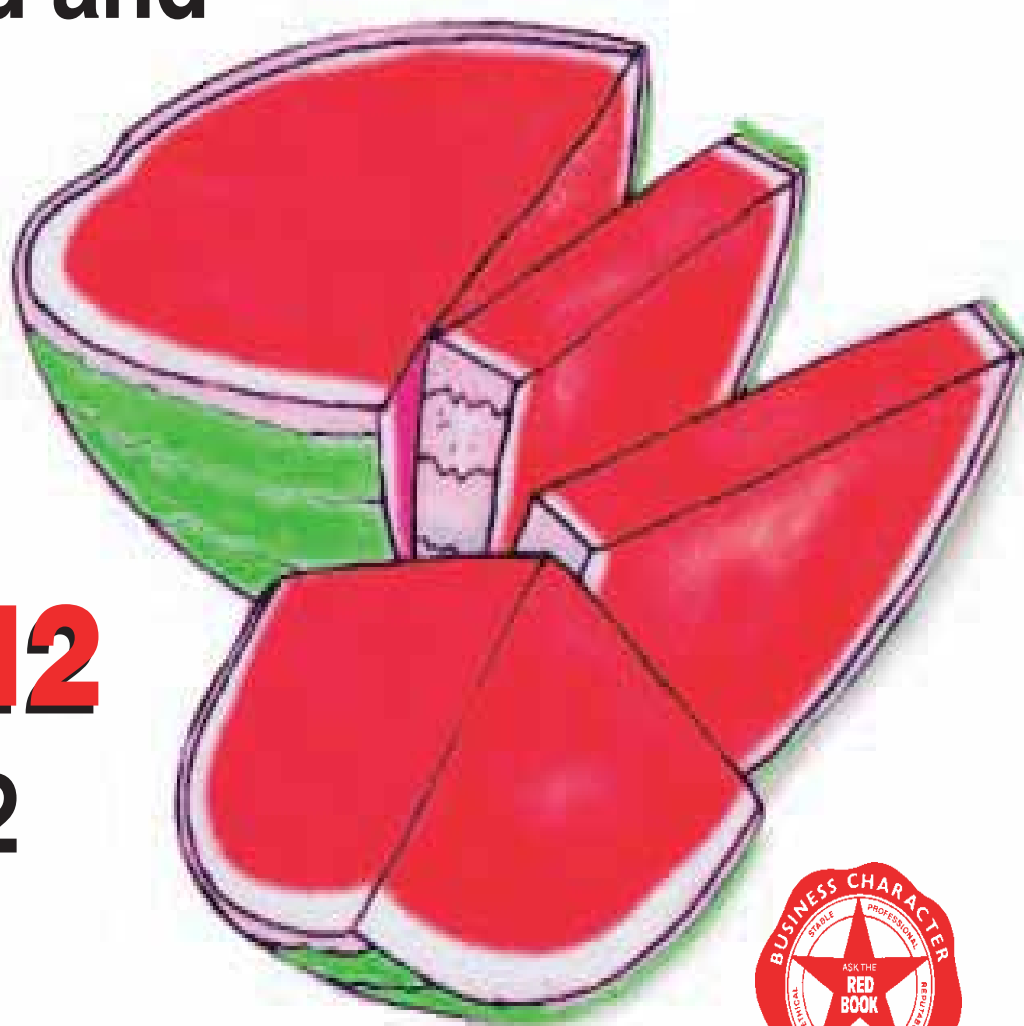
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Florida Report

Watermelon Greetings from the Florida Sunshine State:

Watermelon time is here in the Sunshine State. Kaley and I have had several busy months, traveling all over the world promoting our favorite product... WATERMELONS!

Kaley and I both would like to thank all of our sponsors that have sponsored us these last few months. I would like to send a special thank you to Shawn Valentine and Dixie Rou for filling in for me during my daughter's wedding. I hope when I see everyone I can share some special pictures of that day.

On April 18, Kaley and I traveled to Labelle to visit the Community Christian Academy, where we were introduced to little handsome Bruce Hanshaw's class. We gave out watermelons, coloring books, stickers, etc. We also took a journey to the Country Oaks Elementary School and read the story of "Bernstein Bears and the Missing Watermelon Money". We would like to thank Bruce and Jesse Hanshaw for their hospitality during our visit in Labelle. Our evening ended with a bang as we ate an awesome home cooked barbeque dinner provided by Bruce Hanshaw. Bruce what a wonderful chef you are!!!

Our weekend ended with a trip to Orlando for the National Migrant Education Conference. A day of fun filled excitement passing out watermelons and talking about the nutrients of watermelons. Thanks to Rusty Williams and South Carolina Watermelon Association, Michael Albritton for donating the watermelons for this event. We also would like to thank Jim Barfield of Wolf Island for sponsoring this day.

Our Next weekend, we were on the road to West Palm Beach for a beautiful two day promotion with the National Watermelon Promotion Board at the "Our Kids World Family Fun Festival". Kaley had her first experience in cutting up watermelon slices for a ton of mouth watering kids. It was a fun-filled weekend with watermelons, passing out coloring books, and of course the watermelon eating contest. Thanks to Shawn Valentine Shirley for chaperoning this event.

On May 9, we took a journey down to South Florida for an exciting trip to the annual "Queen Farm Tour" sponsored by Siegers Seed Company, Bayshore Farms, Hanshaw Farms and Wolf Island. Kaley and I along with Patty Swilley started out early visiting watermelons fields, markets and the community of Immokalee. Thanks to Jim Barfield for a wonderful lunch and a special thank you to Patty for being our chauffeur for the day. Later that evening we stopped in to visit with Melon 1 and enjoyed dinner with John Lapide and Rhonda Chastain at Chili's. Thanks John!

On the same evening Meagan Marsh was in Old Town, Florida for the "Relay for Life". Thanks to Billy Smith for sponsoring this event and Karen Ann Crawford for chaperoning. Meagan enjoyed the evening passing out watermelons for all the walkers.

Our next event was in Leesburg where we stopped in at the First Academy School. Lindsey Shurley and her class threw a watermelon party and ended the day with eating watermelons on the playground. A special thank you goes out to Shawn for this amazing day. From there Kaley, Shawn and I headed to Newberry Watermelon Festival. The evening began with the Queen pageant, won by Leslie Torres of Newberry. Congratulations to Leslie! A huge thanks goes out to Don Green for not only sponsoring this event but for the hospitality of your hunting lodge. The next day started out early with their annual Newberry Watermelon parade. From there we headed to my hometown of Arcadia for the Arcadia Watermelon Festival. The noon event was the Queen Pageant won by Heather Johnson of Arcadia. Kaley enjoyed all the watermelon commercials presented by the queen contestant. The evening ended with a dance at the Turner Center by "Slick Willy". Special thanks to Phil Turner Farms for sponsoring this event.

Finally, our last event in May consisted of traveling to elementary schools where Kaley educated the children about the nutrients of watermelons. The kids enjoyed eating watermelons that were donated by Phil Turner Farms and Killmon Farms. We would like to thank our sponsors Heather Raulerson and Cheryl Hicks for this wonderful promotion. Until Next Time!

Debra Harrison



A day in the field with Jim Barfield.



Thank you Bob Gibson of Southern Corp. for taking time to show Queen Kaley the operation of packing and shipping watermelons.



Stopping by to see Gordon & Mike at the office.



A wonderful visit with Doyle Bennett and his grandson in Arcadia.



We always enjoy visiting with Kay and Doug Dickerson of Nature Choice.



What an awesome bunch at NWPB....Queen Kaley, Gordon and Stephanie.



Queen Kaley stops by to chat with Daren Hanshaw on her Farm Tour.



Queen Kaley along with the Florida Citrus Queen and the Florida Cattlemen's.



