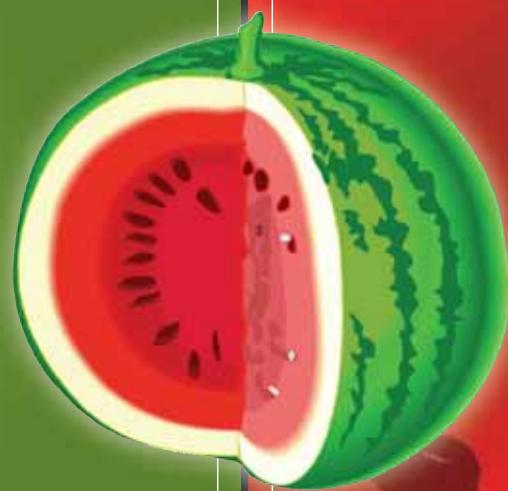


# the vineline

Fall 2011

Official Newsletter of the NATIONAL WATERMELON ASSOCIATION



## E-Verify Bill May Be Dead On Arrival

Conservative, tea-party and libertarian groups have joined liberals in fighting a bill in Congress that would crack down on illegal-immigrant workers. The legislation, they argue, would hurt businesses and employees while expanding government regulation. The bill would require all employers to use E-Verify, an electronic government database that checks whether new hires are eligible to work in the U.S.

Its prospects had looked good in the GOP-controlled House. It was previously regarded as less controversial than others drafted to tackle illegal immigration. It was seen as able to win bipartisan support in the Senate, too, especially with unemployment high. Now, the backlash threatens to sideline the bill, as Republicans seek to placate conservatives wary of legislation they consider intrusive and to court Hispanic voters who might deem it discriminatory.

Recently a coalition of regional and national groups that champion less government, privacy protection and small-business interests wrote a letter to members of Congress urging them to vote against the bill, while they also advertise and use social media to spread the word.

The letter said requiring the use of E-Verify, which is currently voluntary, would create a de facto national identification system, infringe on rights such as the freedom to seek work, cripple small businesses, turn employers into immigration agents and encourage identity theft. The letter calls the bill a “job killer” that will cost employers millions of dollars. The Tea Party said that their movement strongly opposed illegal immigration but that “it’s not private enterprise’s job to enforce immigration.”

“The bill doesn’t stem the tide of illegal immigration,” said Andrew Langer, president of the Institute for Liberty, an anti-regulation group. Instead, he said, “it adds to the burden on small business when the economy is in the doldrums—a baffling idea.” The efforts of the conservative and libertarian groups put them on the same side of the bill as liberal organizations that favor an amnesty for millions of illegal immigrants.

E-Verify works by comparing information entered from an employee’s I-9 employment form with Social Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security records. It is used by 4% of U.S. employers. Federal contractors must participate, and a few states also mandate its use.

Businesspeople are pushing for a business-friendly immigration policy. Over the summer, farmer groups descended on Capitol Hill to protest what they see as E-Verify’s negative impact on their work force and on U.S. food production.

In a sour economy, Rep Lamar Smith is pushing E-Verify as a tool to open up jobs for unemployed Americans. Critics say this bill is enough to jeopardize jobs for hundreds of thousands of legal workers who are mistakenly flagged. At the same time, it fails to catch illegal immigrants using stolen or borrowed documents, which E-Verify can’t detect.

## First Version of Field Operations and Harvesting Food Safety Standards Finalized

In a marathon two-day session, the Technical Working Group (TWG) of the Produce GAPs Harmonization Initiative completed the review and finalized the official first version of the pre-farm gate Harmonized Standards. The TWG reviewed comments from auditors, suppliers and customers that performed ten pilot audits since the Harmonized Standards were drafted last August.

“Throughout the process of developing the Harmonized Standard, one of the constants has been the working group’s consideration of feedback. The group has worked hard to consider every comment, and where those comments indicated a weakness or potential for misunderstanding in the standard, changes were made,” said Suresh DeCosta, Chair of the TWG and Manager of Quality Systems U.S. Supply Chain Management for McDonald’s.

The TWG also reviewed the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) guidelines for GAP food safety standards to ensure that all guidelines within the scope of the Harmonized Standard were addressed.

The Harmonized Standards were initiated as a result of the 2009 United Fresh Global Conference on Produce Food Safety Standards, where 300 stakeholders in the fresh produce supply chain met to discuss audit fatigue and whether differences between existing audit standards were improving food safety or just adding cost. Since that time, the TWG, comprised of over 150 volunteers representing growers, shippers, customers, audit organizations and trade associations, met ten times to harmonize thirteen GAP food safety standards into a single checklist appropriate for all fresh produce commodities and all size operations. A second checklist, for post-harvest operations, is still considered draft and will be finalized by the TWG soon.



The finalized Field Operations and Harvesting standards are available free of charge by logging on to [http://www.unitedfresh.org/newsviews/gap\\_harmonization](http://www.unitedfresh.org/newsviews/gap_harmonization). A “Calibration Committee”, comprised of auditor trainers and commodity experts, is being assembled to develop a training program for auditors on how to use the standards, and organizations like the Agricultural Marketing Service of USDA, NSF Agriculture (previously NSF Davis Fresh) and NCSI Americas are already making plans to offer audits using the Harmonized Standards.

“As of September 1, we will be using the harmonized standards exclusively in our standard GAP audit process,” said Donna Garren, president of NSF Agriculture. GLOBAL G.A.P and SQF, which offer food safety certifications based on the GFSI guidelines, are also working to adapt their audit checklists to utilize the harmonized standards.

## Department of Labor Proposes Child Labor Regulations

The Department of Labor published proposed child labor regulations on Sept. 2 that seek to prohibit farm workers under 16 from operating almost all power driven equipment and set other new rules prohibiting young workers from contact with pesticides, timber operations and storage bins. The regulations would only apply to hired farm workers and not change the child labor parental exemption, which allows children freedom to work on farms owned or operated by their parents. The proposed regulations will have a 60-day comment period.

“There are not as many changes as a lot of people feared,” said Frank Gasperini, executive vice president of the National Council of Agricultural Employers, Gasperini said the new regulations are expected to have a minor effect on larger producers, mainly related to record keeping. “I think the impact is likely to be more important to farm worker families and rural families more than it is to farmers,” he said. “Teenagers work on farms but they are not the bulk of farm workers.”

In a pre-release version of the rule, the Department of Labor said that the proposal would implement specific recommendations made by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and increase parity between the agricultural and non-agricultural child labor provisions. Gasperini said the regulations are likely to have the most effect on very small farms.

“I think the big concern to me is whether this might hinder or future by making it so difficult for teens to work on farms that we further reduce people going into agriculture.” Gasperini said Department of Labor officials told members of Congress that the regulations will:

- Strengthen current child labor regulations prohibiting agricultural work with animals and in pesticide handling, timber operations, manure pits and storage bins.
- Prohibit youth in both agricultural and non agricultural employment from using electronic, including communication, devices while operating power-driven equipment.
- Prohibit farm workers under 16 from operating almost all power-driven equipment. A similar prohibition has existed as part of the non agricultural child labor provisions for more than 50 years.

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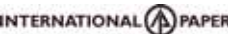
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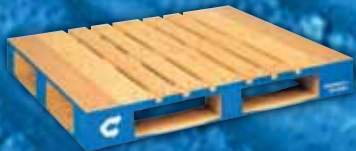
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# A Leader Retires; Already Missed

Some of us learned most recently that Wanda Letson from our Texas Chapter, has retired after 30 years of service to the Texas Watermelon Association and support of so many chapters and the NWA.



It goes without saying that ‘nothing is forever’, and I guess that is also the case when it comes to people that we rely on, that genuinely like, and care for.

On a personal note, Wanda became a friend almost immediately; almost the sister that I never had. The spirit of family was very evident. It has only been a little more than a month since she retired, and I miss her already.

I truly am glad that she was recognized at the national convention in Dallas a couple of years ago with the NWA Outstanding Service Award. With her family in attendance, it was a wonderful moment to honor a person that has been committed and dedicated for many years.

Wanda, Thank You for being our Friend, our Comrade, and a big part of our Watermelon family. We know that you will not be far away, and count me calling you to pester you. After all, that’s what brothers and sisters do.

# COOL oversight riddled with problems, audit says

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s oversight of country of origin labeling (COOL) is riddled with inconsistencies between state officials conducting the audits, problems with how retailers are selected for review and delays in communicating results of the audits.

Those are just a few of the shortfalls detailed in a report from the USDA’s Office of Inspector General concerning the agency’s role in enforcing country of origin labeling laws.

The report says the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service has made some strides in implementing enforcement of the law since it went into effect in March 2009. According to the report, the AMS has cooperative agreements with all 50 states to conduct reviews of PACA-licensed retailers to ensure they adhere to COOL regulations, including recordkeeping.

Items covered by COOL include fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, beef, pork, fish, and peanuts. The report said AMS needs to make many improvements in its oversight of COOL.

“Specifically, AMS needs to strengthen its process for selecting retailers for review, strengthen the review process itself, and improve the timeliness with which AMS evaluates retailer documentation and issues noncompliance letters,” Gil Harden, assistant inspector general for audit, said in the report.

“AMS needs to vigorously enforce COOL requirements, provide better oversight of the state agencies tasked with conducting the retailer reviews, and improve the way it communicates with and provides program guidance to retailers,” Harden said in the release.

# FDA sets new fee schedule

New fees related to the Food Safety Modernization Act have been announced by the Food and Drug Administration. An Aug. 1 notice in the Federal Register said the fee rates will be effective Oct. 1 and will remain effect through Sept. 30, 2012.

The fees apply to domestic and foreign facility re-inspections, failure to comply with a recall order and importer re-inspections, according to the notice. The agency said it will accept comments on the fees through Oct. 31 and consider those comments when considering fees for fiscal year 2013.

The FDA said the fees would be billed on at a rate of \$224 per hour for direct work of FDA staff, excluding foreign inspection travel costs. The agency plans to charge \$335 per hour for direct staff work requiring travel to another country.

According the Federal Register, the food safety act requires that fees account for 100% of the cost of the activities and the revenues generated can only pay for those activities.

The invoice for FDA fees will be sent to the responsible party after the agency completes the work. Payment must be made within 30 days of the invoice date, or the fee shall be considered as a claim of the U.S. government subject to provisions of U.S. code, which allows for reduction of tax refunds and wage garnishment.

FDA recognizes, however, that for some small businesses the cost of re-inspection or recall oversight could impose severe economic hardship, and there may be unique circumstances in which some relief would be appropriate.

“Thus, during fiscal year 2012, FDA will consider waiving in limited cases some or all of an invoiced fee based on a severe economic hardship, the nature and extent of the underlying violation, and other relevant factors.”

According to the notice, Congress directed the FDA to consider the burden of fee amounts on small businesses, including reduced fees. However, according to the Federal Register, the FDA wants to gather more information before establishing those guidelines. There will be no separate small business fee schedule for fiscal year 2012.



# ATTENTION FARMERS, PACKERS, SHIPPERS, SUPPLIERS:

Would you like to help encourage one of the largest suppliers in the produce industry to become a sponsor in NASCAR with one of our own? All it will take is a few minutes to fill out a brief survey and fax it in.

Ross Chastain is an 18-year old successful stock car driver from Florida; Son of a watermelon farmer, Ralph, and nephew of Rich (Melon 1).

With watermelon running through his veins and at the ripe old age of 18, Ross has won about everything that can be won in the late model stock car circuit in Florida. He has been given the great opportunity to drive in a few NASCAR truck races during the late summer and this fall, and is doing well for a rookie driver in the series.

After his first truck race in Indiana in late July, Ross joined watermelon queens to meet race fans before the Nationwide race, handing out watermelon samples and talking about watermelon and racing. It was a great day after he raced so well against the series regulars.

There is an effort beginning that will hopefully show John Deere that as an industry we are behind this young driver, and would like Deere and Company



to sponsor his team full time in the NASCAR truck series in 2012.

You can help by taking 5 minutes of your time to fill out a survey and faxing it in o Rich.

The surveys will help to show Deere and Company that many in our industry are behind Ross. Just look around at how many hats, shirts, collectibles, toys, wall hangings, and so much more that many of us have from John Deere. Then look at the tractors, farm equipment and much more that watermelon farmers have with the famous green color and Deere logo. Our industry is invested into Deere and Company.

With your survey help, the Chastains will be able to encourage Deere to sponsor the career of a young driver that will always have watermelon in his heart (and hopefully on his race truck too). Ross is a fine young man that we can all be proud of.

If you would like to complete a survey, please log on to [www.rosschastain.com](http://www.rosschastain.com) to get the survey. Thank you for your consideration.

# Leonardo Academy Charts Sustainability Goals

The Leonardo Academy has outlined goals for the next phase of drafting sustainability metrics that the group hopes to have in hand by April next year.

The first remote quarterly meeting of the committee was Aug. 25, and the group passed a motion to hold three conference call meetings in addition to the annual face-to-face meeting to increase the progress of developing sustainability metrics, according to a press release from the group.

Committee chairman Brian McElroy, organic supply manager for Driscoll’s Strawberry Associates, said in the release that 30 participants took part in the conference call. Other interested individuals are welcome to join subcommittees to contribute to the work, he said. “Now is the time for all those interested in sustainable agriculture to get involved,” he said in the release. “We continue to work toward finishing a draft standard for public review by April 2012.”

Wide variations seem to exist between COOL reviewers in different states, and sometimes within the same state. “For example, only 18% of the reviews completed in Kentucky during 2009 identified one or more non-compliances, while 96% of those conducted in Missouri during the same period identified non-compliances,” Harden said in the report.

Mike Jarvis, spokesman for the AMS, said “we continue to improve oversight, as well as the enforcement.” Jarvis also said, “we’ve got some protocols to enforce COOL recordkeeping provisions of the supply chain, we have trace-back audits to establish the chain of custody to ensure accuracy of the COOL declarations.”

According to the report, AMS also failed to notify retailers of noncompliance in a timely manner. The OIG found that in 1,719 of the 5,528 reviews conducted during 2010 with identified non-compliances, AMS did not formally notify retailers that they were out of compliance for at least 60 days following the completion of onsite reviews.