Hanging out with the guys from Southern Corp!



FWA Queen Kaley with those Handsome Hanshaw's.



Next stop on the Farm Tour is with Heidi and Steve Singletary of Bayshore Farms "What a nice looking couple".



Thank you Don Green for a wonderful time in Newberry!



It is always a great time when we stop in to see John and Rich of Melon 1.



Queen Kaley and Lindsey Shurley having fun eating watermelons.



Queen Kaley is all smiles when Mr. Phil Turner and son are around!



FWA Queen Kaley along with Arcadia Watermelon Queen Heather Johnson and Miss Jubilee Amanda Mercer educate the elementary kids about the nutrients of watermelons.



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Mark Arney
Executive Director



Head Watermelon Buyer for Watermelon Tours the Fields

In mid-June, the new watermelon head buyer for Wal-Mart, Mr. Dennis Randolph, took a short but comprehensive tour of the industry accompanied by National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) Marketing Director Gordon Hunt and Merchandising Rep Marcia Adler. At Mr. Randolph's direction, the four-day trip started him in McAllen, Texas where he met with Texas Wal-Mart vendors, the Texas Watermelon Queen Marie Fletcher and toured local watermelon packing facilities.

From there he went to Cordele, GA, Autryville, NC, and Evansville, IN, visiting local growers, packers and shippers, both in the field and at the packing sheds. One of the highlights of the watermelon trek was dinner in Cordele with National Watermelon Queen Brittanie Faircloth and Eleanor Bullock, as well as Buddy and Greg Leger.

This was the first ever industry tour by Wal-Mart's head buyer. According to Mr. Randolph, "It exceeded my expectations and gave me a much greater understanding of the industry and its current challenges, as well as opportunities." One thing is for certain, he is now a firm believer in the value of the Queen Program and the benefits that these young ladies bring to the retail promotion of watermelon.



Dennis Randolph with a fresh-picked watermelon bus



Dennis Randolph and NWPB Marketing Director Gordon Hunt



Brent Jackson and Dennis Randolph in Brent's packing facility



Dennis Randolph in the field



National Queen Brittanie Faircloth with Dennis Randolph and NWPB rep Marcia Adler

News from the National Watermelon Promotion Board

Katie Brown Promoting Watermelon on Television!

On Thursday, July 24, domestic diva Katie Brown is promoting watermelon during a satellite media tour. She will be teaching the audiences of approximately 14 major market television stations how to have fun and save money by creating a beach "getaway" in their own back yard. Naturally, the getaway will feature watermelon drinks, carvings, recipes and fun.

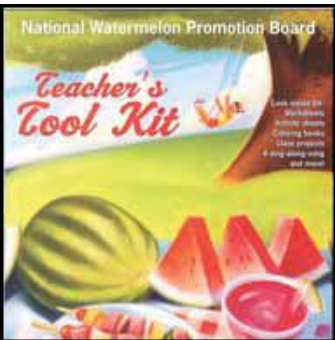
The satellite media tour is just one of the activities Katie is working on with NWPB. She is also developing recipes for her website as well as NWPB's watermelon.org, and working on podcasts that will appear on the internet and feature Katie carving a watermelon.

Katie is best known for her public television program, cook books and writing for major publications, including the New York Times. She has been teaching people how cook and entertain in a way that's simple and enjoyable. She's a perfect spokesperson for watermelon.



New Teacher Tool Kit

Our first Teacher's Tool kit was a great success. We distributed more than 5,000 to teachers, schools, hospitals, and child care facilities throughout the country. This new kit contains work sheets in math, language arts, science and social studies. It also includes two coloring books, coloring sheets for the younger children, class projects, art work, screen savers, watermelon, J-Slice and Pinkie clip art, a mobile and even a recorded sing-along-song with a video and song sheet which was written, recorded and produced in-house.



The entire kit is on a CD-ROM and ships in a small envelope, saving costs of printing and mailing. We publicize the availability of the kit at no cost through our press kit and web site.

Plus, NWPB staff attended a National Education Association expo in Washington, D.C. at the end of June and distributed the kit to thousands of teachers from all over the country.

If you have a teacher in the family, or are a parent or grandparent who is in contact with an elementary or middle school, we encourage you to get a copy and give it to a teacher. We all know how children influence what goes in the grocery cart today, and that they are the food shoppers of tomorrow. Help us spread the word about watermelon to our youngest target market.

Market Potential for Watermelon in Mexico

The Marketing Department is looking at the prospects of developing a program for exports to Mexico this Fall. Gordon Hunt went to Mexico City in June to meet with Luis Moreno of Grupo PM and survey the local market potential for US watermelon. Grupo PM represents a number of US commodities and is very experienced in dealing with USDA and the MAP program. While in

Mexico Gordon met with buyers for the top local retail chain, SORIANA as well as Wal-Mart and COSTCO.

All three indicated that they currently bring in US watermelon in the Fall season when Mexico is out of production, and that they would be interested in developing closer ties with US suppliers instead of dealing through wholesalers in a haphazard manner. We will be asking USDA to approve the shifting of some MAP funds from the UK budget to start a trial program this Fall in Mexico. If successful, we will submit a request for a full Mexican marketing budget for next season.



Gordon Hunt, Associate from Grupo PM and Luis Moreno at a Costco store in Mexico City

NWPB Booth

Come to the NWPB Booth at PMA in October! The NWPB will be at booth #2417 at the PMA Fresh Summit Expo in Orlando, Florida. Upon show opening, we will be unveiling our new trade-show booth, guaranteed to make quite a splash! Again on hand to rouse up watermelon revelry will be Chef Joe Poon! And this year as a special treat

(on Saturday only) we will have lifestyle expert Katie Brown in our booth for a meet and greet opportunity.



We are especially excited to announce that the annual watermelon industry reception will be held on Saturday night at B.B. King's Blues Club at Pointe Orlando! The NWPB has truly leveraged our resources to find the best, hottest venue in town for the reception. B.B. King's has only been open since December, and it has one of the best reputations in town for being a tip-top nightspot. Watch the Watermelon Update for more information over the coming months.

The Watermelon MarketPlace Accepting Listings Now!

Discover today the place where buyers and sellers can easily find and market watermelon industry products and services!

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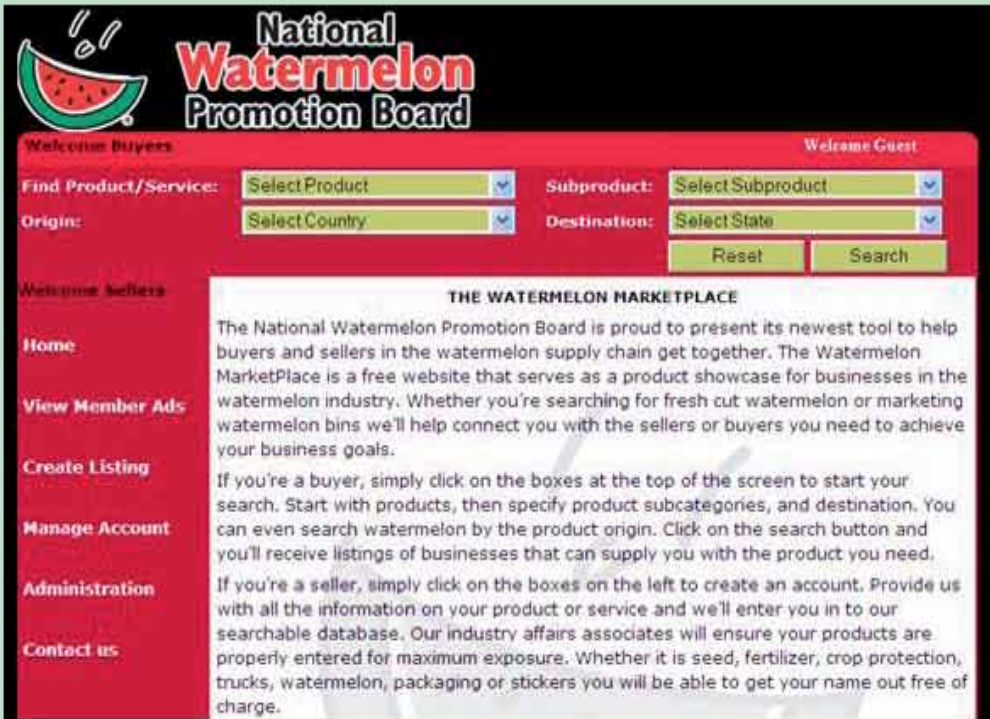
Please note that all listings have review and approval on the NWPB end, so they will not automatically populate the database.