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# National Report

What a fantastic year it has been for our National Queen Whitney! She has enjoyed a busy promotion-filled schedule her entire year! We appreciate the excellent job she is doing! Whitney and I thank each of you sponsors for making it possible!

## **Rusty Kinard & Mark Williams Sponsor Freedom Aloft Weekend**

Awesome watermelon promotions in the Greenville, SC set up by SC Coordinator, Ms Ann Bryant, and sponsored by Rusty Kinard, and Mark Williams, South Carolina. The weekend events included, Bi-Lo in store promotion, a heart warming visit to the Shiners' Hospital for Children, live TV on WYFF, NBC Ch 4 news. The Queens attending; South Carolina, North Carolina, Mar-Del, Florida and National and they were joined by Chef Joe Poon. We attended Saturday and Sunday of the Freedom Aloft Weekend, a fun family event with over 300,000 people attending, with hundreds of hot air balloons. It was a sight to behold to see them all ascend on the festival. Thanks Ann for all you did and special thanks to Rusty Kinard and Mark Williams for sponsoring us!

## **Billy Smith Watermelons, Rantz Smith Farms, Josh Moore of First Choice Melons, Gordon Etheridge and Mike Caruthers, Bob Gibson of Gibson Produce, Murray Tillis, Borders East, Jeff Garrett of Clifton Seed Co., Adam Lytch of L&M Companies, Sponsor Chiefland Festival**

We were pleased to be sponsored to the Chiefland Watermelon Festival by these sponsors. Our host sponsor Mr. Billy Smith, wife Corliss, and son Rantz. They did a fine job taking care of us. They fed us all well and provided us with fantastic lodging at the beautiful Gilchrist Club. It is fabulous! We were joined by the Florida, Alabama, and Newberry Queens! What a great time we all had together. Jessica Southard 2010 National Queen also joined us! We enjoyed the parade and the activities of the festival and pageant! Thanks Billy, Corliss & Rantz for your gracious hospitality! Thanks to all our generous sponsors for making the Festival possible!

## **PBS Filming of the America's Heartland**

Whitney was so pleased to be included in the filming of America's Heartland a PBS presentation filmed at the farm and watermelon warehouse of Ricky and Charlotte Jackson of Jackson Farming in Cordele, Georgia. The segment is due to air in October. Thanks Again Ricky and Charlotte!

## **Leger & Sons Sponsors WALB TV Noon Show**

Special thanks to Greg Leger of Leger & Son for sponsoring Whitney for the Noon Day show on WALB TV channel 10 of Albany for their annual Watermelon event filmed in Cordele, Georgia. She joined Ruthie Garner, host and several local queens and event coordinators for the Cordele annual Watermelon Festival.

## **Coosaw Farms & South Carolina Watermelon Association Sponsor**

Thanks to Coosaw Farms, the Bradley O'Neal family and the South Carolina Watermelon Association for sponsoring us to the Hampton Festival, and to the Charleston River Dogs game... it was great! We enjoyed a visit with the O'Neal's and a tour of their state of the art watermelon facility. Soon off to meet Ann and Holly in Charleston for the River Dogs game. What a great promotion, serving all the fans following the game! Awesome! Back to Hampton, for the girls to ride in the parade, where each of the girls was provided a beautiful float, Hampton is such a hospitable little town! Both girls enjoyed the festival! We were treated to lunch by Rusty Kinard, and took a quick visit to Kinard Farms. Thanks Rusty for all your support. Special thanks to Coosaw Farms and the South Carolina Watermelon Association for sponsoring us to Charleston and Hampton!

## **North County Fruit Sales, Sponsor Macy's Event in Salt Lake City**

Thanks to Jim and Valerie Zaferis and family for sponsoring us to Utah to a record breaking event at Macy's Grand Opening in Lehi. We were pleased to be there to promote and witness the world's largest watermelon display! Three truck loads of watermelons were placed out front of the Macy's store for their grand opening celebration. We toured the new store the day before and met several of the Macy's management staff. Wow what a media filled event this was! Several live segments from Fox 13, Salt Lake City's number one station and their TV personality Big Budah interviewed Whitney, challenged her to a watermelon eating contest and carried it live on the air in several live segments during the day! We had local newspaper coverage, as well as local TV. Val even provided us with a watermelon mascot that added to the festivities. This World's Largest Watermelon display really brought in the coverage. All the Macy's executives were on hand. Valarie and her daughter Alyssa Neal, treated us to a trip to Park City, Utah, the Great Salt Lake and Temple Square in downtown Salt Lake City! Special thanks to North County Fruit Sales, Jim and Valerie Zaferis for sponsoring us and to Valerie and Alyssa for your gracious hospitality! It was awesome!

## **NWPB Sponsors Tokyo, Japan, SEIYU Stores and July 4th Party at the US Ambassador's Residence**

We left Salt Lake City for Tokyo, Japan! Whitney was so excited to experience the culture and sights of Japan! Upon arrival, dinner with NWPB's Gordon Hunt and our gracious host from Yamano & Associates. It was busy days in Tokyo, the following morning we were off to the SEIYU store for in store promotions. They were excited to have our Queen Whitney in their store. Such gracious people! The following day LIVIN stores, with the same level of excitement! On July 4th Whitney was a guest at the U.S. Embassy's U.S. Ambassador Residence in Tokyo. Ambassador John Roos and his wife Susan had an exciting event featuring American products. We were pleased to be included, and for watermelon to be spotlighted. Thanks to Dan Van Groningen for providing the watermelons for the event. Whitney got to explore a bit of Japan with a city tour and Mt. Fuji tour, even a ride on the bullet train! Thanks to NWPB for sponsoring and to our stellar host NWPB's Gordon Hunt!

Until Next Time

**Eleanor T. Bullock, NWA Promotion Coordinator**

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# National Pictures



on the air at WYFF NBC, channel 4 Greenville, SC



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Our Girls in Greenville, SC at the Freedom Aloft Weekend



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Whitney chat with Angela, Louise and Bradley at Coosaw Farms



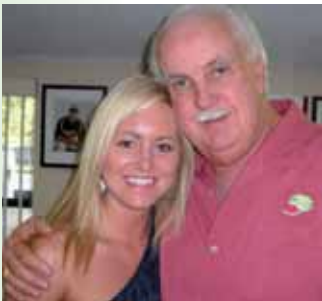
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Whitney gives sponsor Billy Smith a hug in Chiefland!



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Holly & Whitney with sponsor Rusty Kinard



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on the air live with Big Budah, Fox 13 Salt Lake City, Utah



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Thank You Jim & Valerie Zaferis, and Alyssa, North County Fruit Sales



Whitney in Chiefland



On the air for PBS's America's Heartland



Ribbon Cutting at the Macy's Grand Opening, Lehi, Utah



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# Alabama Report

Another summer past, another summer packed to the fullest, with promoting watermelon that is! Queen Anne-Marie has had a busy summer season, traveling all over throughout our great state of Alabama, as well as Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, and Washington D.C. With our busy travel season, Queen Anne-Marie and I have traveled thousands of miles, passed out hundreds of slices, and seen countless smiles after that first bite.

Anne-Marie’s summer months continued with a visit to the Nation’s Capitol for the Safeway National BBQ Battle. The BBQ Battle brought thousands of food lovers to Pennsylvania Avenue, where countless food vendors and competitors were setup to feed the hungry crowds. There may have been hundreds of other booths passing out food, none was quite as popular as our Watermelon Queens and their fresh, juicy, watermelon slices – You could almost see the mouths watering from way back in line!

A HUGE Thank You goes out to the Mar-Del Watermelon Association and Coastal Growers for inviting us to help them on Capitol Hill. To Will & Candice Hales, Travis Hastings, Dawn and Zach Collins, and Queen Jordan Calloway – Thank you for the great hospitality! To Jeff, Bobbie Jo, & Jenna Garrett, and Past AWA Queen Melinda Gooch – Thank you for also being a part of such a great weekend! We worked hard but had a great time and I’m sure we all can’t wait to do it again! Queen Anne-Marie moved on next to celebrate the 4th of July at the Grand Bay Watermelon Festival in Grand Bay, Alabama. In Grand Bay, the Watermelon Queens start the festival by taking the first bite of the watermelon for the season. We celebrated the Nation’s Birthday with watermelon grower and AL State Representative, David Sessions, among other Alabamians who love everything about the longest running watermelon festival in the state of Alabama.

The Mississippi Watermelon Festival was another stop on our summer tour. Queen Anne-Marie enjoyed every bit of the festival – including the Seed Spit Competition, Watermelon Eating Contest, and her Radio Interview with WFFF. It was a long, hot day in Mize, Mississippi, but Queen Anne-Marie represented the AWA well as we spread the good word about the Alabama Watermelon Association.

She was also lucky enough to bean honored guest with the Montgomery Biscuits’ baseball team and threw the First Pitch. Anne-Marie practiced for weeks with her high school baseball coach and that practice sure paid off! Not only did Anne-Marie pitch that ball in perfect form, but she surprised the catcher by sending it straight to his glove. She made the watermelon family and her big support team at the game very proud!

I’d like to take another moment to say thank you to all of our members, supporters, and the entire watermelon family for helping Queen Anne-Marie and myself work hard for this industry throughout this summer. A great big thank you goes out to the AWA Sponsors, specifically to Billy & Corliss Smith; Cheryl Hicks, Jeff & Bobbie Jo Garrett; Jay Jones; Jim Mastropietro; Arnold & Chandler Mack; Josh Moore; Dave Genecco; Dean Tucker; Tom Daughtry; and Rosie Elliott. Wish us luck as we continue in our travels to the Washington Public Policy Conference and PMA. See ya’ll there!

Ali Rauch  
AWA Promotions Coordinator  
ali.rauch@gmail.com  
217-317-0553



Queen Anne-Marie Ready to Feed Thousands at the Safeway National BBQ Battle in DC!



Newberry Queen Jenna Garrett, MWA Queen Jordan, and AWA Queen Anne-Marie serving Slice after Slice.



Queens Jenna, Jordan, and Anne-Marie with John Treadway of Safeway Foods – Thanks for your help John!

She may have been working hard, but sometimes you have to sneak a slice – and Queen Anne-Marie did more than once!



Serving some fellow BAMA Fans on Pennsylvania Avenue at the Safeway BBQ Battle – Roll Tide!



Queen Anne-Marie stops to talk watermelon with some Safeway BBQ Battle Supporters – the Chefs of Rancher’s Reserve.



Thank You to Bobbie Jo and Jeff Garrett for Joining in and Helping out at the Safeway BBQ Battle!



Queen Anne-Marie at the Grand Bay, AL Watermelon Festival



Queen Anne-Marie with the Grand Bay Watermelon Queen and Junior Miss Queens at the 4th of July Festival.



Queen Anne-Marie with Watermelon Grower at AL State Representative David Sessions at the Grand Bay Festival.



She sure loves her yellow meat watermelon – and that big knife cut hundreds of slices that hot July 4th.



Mississippi Watermelon Festival welcomes Queen Anne-Marie to Mize, Mississippi.



Mississippi Watermelon Queen and Jr. Miss with AWA Queen Anne-Marie before they spit their seeds!



AWA Queen Got to Throw the First Pitch at the Montgomery Biscuits Game – Great job!



Thanks to her awesome coach – Queen Anne-Marie successfully threw the first pitch AND made it over the plate!



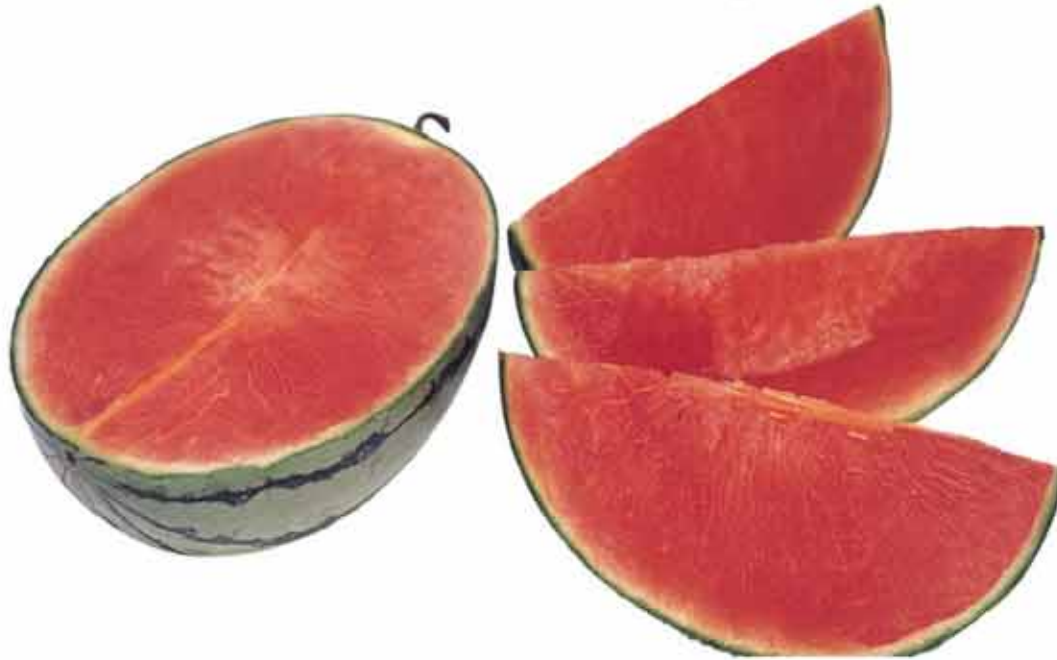
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# Florida Report

## Watermelon Greetings from the Sunshine State of Florida

Mrs. Debra and I have spent our summer months touring farms, promoting watermelons in grocery stores, and lobbying for the watermelon industry. Through these activities I have learned valuable information about watermelon production from the seed to the final product. Thank you to all who gave their valuable time to accommodate me on my tours and promotions, thus enhancing my understanding of the watermelon industry. I am blessed to represent a state producing safe, high quality, and affordable watermelons for consumers. Thank you again for your continued support.