The NWPB does not promote, endorse or guarantee any product or service listed on the Watermelon MarketPlace.





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- Where:** Find the link on Watermelon.org



Our goal is to be constantly improving the site to provide the best tool for the watermelon industry. Please send comments to Jason Hanselman at jhanselman@watermelon.org or call 877-599-9595.

Please note that all listings require NWPB approval, so they will not automatically populate the database.

The NWPB does not promote, endorse or guarantee any product or service listed on the Watermelon MarketPlace website.

Georgia Report

Hello everyone from Georgia!

As summer is in full swing our Queen Hannah Jones has been busy on the roads promoting our delicious Georgia watermelons. Starting in May, we would like to thank the National Watermelon Promotion Board for the as always fantastic training seminar held in Orlando, FL. The extensive seminar well prepares our girls on the techniques needed to correctly promote our industry throughout the year. We appreciate NWPB’s latest marketing ideas as we are always looking for new creative ways to promote watermelon to the consumers.

As May rolled around, Queen Hannah’s promotions began picking as she hit the ground running. She enjoyed our annual Sutherland’s Food Show held at the Atlanta Farmers’ Market in Forrest Park, GA. The Sutherland’s had the largest turn out in their history of shows and we are so thankful they included us again this year. Next, Hannah was back to the “watermelon capitol of the world” Cordele for the Sail-plane Convention dinner held by the Cordele Chamber of Commerce at The Lake Blackshear Resort. Next, Hannah met with Mr. Buddy Leger and Mr. Jerry Albritton at The Albritton’s Farm in Butler for a field day. Hannah truly appreciated the hands on education during her day on the farm. Hannah later headed to Albany for the WALB noon show to discuss the upcoming Cordele Watermelon Festival. From Macon we headed to Richmond Hill to a Harvey’s in-store “John Boy and Billy” grilling contest where we were joined by Mrs. Eleanor and Ms. Brittanie. The day was wonderful and we appreciate Browning and Sons for sponsoring us to this wonderful event.

As we snuck up on the month of June we joined Mr. Barry Plotnick and Mrs. Christine Bassett with Borders Melons East for the Adelily Festival in Adel, GA. We again were thrilled to have Mrs. Eleanor and Ms. Brittanie with us for this weekend promotion. We started at the Adel Community Center where we handed out watermelon slices, held a watermelon seed spit competition and shared a delicious catered lunch by “Sisters” in Adel. We later went by a nursing home in Adel where we again shared Borders watermelons and shared stories with the ladies at the nursing home. We all really enjoyed the day. The next day Hannah and Brittanie passed out watermelon slices. Thank you, Barry and Christine, for our dinner at the famous Cadelac Ranch and The Bistro in Valdosta. We all enjoyed our weekend! The Cordele Watermelon Festival Ribbon-Cutting was immediately following the Adelily promotion. GWA would like to thank Lisa Renshaw (08 runner-up) for filling in for Hannah in Cordele during the ribbon cutting to kick-off the festival. As the festival began Hannah participating in the following: Kiwanis Fishing Rodeo, Taste of Melon Show with Phil Streetman, Reading with the Queens at the Cordele Library, WALB noon show at Flint River Pottery, United Methodist Daycare, First Baptist Daycare, Farm Bureau Luncheon, Wal-Mart in-store promotion, Big Melon Contest, Seed Spit Competition and the parade. Thank you to our sponsors Mc-Melon, Temple Inland, C & L Packing, Chase Daughtrey, and Shawn Valentine-Shirley for this week long promotion.

We all would like to congratulate Mr. Buddy Leger as he was recognized as the man of the year in Cordele, GA. The Friday night of the Cordele Watermelon Festival, the Cordele Chamber of Commerce held a dinner titled “This Is Your Life” honoring Mr. Buddy. We all enjoyed the roasting of Mr. Buddy as his closest friends got up to tell stories about Mr. Buddy. Again, congratulations. We are still on the road promoting Georgia Watermelons and will pick up from here in our next edition of The Vineline.

Sincerely,

Julie Akins Daughtrey
Queen Promotion Coordinator
P. O. Box 2278
Dalton, GA 30722
770.842.3309
akinsjulie1@alltel.net



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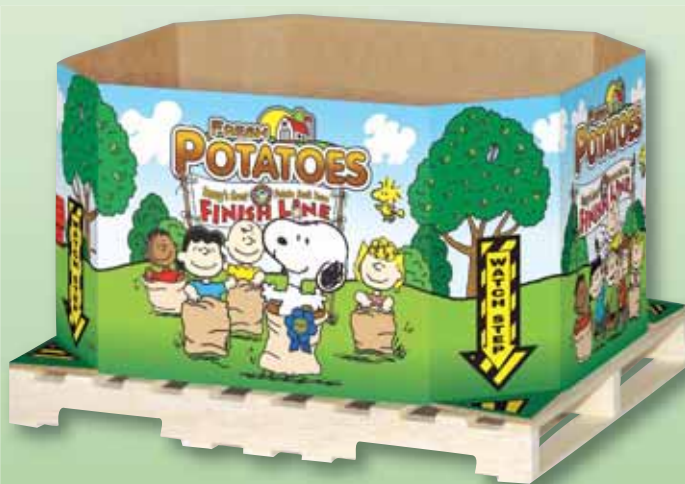
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Illiana Report

Our IWA Queen Maggie is off to a super start for 2008. One week after her crowning, she attended the FWA Convention held in Orlando. Maggie thoroughly enjoyed her first visit to a state convention. Congratulations to Kaley Harper, the 2008 FWA Queen. She is a transplanted Hoosier, and we look forward to seeing her over the next year. On the way to Orlando, Maggie was given a tour of a watermelon farm by Tim Dunn. Queen Maggie and 1st runner up Laura Maddock were back in Florida a few weeks later for the NWPB Media Training.

After attending the Knox County Chamber of Commerce banquet on April 24, Maggie promoted watermelon at the GSH Kids Health Fair two days later and that afternoon greeted a family trust tour group at Melon Acres.

May was almost nonstop. Maggie attended the United Fresh Produce show in Las Vegas on May 3-7 and was sponsored by Midwest Marketing, Wabash Valley Growers, Mouzin Brothers, Melon Acres, and Hinkle Produce. While Maggie was in Vegas, 1st Runner up Laura represented IWA at the Vincennes YMCA Weigh Down on May 6. One day later, Laura attended the Purdue University Extension Service “Day on the Farm” for all county third graders.

On May 14 Queen Maggie was back in Indiana at the Good Samaritan Hospital Employee Health Fair. Over 400 watermelon samples were served, and the employees enjoyed the recipe booklets, with the Watermelon Mango Margarita and the Watermelon Salsa being their top choices to try.

Knox County Relay for Life was next on May 17. Sponsors Caito Foods and Midwest Marketing provided watermelon in the food tent for all Relay participants. Maggie handed out stickers, pens, coloring books, and recipe books in the health fair tent, and then spent the rest of the day supporting our IWA team “Lycopene Leaders.”