Katelyn B. Kelley  
2011 Florida Watermelon Queen

Queen Katelyn and I have been busy this past summer promoting Florida Watermelons. We would like to thank everyone who sponsored us on these wonderful promotions. If you would like Katelyn to appear for any watermelons promotions for the fall please email me at [debra@flfwa.com](mailto:debra@flfwa.com)

Mark your calendar for the 44th Annual Florida Watermelon Convention March 23-25, 2012 at the Renaissance International Plaza in Tampa, Florida. President Billy Smith and his wife Corliss, Patty and I have started working really hard for an exciting watermelon event. Check out the details on the Florida Watermelon Association website at [www.flfwa.com](http://www.flfwa.com). Hope to see you there!

As you plan your Holidays events please be sure and remember to buy that Florida Watermelon this fall. Happy Holidays from all of us at the Florida Watermelon Association!

Until Next Time!

Debra Harrison

Florida Watermelon Promotions Coordinator  
Email: [debra@flfwa.com](mailto:debra@flfwa.com)  
Home Phone: 863-494-1163  
Cell Phone: 863-633-8306



Freedom Loft Weekend in South Carolina



Queen Katelyn spending the 'Fourth of July' at the Watermelon 5K Run in Orlando, Florida



Watermelons next "American Idols"



Queen Katelyn and J-Slice at the World Kids Festival in West Palm Beach, Florida



Visiting in the field with Syngenta Seed Company



Carr and Jane Hussey - Sweet Mama Produce



Josh Moore - First Choice Melons Growers



John Toth - Indian Hills Produce



President Billy Smith in Trenton, Florida



Mike Caruthers & his dog Carson -Etheridge Produce



Queen Katelyn in Canada at "Longo's Grocery Store"



Darin Hanshaw - Hanshaw Farms



Employees at Longo's have fun compete in the Watermelon Eating Contest



Doug & Kay Dickerson - Nature Choice



In Sarasota at the High Heel Hike with Ms. Jean Marino



Welcome Center in Jennings, Florida



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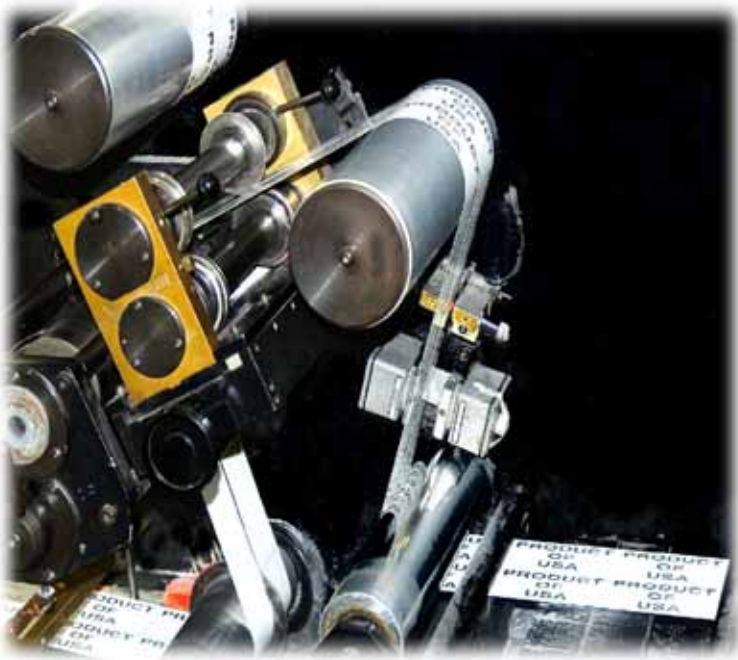
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# Georgia Report

Hello Watermelon Friends.

The 2011 tour for the Georgia Watermelon Association has been very productive. We had several promotions new to our Queen tour this year, as well as annual promotions we look forward to each year. As you are all aware, it takes a team to make the tour flow as a success, and our GWA family has again pulled together as a team and made this year as successful as it has been.

Starting with the month of June, our Queen Jenna Saxon enjoyed an educational farm tour in Tifton, Lenox and Arabi to learn the industry from the field, to the packing house, to the store. Jenna has an extensive agriculture back ground, but even she learned several facts she didn't know about agriculture during the farm tour. From the Farm tour we promoted watermelon in Harvey's and Piggly Wiggly. June is a very hot month in south Georgia, and the watermelon slices were much appreciated in the summer heat.

Again this year, our tour was double booked during the Watermelon Festival that was held in Cordele, GA. Our second runner up Jennifer Eadie from Macon helped us with the festival while Queen Jenna promoted watermelons in Toronto Canada with NWPB. Jennifer Eadie worked very hard during the festival and represented GWA very well. While in Cordele for the festival, Jennifer participated in the Watermelon parade that strolled through the downtown streets of Cordele. Next, we made a few farm visits followed by the Big Melon contest and the adult and children seed spit. We had more participants this year for the seed spit than ever before. Thank you to Rusty and Pam Autry, Mitch and Janice Mitchell, David and Gayle Hobbs and Steven Vandermeid for helping during the festivities. After the seed spit in watermelon park Miss Jennifer Eadie attended the Georgia Farm Bureau Luncheon.

While the Watermelon Festival took place in Cordele, our Queen Jenna joined the National Watermelon Promotion Board and the Florida Watermelon Queen Katelyn Kelley in Toronto Canada to promote Georgia and Florida watermelons. It is not everyday a Canadian has the opportunity to meet a watermelon queen. Our goal was to promote watermelon consumption and Longo's Annual Kid's Watermelon Eating Contests. Our queens interviewed in front of thousands of Canadian viewers on FCC TV where they discussed watermelon selection, and storage techniques. We had in-studio radio pitches as well as telephone interviews. The main focus on the radio was the nutritional benefits of watermelon and how to select a perfect melon. During the Toronto promotion Brad Bownsey of NWPB and Mimmo Franzone of Longo's joined Jenna and Katelyn at three Longo's in-store promotions. In-store promotions in Canada are always a delight to work. Canadians are generally very health conscious and very excited to meet Watermelon Queens. A special thanks to Juliemar Rosado of NWPB, Brad Brownsey of NWPB, Mimmo Franzone of Longo's and Andrea Karpala of Faye Clack Communications for a fantastic promotion. A lot of hard work paid off during this event.

During July we began the month at the Braves stadium attending the Publix Tailgate. Members and Board members of GWA joined together to serve thousands of Braves fans cold pre-sliced chunks of watermelon before the game. We held a seed spitting contest throughout the day and shared watermelon tips with fans. GWA received a ½ inning of right field wall LED during the bottom of the 3rd inning July 2nd. The runners that ran during the games throughout the months of June and July promoted "Georgia Watermelon...You just can't hide the Goodness". Tremendous exposure for GWA included Publix Tailgate and TV Banner Ad during 26 games. Combined game attendance for both game days, we promoted watermelon to approximately 60,751 fans. This promotion was the perfect way to spread our brand awareness.

On the second day of our Braves promotion Ms. Jenna was announced as the Honorary Team Captain for the Atlanta Braves on July 3rd. She walked onto the field with the Braves Manager, Freddie Goon-zalez, greeted the umpires and exchanged the line up cards. Jenna shared watermelon facts with the Braves chef, and enjoyed fresh watermelon with Braves Sales Manager, Mark Lehman. Jenna was able to greet over 1,000 children that ran the bases following the July 3rd Braves game. Jenna appeared as the special post-game field guest.