The Spirit of Vincennes Rendezvous transported us back in time as IWA teamed up with the Lincoln Band Boosters to sell watermelon to the 15,000-20,000 attendees at the 2-day 18th century reenactment. Battles, music and other entertainment, pioneer crafts and food of all kinds make this the perfect way to spend Memorial weekend. Maggie worked both days selling sweet, refreshing watermelon. Thanks to sponsors Caito Foods and Schmieding Produce.

Queen Maggie kicked off June with a radio interview on WAOV. Maggie did a fabulous job of spreading the Watermelon message. Next, Maggie and I headed to Zion, Illinois on June 10-12 for a Wal-Mart Grand Opening. We were sponsored by Frey Produce and escorted by Ted Frey. We would like to thank everyone at Frey Produce, especially Ted Frey, who showed us a super fun time. He kept the watermelon coming in the store and the fun coming there and everywhere else! Maggie was in the Vincennes Wal-Mart on June 13 for a store promotion, also sponsored by Frey Produce. Special thanks to John Frey for asking us to take three sets of promotional pictures for him.

On Saturday June 14, Queen Maggie rode in the Red Skelton Parade of Clowns. Two clowns suitably dressed in watermelon-patterned costumes escorted her in the parade. That evening she attended the black tie Red Skelton Gala and was honored to meet singer Crystal Gayle.

Maggie had another in store promotion on June 25 at the Vincennes Harold’s JayC, which is part of the Kroger Company. She was sponsored by Vincennes Farm Credit Services. On June 29th Maggie celebrated “Good ole Oaken” Days in Oaktown by helping with watermelon eating contests, seed spitting competitions, serving watermelon, and then riding in the parade. This fun-filled day was sponsored by Norman Lamb Produce. Thank You!

IWA has one more important Thank You to make. Kristy Cardinal has retired from the Promotions Coordinator position. She has been involved with IWA virtually her entire adult life, and we thank her for her hard work and dedication. Under Kristy the IWA Queen program blossomed, and she has laid a strong foundation upon which to build. Thank You Kristy!

If anyone would like to book Maggie for a promotion or help sponsor an event, please contact me, Beth Frey, at the information below. I am honored to have this position and look forward to serving the IWA for many years to come.

Sincerely,
Beth Frey
Promotions Coordinator
Illiana Watermelon Association
1707 McDowell Rd Vincennes IN 47591
loveshallmark@hotmail.com
812-886-5409



Maggie and Jill Frey of FreyCo get ready to serve delicious juicy watermelon at the Vincennes Rendezvous.



Hannah Montana “aka” Tim Dunn gets pointers from Maggie before competing in the “Miss” Relay contest.



Maggie practises interview techniques at the NWPB training weekend.



Thank You Ted Frey and Frey Produce for sponsoring Maggie at Walmart’s Grand Opening in Zion, IL.



IWA President Brad Toney, wife Angie, and 1st Vice-President Carrie Smith introduce Maggie at the Knox County Chamber of Commerce Banquet.



Maggie gets ready to “Send in the Clowns” in the Red Skelton Parade.



Maggie shares watermelon facts with some of the coloring contest participants at the hospital Kid’s Health Fair.



Thanks to Norm and Avis Lamb for sponsoring Maggie at Ole Oaken Days.



Maggie checks out the lane sponsors at the bowling event in Vegas and shows off a bowling ball that resembles a “watermelon?”.



Dan Hinkle and Queen Maggie take time out for a picture at the United Fresh Produce show in Las Vegas.



Queen Maggie waves to the crowd at the Parade in Oaktown.



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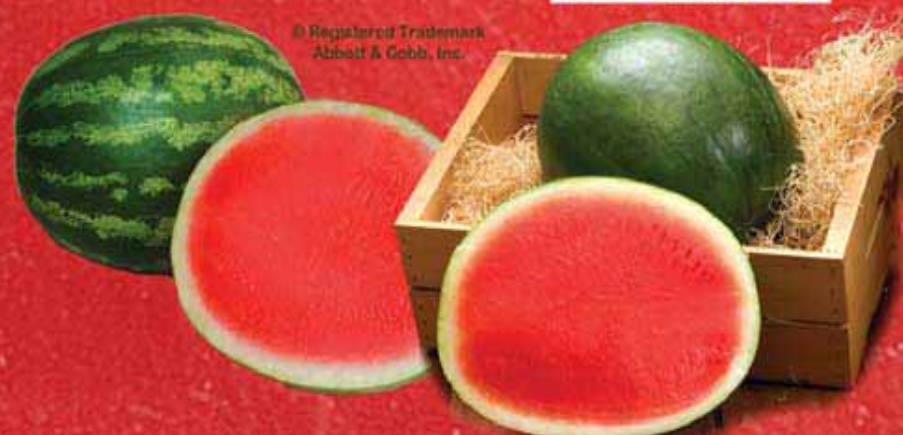
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Mar-Del Report

Greetings!

Christina is anxiously awaiting the kickoff of another fantastic, MAR-DELicious, watermelon season to begin later this month. With little promotional activity until then, Christina has had the time to take her promotional photos, record a radio commercial with our local Clear Channel affiliate (promised to reach thousands of listeners across Maryland, Delaware, and parts of Pennsylvania in July and August), and tape a commercial for “Video on Demand,” seekers. To see it yourself, log on to www.froggy999.com, click on features, on demand, and select the video you wish to see (it may take a few tries for Queen Christina’s ad to play).

In April, Queen Christina joined the rest of our queens along with our 1st Runner-Up, Miss Katey Algier, in Orlando, Florida for a very informative and fun training session with the National Watermelon Promotion Board. A BIG thanks to Stephanie, Leslie, Gordon, and the rest of the team for putting on this spectacular session— the girls learned a lot! Also, thanks to Mark Arney and the NWPB for the wonderful dinner. We had so much in your company and we loved meeting the regional reps from all over the country!

June 14th, Queen Christina had a blast educating children and parents at Delaware’s Kid’s Fest at the state fair grounds. Everyone was so excited to see Christina and VERY thankful for the tasty watermelons from Hales Farms on that HOT, hot day! Thanks to 2004 Queen Lani Kennedy for taking her to this event!

As you all know, the 4th of July is not complete without watermelon on the menu! July 3rd, Christina took part in the Queen tradition of riding in the Laurel 4th of July Parade in Laurel, Delaware. We were happy to have 2007 Queen Stephanie join us on the ride down the parade route and we all had a lot of fun. A special thanks to Pohanka of Salisbury for equipping us with a beautiful, new, black, Mercedes convertible! Be sure to see Kevin if you’re in the market for a new car (this one is a little out of my price range).

On the 4th of July we joined Froggy 99.9 at the Delmarva Shorebirds baseball stadium for lots of 4th of July fun! Thanks to Hales Farms for the beautiful watermelons, and thanks to Will and Candice Hales for all of your help--we needed you! Christina did an awesome job greeting thousands of spectators with autographed pictures, stickers, fans, and juicy slices of watermelon...what a great way to spend the 4th!

We’ve got a big month ahead of us and we can’t wait to see Eleanor, Queen Brittanie, and other queens in Maryland and Delaware in August. Until next time, happy harvesting, and I hope you’re summer is going great!

Warmest Regards,
Allison Castellana
MAR-DEL Watermelon Assoc. Promotions Coordinator
eventsplanner@crisfieldcityhall.com
443-783-5553

2008 Maryland-Delaware Watermelon Queen Christina Gallant



Looks like Queen Christina isn’t the only festive one here! Sherman the Shorebird was all decked out with his Americana outfit.



Queen Christina and our 1st Runner-up Katey Algier loved meeting Queen Samantha of Alabama



Everyone wanted a watermelon slice and everyone wanted a picture of Christina



Christina was having fun reuniting with Illiana and Texas at training. The three had a lot of fun together at the Illiana Convention!



Queen Christina is great with consumers of all ages and loved spreading the watermelon message with this little lady



Thanks Stephanie Simek and the NWPB for putting on another great training session. Somehow, they keep getting better and better!



How many potential watermelon queens do you see? I see nine! These dancers LOVED posing with Christina



Queen Christina is quite the movie star! It only took her a few takes to perfect the Video on Demand clip.



It was like a watermelon queen reunion at the Shorebirds Stadium on the 4th of July! 2005 Queen Allison, 2008 Queen Christina, 1989 Queen April (and our favorite morning talk show host), 2006 National Queen Candice, and April’s daughter Stephanie, a future MAR-DEL queen!



Christina looked beautiful riding down the parade route for the Laurel 4th of July Parade



Queen Christina found a fellow commodity Queen at Delaware’s Kids Fest



Pretty car, and pretty ladies!



Christina had a blast at Kids Fest! Thanks to 2004 Queen Lani for taking her!



Nothing says 4th of July like watermelon, flags, and happy kids! Christina had fun talking watermelons with this joyful spectators



Everyone is all watermelon smiles!



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Researchers find 2,100 year-old melon



By KOZO MIZOGUCHI, Associated Press

Archaeologists digging in western Japan have excavated what they believe to be the oldest remains of a melon ever found, an official said Friday.

Based on a radiocarbon analysis, researchers estimate the half-rounded piece of fruit to be about 2,100 years old, said Shuji Yamazaki, a local official in the city of Moriyama.

The remains are believed to be the oldest of a melon that still has flesh on the rind, Yamazaki said. Previously, the oldest such find was believed to be remains found in China that date back to the fourth century A.D., according to local media reports.

The melon might have been so well-preserved because it was in a vacuum-packed state in a wet layer below the ground, an environment hostile to microorganisms that might otherwise have broken down the remains, Yamazaki said.

Melon seeds have been often found in archaeological digs around the country, but researchers rarely find the remains of melon flesh, Yamazaki said. Moriyama is about 205 miles southwest of Tokyo.

More Disturbing News On Honeybees

A recent survey on bee health continues to raise concern over colony collapse disorder (CCD). The new numbers show a sharp decline in managed hives since last year. The survey showed that 36% of the nation’s commercially managed hives have been lost since last year and 29% of those losses were due to CCD. The survey included 327 producers, which makes up 19% of U.S. commercial beehives.

The survey results have heightened concern over CCD, because losses at these levels are not sustainable for the industry which is critical in the pollination of many of the nation’s food crops. While a cause for CCD has not been identified, some researchers believe it is a combination of factors including pesticides, new diseases, and parasitic mites.

The USDA has invested substantial dollars looking into this disorder, and will hopefully find the cause and a cure for industries like ours that depend on bees for pollination.

Watermelon As A Potential Feedstock For Ethanol Biofuel

Wayne Fish, Benny Bruton, and Vincent Russo
USDA-ARS
South Central Agricultural Research Laboratory
911 Highway 3W
Lane, OK 74555

Developing alternative sources for biofuel production is a mission at the South Central Agricultural Research Laboratory at Lane, OK. Watermelon juice, rind, and pulp are being evaluated as po-

tential feedstocks for ethanol biofuel production. Watermelon juice contains simple sugars that are “fermentation-ready”; no pre-processing is required before fermentation as with corn. Watermelon juice as an ethanol feedstock is a waste stream product from lycopene and/or citrullene extraction. One hundred gallons of watermelon juice will produce about 4 gallons of ethanol, a recovery rate that might be prohibitively inefficient. Watermelon juice may be used as a diluent in place of water during fermentation of feedstocks of molasses or cane sugar. This approach adds supplemental sugar to the fermentation as well as decreases fresh water use. In laboratory tests, combinations of watermelon juice and cane sugar up to 25% total sugars produced up to 15 gallons of ethanol for every 100 gallons of watermelon juice utilized and provided for a more efficient ethanol recovery. Watermelon rind and pulp will have to be broken down into simple sugars before ethanol can be produced from them. Sources of enzymes that can do this are not commercially available. Future research will deal with discovering and enriching natural sources of these enzymes.

Fusarium Wilt Caused by Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. niveum Race 2 in Georgia

B. D. Bruton and W. W. Fish, USDA-ARS, PO Box 195, Lane, OK 74555; and D. B. Langston, PO Box 4604 Research Way, Tifton, GA 31793.

Watermelon is the number one specialty crop grown in Georgia. In the last five years, Fusarium wilt has been the greatest yield-limiting disease of watermelon in Georgia. In 2004, a seedless watermelon field in Berrien County, Georgia, exhibited approximately 40% wilted plants. Affected plants had strong discoloration in the crown xylem. Plant samples (cultivars unknown) from a similarly affected field were also tested from Crisp County, Georgia. Fungi with the

morphological characteristics of Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. niveum (Fon) were consistently recovered from the diseased tissue of all plants. Thirty days after inoculation of differential test plants with the isolated fungi, plants were rated as to healthy, wilted, and/or dead. One fungal isolate from each county was determined to be Fon race 2, based on its ability to wilt/kill a high percentage of the race 1 resistant plant differential, ‘Calhoun Gray’. This is the first report of race 2 in Georgia, and it increases the number of states to seven in which race 2 has been identified. Five of the top-ten watermelon producing states have now reported race 2 of Fon for which there is no genetic resistance within commercial cultivars.

Farm Bill provides valuable research grants

The new farm bill includes a major investment (\$230 million) for the research of specialty crops across the next five years at the highest levels in our nation’s history. The funding levels are as follows:

2008 (ending September 30, 2008) = \$30,000,000
2009-2012 (ending September 30 of each year) = \$50,000,000 annually

All of the federal, university and private researchers that the NWA has worked with in the past five years have been alerted to this opportunity.

Please join with us and contact your university and local federal researchers to make sure that they apply for funding of watermelon-related projects that are important to your region of the country, and those issues that are most important to your chapter. Diseases related to watermelon, value-added project research (i.e. ethanol), plant grafting, and much more await our attention.

Watermelon Research Grants - 2008

The NWA serves as the primary resource in our industry to issue grants to Universities and/or other research organizations to conduct the studies that our Executive Committee approves, looking at various regional/national diseases or planting processes that can help save farmers money and create synergies in farming. In the 2008 season, the following grants were issued:

University of Georgia - Assessment of resistance to fungicides in the gummy stem blight pathogen, and evaluation of fungicide programs for disease and fungicide resistance management

North Carolina State University - Forecasting long-distance movement of cucurbit downy mildew: a decision-making tool for watermelon growers in 2008

North Carolina State University - The interaction and effectiveness of cultural and chemical strategies to control Phytophthora fruit rot in watermelon

Clemson University, North Carolina State University, Virginia Tech University, University of Florida and University of Georgia - Making Grafted Plants More Economical for Watermelon Production by Investigating the Use of Low Plant Populations, and Screening Rootstocks for Their Effect on Fruit Yield and Quality

Clemson University - Rootstocks as new methods to grafting, and the study of the economic impacts

We look forward to hearing from our research partners later this year, and reporting the project results to you.

The Young Ag Spokesperson speech contest for 2008 is open to all NWA family members and employees, agriculture students, and other industry members between the ages of 17-23. Please send any interested candidates to the NWA web site to review the guidelines and application for this year’s scholarship contest.



NWA and NWPB: Partners in the Industry

The NWA, in cooperation with the NWPB, has developed a document that describes the priorities of each organization, and what we do together, all on behalf of the industry.