During this weekend we also promoted watermelons at Ingles, Piggly Wiggly and Krogers. The July 4th crowd is always exciting to share watermelon fun facts with, and watching the watermelons exit the store is always a thrill of ours.

In July Queen Jenna joined NWPB to promote Georgia Watermelons throughout Newfoundland, Cambridge and Quebec. Jenna promoted Georgia watermelons in 6 Coleman's Stores, attended a cookout with Coleman's. Jenna interviewed on camera and by radio in each store. The gratitude of the Canadians is hard to describe. Each consumer is eager to learn about the watermelon queen and the area the watermelon is grown from. The children in the area are thrilled to have eating contest and seed spits. Though to us the weather is very cold, they were thrilled to have sunny days, which made for perfect watermelon promotion weather. GWA is extremely thankful to have the NWPB and the staff of NWPB. The hard work and dedication NWPB has for our watermelon industry is making our promotions bigger and better every day. Thank you NWPB for your creativity and hard work. Gordon Hunt of NWPB, and Judy Bennett of Coleman's.

Queen Jenna enjoyed the Indianapolis Race in Indiana with all the state queens where pre-sliced watermelon was handed out to thousands of race fans. This is a promotion we enjoy annually, and this year we had an added treat with Rich Chastain's nephew racing on the Indy tracts. Yes, we have a lot of talent on our watermelon family. From Indianapolis, Jenna headed back to Georgia to attend the annual Georgia Bulldog Fall Practice Watermelon Day. This was an exciting annual event for Jenna since she is a student at the University of Georgia. We handed out watermelon slices to the team and held a seed spit contest on the practice field. Watermelon is definitely in the Bulldog air.

In August we attended a Sam's B-B-Q cook off in Marietta, GA. There were hundreds of B-B-Q attendees and Sam's had an amazing attendance. We appreciate NWPB for setting this Sam's event up for Jenna to promote watermelon. On this same day, Jenna headed from Sam's into downtown Atlanta back to the Braves stadium for GWA's Retail Display Contest Winners Appreciation Dinner. We appreciate each retail store that participated in our contest.

A special note from the Georgia Watermelon Association~ We would like to congratulate our President Jamey Adams and his wife Rachel on their healthy baby boy JACK. Welcome to our watermelon family Baby Jack!

We look forward sharing many more promotions with you in our next issue, and look forward to seeing many of you in D.C. and PMA in Atlanta.

Sincerely,

Julie Akins  
Promotion Coordinator  
770-842-3309  
akinsjulie1@windstream.net



Two of GWA's dedicated "Has-Beens" Jarret Watson Barnes and Wendi Youngblood Wolf with Queen Jenna at the Braves Kid's Base Run in Atlanta, GA.



Jenna with Sam's BBQ Cookoff Champion in Marietta, GA



Nationals and Georgia working hard in Lake Lure, N.C. at The Dirty Dancing Festival.



Queen Jenna as Honorary Team Captain for the Atlanta Braves.



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## PMA 2011

This year’s PMA Fresh Summit in Atlanta, Georgia was a great success and the 10th Annual Watermelon Industry Reception could not have been possible without the generosity of our sponsors:

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we’d like to thank you all again		Abbott & Cobb
so much for your generosity and		
support of this event. See you in Anaheim next year!		

## AHA Certified!



Have you heard? Fresh watermelon is certified by the American Heart Association to be low in saturated fat and cholesterol. Meaning, we are now allowed to use the Heart Check mark on promotional items, communications and in-store elements, such as bins and price stickers. When consumers see the heart-check mark on food packaging, they instantly know the connection. Healthy food means healthy eating for the whole family that leads to an overall healthy lifestyle. Use of the heart-check mark will take the place of the former watermelon Heart Healthy stickers and programs that were in place to visually tell the story of watermelon’s health benefits as they relate to heart health. The American Heart Association is an authority on cardiovascular disease-related statements and positions on cardiovascular diseases, including coronary heart disease (heart attack), stroke, atherosclerosis, arteriosclerosis, hypertension (high blood pressure) and high blood cholesterol. Watermelon, healthy and delicious, every day! (picture below)

## Wonderful Watermelon

State Senator and NWPB board member Brent Jackson passed along a great article, ‘Wonderful Watermelon’, in the Summer 2011 Heart to Heart quarterly issue. Heart to Heart is published quarterly for all of the patients and physicians associated with the WakeMed Heart Center - an 870-bed private, not-for-profit health care system based in Raleigh, North Carolina. The story uses the NWPB lycopene leader logo and also quotes registered dietician Elizabeth Somer, correctly noting that she is a spokesperson for the NWPB.

This article is especially significant considering the prestige bestowed on this medical group. In a 2002 AARP independent study, WakeMed was ranked #9 in the US in the top 10 cardiovascular surgery hospitals and #20 in the 50 top hospitals in the US. WakeMed Raleigh Campus is a certified Primary Stroke Center, Neuro-Intensive Care Unit, Pediatric Inpatient Unit, Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Level IV Intensive Care Unit, and Level I Trauma Center.



## North Carolina Department of Commerce and Tourism officials



Board member and State Senator Brent Jackson also visited with Gordon Hunt during a luncheon meeting in Raleigh, NC in early July. Board member and executive committee member Tony Moore was also in attendance with his son Joshua. Taking the picture is Mark Arney. The meeting was with NC Department of Commerce and Tourism officials. This branch has taken the lead in organizing Watermelon Day in the United Kingdom and wants to include North Carolina Watermelons in the promotion. The NWPB staff attended in an advisory role with hopes that this program could eventually be expanded into a Market Access Program (MAP) similar to the NWPB’s presence in Japan. The US Government encourages commodity programs that utilize MAP funds expand into other markets. (picture below – Senator Brent Jackson and NWPB’s Gordon Hunt)

## SNA Nashville

NWPB Director of PR & Social Media Stephanie Simek and Marketing and Communications Associate Juliemar Rosado once again returned to the School Nutrition Association Convention held on July 11th – 13th in Nashville, TN. Armed with a new booth, and even more resources for school nutrition directors, employees, and teachers alike, the NWPB booth was once again hailed as “the booth to visit” for all of the most valuable tools and materials available for the cafeteria and the classroom. This show was again successful in educating attendees on the versatility, value, and health benefits of watermelon as well as reminding them of the safety, handling, and cutting tips. Our materials flew off the tables!



## Mobile Website is Live!

Our mobile web is now live! If you use the web browser on your smartphone and enter “watermelon.org,” it will now be “smartphone friendly” for the shopper visiting the local grocery store (insert picture). Director of PR & Social Media Stephanie Simek has done a great job in developing both the mobile website and our new and improved full site. Please don’t forget we also have our YouTube channel (WhatAboutWatermelon) you can subscribe to that has great cutting tips, recipes, and other fun and useful videos for everyone.



## J. Slice Delights!



J. Slice made his first store appearance during the Kroger Speedfest in late July. He then hung loose with the kids at the Our Kids World Family Fun Festival in South Florida. So far, he has been a hit with the children of all ages! We’ll keep you posted on more J. Slice sightings as they happen. Stay Tuned!



## American Dietetic Association Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo

In late September, NWPB staffers Stephanie Simek and Juliemar Rosado returned once again to the annual ADA show held in San Diego, California this year. This expo is highly attended by Nutritionists and Registered Dietitians (RDs) all over the country and more than 8,500 key decision makers and buyers for food and nutrition also attend. The response at the watermelon booth last year

was fantastic and this year it was even better. We were able to tell the watermelon story to thousands attending the expo that stopped by our booth. We also had the opportunity to participate in an event where Supermarket RDs were invited exclusively. We were able to provide materials and useful information to them and discuss the health, value, and versatility of watermelon.



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# New immigration rules welcomed, but follow through is expected

President Obama halted the deportations of thousands of illegal immigrants, which should resonate with Hispanic voters as long as he backs it up.

Advocates have been disappointed in Obama for not fighting harder for the immigration reforms he promised on the 2008 campaign trail. So the President eased the disappointment by announcing new rules allowing non-violent illegal immigrants to remain in the country indefinitely.

Talk is one thing, and action another. The reception from many Hispanic voters will hinge on that being the case. “There has been a lot of skepticism in the Latino community about the President’s willingness to fight on the immigration issue,” Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-Ill.) said. “So my sense is people will wait to see how the new Homeland Security procedures are implemented and how hard the President fights back against the inevitable backlash.” Clarissa Martinez, director of immigration at the National Council of La Raza, echoed that sentiment. “As an initial move, it’s very significant. It gives him a stronger platform to say he’s doing what he said he’d do,” she said Friday. “But implementation will be crucial.”

The new rules will eliminate blanket exile for those in the process of being deported. Instead, DHS officials will perform case-by-case reviews, prioritizing violent criminals and other public menaces, while closing the books on students and others not considered a threat.

Many Democrats have hailed the change as a common-sense prioritization of limited resources. But Republicans are hammering it as an end-around Congress, which defeated a similar proposal (the DREAM Act) in December. Republican leaders said, “in reality, this decision to vastly expand the exercise of ‘prosecutorial discretion’ in enforcing our federal immigration laws means that the administration will now be, in a huge number of cases, simply ignoring those laws.”

The advocates have reason to be wary. Through the first two-and-a-half years of his White House tenure, Obama initiated a tough deportation policy that removed 390,000 illegal immigrants in 2010, compared to President Bush’s 2008 deportations by 23,000.

Steven Camarota, research director at the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), said that the new policy ignores existing law. Additionally, the change could backfire on Obama politically by undermining the public’s already shaky confidence in the government’s ability to enforce the nation’s immigration laws.

At the end of the day, it may not matter much because most agree the economy is going to drive the election.

# Concerns Expressed about Federal E-verify bill

A growing chorus of conservatives is hammering a proposal requiring businesses to verify the legal status of the workers they hire.

The conservative critics, including Republican lawmakers, Tea Party groups and border-state governors, are airing a long string of complaints. They have fears the bill will erode civil liberties; worries it will harm the agriculture industry; concerns that it simply won’t work. Rep. Dan Lungren (CA) said the proposal would “devastate” agriculture in his state.

“The bill before us does not recognize the demonstrated need for temporary foreign workers in agriculture. Now, that might not be politically correct to say, but it happens

# Letter sent by Produce to address e-verify concerns

The NWA, in conjunction with over 100 other produce trade associations, boards and major brand companies, signed on to the letter below to express concerns about a federal e-verify bill without an accompanying guest worker provision for agriculture.

It has been said that e-verify without a guest worker program will put farms out of business almost immediately. The impact would actually be far greater to include almost every business within the supply chain. Much more to come as the bill was recently introduced.

The Honorable Lamar Smith  
Chairman  
House Committee on the Judiciary  
2138 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We commend your leadership on the House Judiciary Committee, in particular the outreach you have extended to us to solicit ideas and proposals for an agricultural worker program. We have been providing our recommendations and provisions to you and your staff and have underscored the critical importance of incorporating these ideas into an agricultural worker program that is included in any E-Verify legislation.

We are deeply concerned that the Committee appears on the verge of taking up H.R. 2164, the Legal Workforce Act, without including an agricultural worker program. As you know from discussions with our leadership, it is imperative that any mandatory E-Verify legislation incorporate provisions for a workable, efficient worker program that encompasses all of U.S. agriculture. If the Committee imposes a new mandate on agricultural employers without providing them access to a legal supply of labor, the result will be devastating for U.S. agricultural producers. We have no doubt that farmers and ranchers from around the country, from every facet of agriculture, would vehemently oppose such a step.

The reasons are clear. Mandatory E-Verify legislation for farmers threatens \$5-\$9 billion in annual U.S. agricultural production. This is wealth – in fruits, vegetables, dairy, livestock and other commodities – that will leave U.S. soil, be grown outside our country, then shipped to the U.S. by our competitors and sold to American consumers. But that is not all. When this U.S. production leaves, it puts at risk the 2-3 American jobs upstream and downstream of farm production that are supported by each farm worker. Thus, legislation mandating E-Verify for agriculture without provisions implementing an agricultural worker program will result in fewer U.S. jobs, a smaller U.S. agricultural sector, weaker rural communities, erosion of our nation’s food security, and a less vibrant economy.

This does not have to happen. The undersigned organizations, representing the breadth of U.S. agriculture, stand ready to work with you in crafting a program that will prevent the loss of American jobs and the export of billions of dollars of U.S. economic production to foreign competitors. It is critically important to all of us that H.R. 2164 include an agricultural worker program capable of meeting the diverse needs of U.S. agricultural producers.

to be a fact,” Rep. Lungren said. “I know we are only one state, but we are the largest agricultural state in the Union.

“If we do not recognize the demonstrated need for foreign workers, and I am talking about temporary foreign workers in our agricultural fields, we are kidding ourselves,” he added. “Anybody who suggests that we can do it with American workers, with all due respect, does not understand agriculture in America today.” Tea Party groups are also putting pressure against the

# The Immigration Reform Movement Begins, Again. Does it have a chance this time?

House Judiciary Chairman Lamar presented H.R.2164, his mandatory E-Verify legislation, in September. Enactment of legislation mandating use of the E-Verify program will deprive America’s farms and ranches of a majority of their current skilled labor force, as well as nearly the entire applicant pool willing to fill farm jobs, unless Congress provides a workable agricultural labor program at the same time.

The state of Georgia offers a glimpse into the future for the nation if E-Verify is imposed without a farm worker program. There, passage of a state law including E-Verify led to farm labor shortages as high as 30 to 50%! Georgia growers and producers may have lost up to \$300 million due to the “man-made labor disaster.” The economic misery resulting from lost production and lost payroll is also being felt in the community-based businesses that serve farms and farm workers.

Farms mean jobs! Economists estimate that each farm worker in labor-intensive farming supports at least two to three jobs in the upstream and downstream economy. These are mostly year-round, good jobs filled by Americans.