“The document will provide key insights into our watermelon groups, and will help to clarify the role that each of us plays in the watermelon industry”, says Bob Morrissey. “The primary achievement will be to gain new members throughout all of our chapters by sharing this information, and eliminating any confusion that exists about the NWA and the NWPB. Both of our organizations provide key focuses for the benefit of the industry. By sharing the priorities with the entire industry, the NWA and its nine chapters should be able to gain new members through this clarification process.”

The document is available on both the NWA and NWPB web sites. Please share the document with your suppliers and other industry companies that are not current members. Thank you for your support.

Convention 2009 Awaits!

In August you will receive the first announcement of the 2009 convention at the historic Francis Marion Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina. If you have not received your brochure, please contact the NWA office and we will send one immediately to you.

We are expecting the single largest turnout in our 95 year history of the NWA in Charleston. With that said, it is highly recommended that you make your hotel reservations and convention registrations right away to reserve your place.

As has become expected of us, we are planning a convention filled with fellowship, entertainment, education and fun along with our business sessions. Charleston is a beautiful historic setting that we believe everyone will thoroughly enjoy. Ever danced the “Charleston?” Ready for the next edition of “Watermelon Idol?” Much more too.

There are new sponsorship opportunities available to interested companies and members as well as a unique Business-2-Business Exhibit Center. You can review the applications and materials on the NWA web site currently. Please take advantage of the opportunities to promote your company, and show your support of the industry’s association at our national event. We hope to see you there!

Did you know that every
CHEP pallet, every Snoopy & the
Peanuts Gang corrugated
watermelon bin, every label from
Label Technique Southeast and
every unit of Sakata Seed’s SX
7401 seedless watermelon provide
new revenue to the NWA? Check
out each program’s details on the
NWA web site.

Golden Rules of Marketing

Our Industry’s future depends on its ability to improve its marketing strategies and practices to become “Price Makers” instead of “Price Takers”. To do this we should follow the Golden Rules of Marketing:

1. Good markets exist only where Demand exceeds Supply. The industry must create Demand, and yet more Demand, for watermelon.
2. We must educate the consumer on the practical and health benefits of watermelon; for only a fool buys that for which he knows no use.
3. Sellers who undercut their neighbor’s price throw a boomerang which will return to hit them. The neighbor will in turn have to cut their price, and both parties will suffer financially. When price cutters enter the market, the merchant withholds buying in case his competitors buy cheaper or tomorrow’s fruit is lower; and the fruit piles up like a dammed river until it bursts.
4. Be aware that the eye controls the purse strings of the consumer to the greatest extent. Bruises are perceived by the consumer as being of poor fruit quality.
5. Quality is the only direction, and only the best quality fruit should be marketed in the domestic and import markets. A good pack is a delight to merchants and brings repeat orders. A sloppy pack induces rejection and does damage to the image of the industry.

**Golden Rules of Marketing, Australian Citrus News, 2001*

Two sets of grants for marketing available this summer!

The Agricultural Marketing Service will be administering two separate programs to assist State departments of agriculture in enhancing the competitiveness of U.S. specialty crops. This is a result of the achievements included in the new farm bill. The two programs will have different names to distinguish them from one another. While similar, the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) and Specialty Crop Block Grant Program-Farm Bill (SCBGP-FB) are distinct with different definitions and separate deadlines.

The Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 authorizes USDA to make grants to states for each of the fiscal years 2005 through 2009. These grants are to be used by state departments of agriculture solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and nursery crops (including floriculture). In fiscal year 2008, approximately \$8,440,500 was appropriated to the Secretary of Agriculture to support the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP). Applications must be postmarked not later than March 5, 2009 to apply for fiscal year 2008 funds. In fiscal year 2007, all 52 states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico were awarded funds.

In fiscal year 2008 (October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008) under the 2007 Farm Bill program, approximately \$10 million was made available to the Secretary of Agriculture to support the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill (SCBGP-FB). Notice of Funds Availability Inviting Applications for fiscal year 2008 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program-Farm Bill funds was published in the Federal Register on July 9; applications are due by September 8, 2008.

Please contact your State’s Agriculture Department TODAY to get Watermelon included in their plans.

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country's most historic cities of yesteryear - Charleston.
See you there".**

February 18-22, 2009



North Carolina Report

Greetings from North Carolina

Brittany White, NC Watermelon Queen is excited about the 2008 Queen Tour and her role representing the Association and promoting watermelons. April started the tour as Queen Brittany and 1st Runner up Candi Allen attended the National Promotions Board Queen Media Training in Orlando, Florida. Both young ladies enjoyed meeting all the other state Queens and National Queen Brittany. The NWPB was a great host and we all learned so much about watermelons and how to successfully promote and work with the public and the media.

Queen Brittany made her first store promotion in Morganton at the Ingles store there. She was honored to meet Mr. Ingle, and enjoyed her day signing autographs and promoting watermelons.

Memorial Day was spent in Fayetteville at “Glory Days”. Queen Brittany met the Mayor, Mayor Tony Chavonne, as well as 2 members of the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners-Diane Wheatley and Breeden Blackwell. Brittany also met the Fayetteville Dogwood Festival Queen and several other queens. And Queen Brittany’s day was made complete with a ride on Mr. Joe Jones’ wagon for a tour of Fayetteville.

With our watermelons just about ready, Brittany will be busy representing the North Carolina Watermelon Association on the Queen Tour. If you or any of your customers would like for Brittany to do a special promotion, contact Susan Mills, NCWA Promotions Coordinator at 910-485-1385, or our watermelon office at 919-790-7099. You can learn more about Brittany and the Queen Tour at [HYPERLINK “http://www.ncmelons.com”](http://www.ncmelons.com) www.ncmelons.com.

Wishing you a wonderful watermelon season!

Susan Mills
NCWA Promotions Coordinator



Queen Brittany and 1st runner up Candi at Media Training



Queen Brittany and 1st Runner up Candi pose with Snow White on their way home from media training.



Queen Brittany with Jim Ray at Ingles



Queen Brittany with Mr. Ingles at an Ingles Store



2 Beautiful Queens, Queen Brittany and a shopper



Queen Brittany with Fayetteville, North Carolina Mayor, Tony Chavonne



Queen Brittany with Cumberland County Commissioner, Diane Wheatley



Queen Brittany with Miss Fayetteville Dogwood Festival, Gloria Jarvis



Queen Brittany with Cumberland County Commissioner, Breeden Blackwell



Queen Brittany in the Field of Honor at Glory Days in Fayetteville



Queen Brittany with Guy Jones



Queen Brittany with Joe Jones



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WATERMELONS

South Carolina Report

Hello Everyone!

Hope you all are well and gearing up for a busy summer! Queen Amanda's promotional tour began in April where she attended the NWPB Marketing Seminar in sunny Orlando, Florida. Thank you NWPB for a wonderful seminar and all of your helpful tips. After leaving Orlando, Amanda is confident and ready to go.

While Queen Amanda was in Orlando, our 1st runner-up, Amanda Cook, was busy attending an Ingles Reopening in Easley, South Carolina. It was a huge success with Amanda passing out health brochures and stickers. We were very excited to meet Mr. Ingle himself!!

Next we were off to Columbia our state capital for the annual Taste of South Carolina. Amanda did a wonderful job handing out slices of watermelons to all of the dignitaries including our South Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture, Hugh Weathers.

We started off June with a trip to Surfside Beach, South Carolina and the annual Surfside Kids Fair. With temperatures hitting 100 degrees Amanda was a hit with cool hydrating slices of watermelon. The children were very excited to have their pictures made with our queen and also to receive coloring books and stickers.

Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina was the site of our next promotion for the United Way Executives Conference. Brad Boozer kept the melons cut while Amanda explained the numerous benefits of eating watermelon. This promotion was a real treat for the 150 executives who attended from across the country.

Amanda then attended back-to-back promotions at several Food Lion grocery stores in the Upstate. Over a 3-day period she enjoyed handing out watermelon samples, brochures, stickers and coloring books at stores in Anderson, Clemson, Spartanburg and Roebuck. Amanda was extremely popular with the customers and employees. Thanks to Coosaw Farms for providing the watermelons! I am so excited to be working for the South Carolina Watermelon Association and all of my old friends in the industry. Amanda and I are looking forward to an exciting year!

Until next time,
Julie Murdock
SC Promotions Coordinator
864-313-8168
Jewels412@charter.net



Thank you NWPB for a wonderful meeting!



Queen Amanda enjoys a delicious slice of watermelon.

Jim Ray, VP of Produce Operations at Ingles, chats with runner-up Amanda Cook.



This little girl loved getting her picture made with Amanda.



Runner up Amanda Cook was excited to meet Mr. Ingle.



The Co-Chairmen of the United Way Executive Conference thank Amanda by giving her a shirt.



Amanda enjoyed mingling with dignitaries at the Taste of SC in Columbia.



Amanda and Julie couldn't help but sample the watermelon!



SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers poses for a picture with Amanda.



Amanda takes a minute to sign an autograph for an admirer at Food Lion in Anderson, S.C.



Amanda and Brad Boozer take time out from cutting and serving melon to smile for the camera.



This shopper couldn't resist a slice of watermelon at a Food Lion grocery store in Clemson, S.C.



"Mr. Pig" loved promoting watermelon with Amanda at the Surfside Kids Fair.



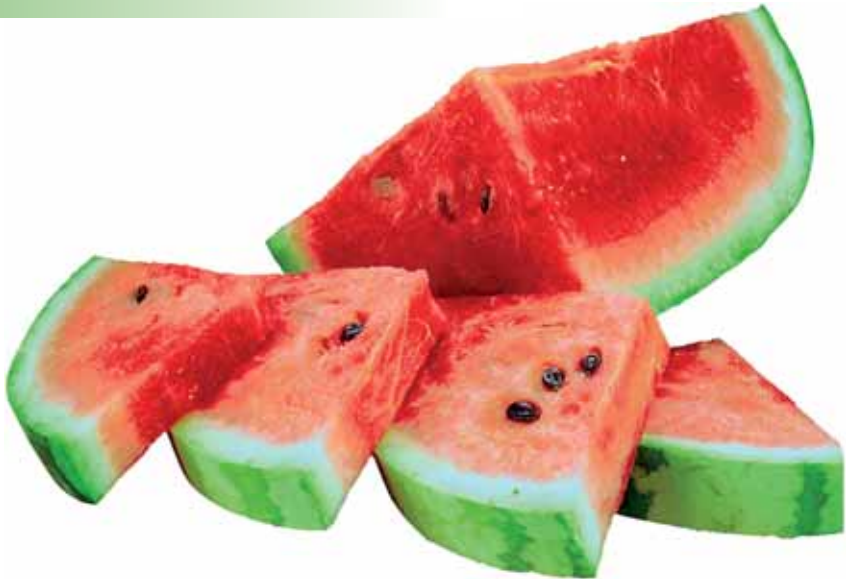
Amanda made sure to provide customers with the nutritional benefits of watermelon.



Amanda is all smiles while chatting with "The Sun" in Surfside Beach.



The watermelon was so good this little girl came back for seconds!!



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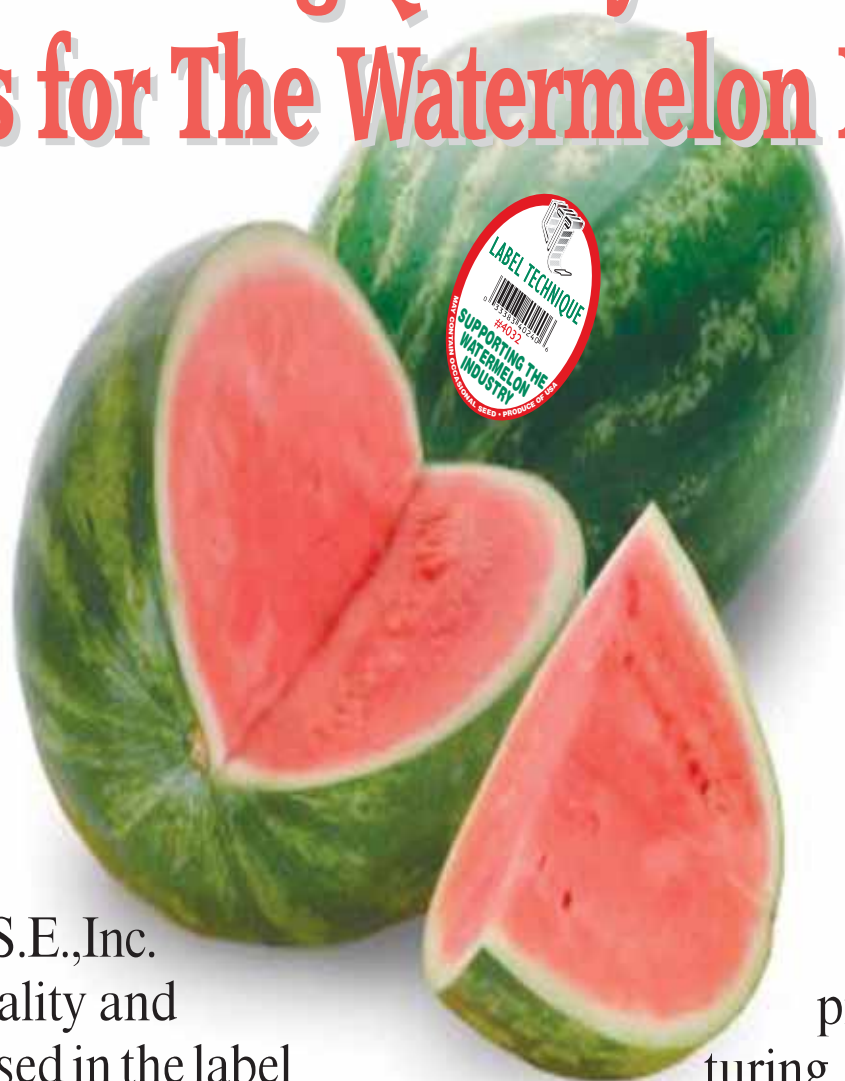
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many awards for excellence in printing and manufacturing. Our success is based on the success of our customer's product. We work hard to find the best solution to every challenge. Label Technique brings together materials, printing processes, die-cutting and more to meet the demands of our customer's individual applications. We'll do whatever it takes to ensure our customer's success by producing the highest quality labels, perfectly to spec, and in the shortest time possible. That's our promise . . . and guarantee.

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Texas Report

Wow, this Texas watermelon season seems to be flying by quickly. I hope everyone in the watermelon industry is having a great year in these times with so much added expense in all aspects of growing watermelons.

Queen Marie Fletcher has moved back home to Texas for the summer to fulfill her duties as our watermelon queen. Marie attended the NWPB workshop in Orlando and was excited and pleased, saying it was a very beneficial weekend for everyone that attended.

1st runner up, Miss Mollie Bennett attended the United Food Show for the Texas Watermelon Association, Marie had college exams and could not attend. Mollie put on the banner and crown and made us all proud that she is a part of our Association. Thanks to Dan Hinkle for inviting us to serve and promote watermelons from his booth at United. A date for you to jot down on your calendars: Texas Watermelon Association Annual Convention. Jan. 15-18, 2009, at the Radisson in Padre Island, Texas.

Reminder, JULY is National Watermelon Month.....

Until next time.....
Wanda Letson
P. O. Box 903
Weatherford, TX 76086
melonred@sbcglobal.net

Marie and I traveled to the Boston area in June to do promotions for MarketBasket stores. They were one of the winners of our in store promotions. After arriving, we visited the MarketBasket distribution center and met with their Buyer-Merchandiser, Gary Arsenault and the Director of Produce Operations, Michael Maguire. They were interested to learn about Marie's job as Texas Watermelon Queen and very excited to have us in the area.

Over a whirlwind two days, we covered a lot of ground by doing promotions in four cities in Massachusetts: Danvers, Reading, Tewksbury, and North Andover.

The produce managers at each location made announcements over the intercom that the Texas Watermelon Queen was visiting and encourage people to stop by and have their picture made with her and allow her to teach you how to pick out a good watermelon- and that she did! To several customers, naturally, but to our surprise she also was able to teach the produce managers a thing or two! They commented on how excited they were to learn to look for the yellow belly on a watermelon.

Marie was very energetic and represented Texas first class in Boston. We will be traveling to North Dakota next month to visit MarketPlace stores in the Minot area. Looking forward to a successful (and sweaty!) summer!

Jennifer Carden



MARKET BASKET BUYER-MERCHANDISER: GARY ARSENAULT & DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS: MICHAEL MAGUIRE



ALL SMILES!



THE MANAGER WAS EXCITED TO HAVE THE TEXAS WATERMELON QUEEN IN HIS STORE!



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EDUCATING THE STAFF



GREAT HOSPITALITY HERE!



THE BUSIEST MARKET BASKET IN THE AREA! DANVERS, MASS



Mollie Bennett, Texas 1st Runner Up, says "Everyone Loves Watermelon"



Mollie starts the United Show right, with lots of strikes in the bowling tournament.



Thanks to Dan Hinkle for inviting us to promote watermelons in his booth.



International Paper sure had some pretty eye catching bins!



Gordon and Mark drop by for a quick visit.



Alan Heinzen with Heinzen Manufacturing diced up watermelons for us to serve, THANK YOU!



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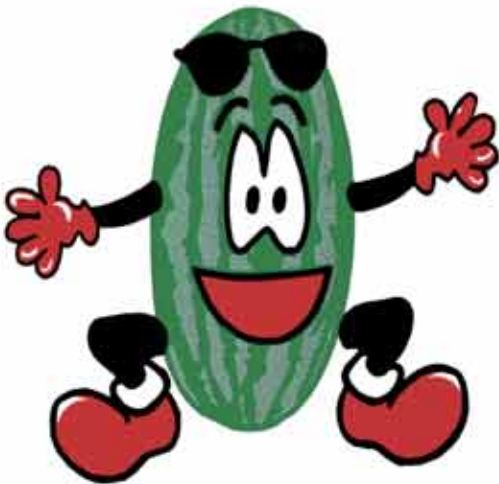
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The Safe Growing & Handling of Watermelon

The NWA is in the midst with numerous produce experts and a NWA sub-committee to develop a watermelon-specific food safety program that will cover all vital aspects of a quality food safety program on the farm and in packing facilities.

“This is very timely considering the food safety issues of the past two years coupled with the media attention”, said Bob Morrissey, NEW Executive Director. “We approached the FDA recently to find out if watermelon is included in the “Melon Category” along with cantaloupes, which recently had their third recall in the past 14 months. Unfortunately, we are guilty by association, even with no reported incidents. That category affiliation (melons) has become one of five high risk categories that the FDA will focus on in the near future,

which makes it more imperative that we continue to pursue this effort.”

A development team of experts from the USDA, Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association, United Fresh Produce Association, FDA, University of Florida, Cornell University and others have joined hands to provide support. In addition, the Florida Tomato Committee which recently took the lead in food safety initiatives is lending their guidance and support.

Traceability will be a cornerstone area of high interest within the program. We are working with the USDA’s Traceability Committee, which recently unveiled their findings and recommendations. Along with this group, we are in discussions with numerous companies that provide support in the area of track-and-trace from farm to fork, and back again within minutes or hours.

The process is on-going, and will hopefully be unveiled in a few months. “We are unique, as all crops are, and need to cover our bases before we introduce any program to the industry”, said Morrissey. “We need to have a program that is complete, focused, reasonable, adaptable, affordable and reliable to respond immediately to any potential issue that could occur. Protecting the industry is of paramount importance, as the spinach and cantaloupe issues have shown. We can help every farmer and packer to protect themselves, and the entire industry as well. That is our mission, our goal and our charge.”

“Joint Employment” Can Create Potential Liabilities For Growers

Watermelon producers are vulnerable to law-suits and potential liability under the federal law concept that they are “joint employers,” equally responsible for the wages and labor conditions of harvest and other field workers and migrant packing house workers who are actually on the payrolls of other people. These workers are entitled to many rights under federal statutes, including the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (“MSPA”) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”). Because producers can be held jointly liable for violations of these laws, along with the crew leaders, often called “contractors,” who recruit and furnish the workers, it is imperative that producers understand the requirements and obligations of these laws in order to minimize their risk of a lawsuit and liability.

An article that briefly discusses the concept of “joint employment” and reviews some requirements of MSPA and the FLSA under which violations have been asserted against watermelon producers and other growers is available on our website in the “Legislative Affairs” section under the heading “Joint Employment Issues for Growers under MSPA and the FLSA.”

NWA announces NEW Hertz Business Account Program!

The NWA’s Hertz discount (CDP) number is 1819286.

To receive all the benefits of our Business Account Program, all car rental reservations must include this CDP number.

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- 2. Extra Rental Day Certificate
- 3. Up to 20% Discount on business travel rates
- 4. Priority handling at rental facilities

Enjoy your business travel with Hertz; they’re glad to have you with us!

NWA Insurance Services

“New” Workers Compensation
“New” Life Insurance Programs (now on-line)
“New” Employment Practices Liability Insurance

Through much hard work and discussions with multiple insurance carriers, we are pleased to unveil three new insurance programs available to you, our NWA members. Both programs will be advantageous to your family, your business, and to the Association.

“New” Workers Compensation Program exclusively for NWA Members

The NWA has paired up with an excellent, very competitive Carrier to provide the following benefits to any member of the NWA, which will also benefit the Association.

Flexible Pay-as-you-go. Pay only actual workers compensation you used in each month.
On-line Business. 24hr. loss control, claims, safety programs, billing and risk control.
Disaster Recovery. Helps you build recovery plans after a disaster.
Loss Control. Workplace hazard assessment, safety training and return to work program
Dividends. Returns Premium to NWA members who maintain a good claims record.

“New” simple, on-line term life insurance is available to our members only. In the time that it takes to order at a fast food restaurant you can purchase a quality term life insurance policy; hassle free, requires no medical exams, and is available on-line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Issued while you are on-line.

No Medical Exam. Just a few simple questions; no meetings; no needles; no fasting.
Pick your Coverage. \$25,000 to \$150,000 over your choice of 10, 15 or 20 year policies. Excellent Tobacco rates and additional coverage available upon request
No Waiting. Purchase on-line today by going to “NWA Insurance Services” on NWA Web-site
Manage Your Policy Online. Easy on-line changes and other modifications with your secure online account. You can make payments on-line with Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover plus Bank Draft options

“New” EPLI-Employment Practices Liability Insurance is a relatively new coverage program that was designed specifically for the NWA. This coverage is “NOT” included in your General Liability policy.

Excellent Protection from Harassment, Discrimination, Fair labor, Equal Pay and EEOC Suits
High Limits of \$1,000,000 and Expanded World Wide Coverage with Duty to Defend.
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You can access all three programs at our NWA website under Insurance Services.

Please take a look, investigate the possibilities and see where you can save money, provide needed coverage for your family, your key employees and/or your business.



Charleston, SC -- technicians Laura Pence (left), Mary Ballzigler (center) and geneticist Amnon Levi evaluate watermelon selections derived from crosses between American heirloom cultivars and wild watermelon accessions

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