H.R.2164 does not provide a solution for agriculture. It simply delays the inevitable catastrophe for some, for up to 3 years. In the U.S. Senate, S. 1196, introduced by Sen. Grassley, is even worse. It would mandate use of E-Verify by all employers one year after enactment and eliminate the agricultural commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) exemption for agricultural products under current federal procurement regulations. Elimination of COTS will make it nearly impossible to source U.S.-produced meat, milk, fruit, and vegetables for the school lunch program and U.S. military.

Mandatory E-Verify without an agricultural worker program will mean exporting U.S. farm production and U.S. jobs, and importing much more of our food. A true solution to the problem will provide work authorization for the experienced farm labor force, visas of adequate length to meet the diverse needs of agriculture and a workable program for the future. With such reforms, agriculture will be in a position to fully support phased-in implementation of E-Verify.

The H-2A program, in many people’s opinions, is utterly failing to provide a timely and accessible solution. Even with significant reform, the structure of H-2A is too unresponsive and inflexible to meet current labor needs on America’s farms, let alone future needs. H.R.2847 would reform H-2A but does not go far enough to ensure a legal workforce in the face of mandatory E-Verify. Agriculture needs a new program that can meet the labor patterns and needs across the diversity of farming in the 50 states.

Rep. Dan Lungren (CA) introduced H.R.2895, the Legal Agricultural Workforce Act (LAWA). It would create a more flexible and market-based agricultural worker program, and a better structure for a workable program. Both the LAWA and H.R.2847 (Chairman Smith’s ag worker bill) have some good features; there is room for a compromise that borrows from both.

We look forward to working with you on this vital issue to U.S. agriculture.

Sincerely,  
cc: Members, House Judiciary Committee  
Hon. John Boehner  
House Leadership

proposal. A number of those organizations including the Republican Liberty Caucus, the Liberty Coalition and the Kitchen Table Patriots wrote to every member of Congress warning that the bill “poses a threat to both the Constitution and every law-abiding citizen of this country.”

The groups said the bill jeopardizes small businesses with expensive new paperwork burdens, violates individuals’ rights to work and establishes “a de facto national I.D. system even for citizens.”

*E-VERIFY continued on page 35*





Many thanks to the growers, marketers, and other industry professionals who made the  
**“2nd International Watermelon Conference: Americas Summit”**  
a tremendous success. Thanks to your participation, the event provided a rare  
opportunity to both learn the latest developments and connect  
with others in our industry. **Thank you.**



See event photos and conference highlights at  
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# Georgia Senator introduces H-2A Reform Bill

Senator Saxby Chambliss - has introduced a significant reform bill to the H2-A program, called the Harvest Act (Helping Agriculture Receive Verifiable Employees Securely and Temporarily). The legislation is intended to make the H-2A program – which is the only existing legal program to obtain temporary agricultural workers – more viable and user-friendly.

HIGHLIGHTS

1. The current H-2A program is administered by the U.S.

Department of Labor, which has no agricultural expertise and a seeming contempt for farmers and ranchers across the country.

o This bill moves the administration of the H-2A program to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

2.The current H-2A program is limited to “seasonal” operations so it excludes any farm that operates year-round, like dairies, or even diversified farms that plant and harvest different crops throughout the year. Processors and packers of agricultural products are also excluded.

o HARVEST requires the worker to be temporary rather than the job so that year-round agricultural operations, including dairies, can access the program.

o also expands the H-2A program to packers, processors, and ginner.

o Workers can come and work in any agricultural job for 10 months per year and must be out of the country for 2 months per year. For year-round operations, this will require some logistical work to ensure that workers can be

H-2A continued on page 35

Make plans to attend the

98th National Convention

Of the National Watermelon Association

Ritz Carlton Resort • Amelia Island, Florida • February 22-25, 2012

- 1.5 miles of dune-lined beachfront
- 18 holes of PGA championship golf
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- Four cocktail lounges
- The Ritz-Carlton Spa
- Full-service beauty salon
- Fitness center
- Indoor and outdoor heated pools with whirlpool
- On-site tennis facilities
- Ritz Kids program, playground
- Retail gift shops

## National Council of Agriculture Employees Information

“It [H-2A] is the only method of acquiring a legal workforce. If [the government] wants fruit and vegetables grown in this country, it must stop attempting to destroy the program that legislators put in effect.”



### Why Domestic Agriculture Needs New, Workable Farm Labor Alternatives Now

KEY MESSAGES FROM NCAE’S 2010 SURVEY OF H-2A EMPLOYERS

The H-2A program is an example of governmental regulatory abuse of small business causing economic harm to employers (farmers) seeking a legal workforce; threatening the jobs of their local year round U.S. workers and rural and urban economies.

1. THE H-2A PROGRAM DOES NOT SERVE GROWER NEEDS

Employers of different size depend on the H-2A program, including smaller employers:

16% with gross sales less than \$250,000	[USDA definition of a small farm]
28% with gross sales between \$250,000 and \$499,999	
20% with gross sales between \$500,000 and \$999,999	
36% with gross sales \$1 million or greater	

47% of employers were “not at all satisfied” or only “slightly satisfied” with the H-2A program. Only 14% of employers were “very satisfied” or “completely satisfied” with the program.

Growers who do not plan to use the program in 2012 – many (42%) will not participate because it is “too administratively burdensome or costly.” (The most commonly reason reported for not using the program in 2012)

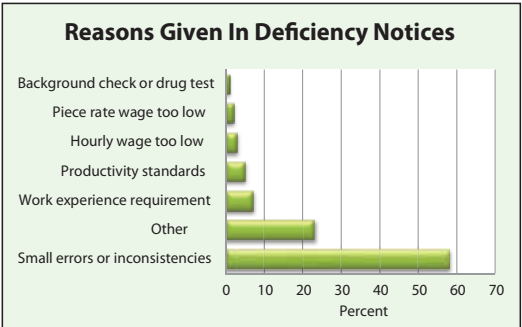
Many (54%) growers have complained to their Senator or Representative about H-2A problems.



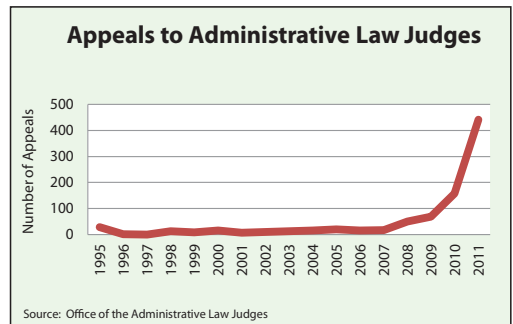
4. DEFICIENCY NOTICES AND H-2A REGULATIONS USURP A GROWER’S ABILITY TO MANAGE ITS OWN BUSINESS

Deficiency notices limit employer management discretion.

Time consuming DOL inquiries and application deficiency notices cause serious delays in obtaining workers, but most deficiencies (58%) are given for small errors and inconsistencies in the application.



5. A HISTORIC NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OF DENIALS CONTINUES TO IMPOSE DELAYS AND ADD LITIGATION COSTS ON GROWERS.



The number of appeals has reached historic levels and is still growing.

When growers appealed, many (37%) hired a lawyer to help with those appeals.

Growers who did not appeal, stated that “it was too costly to appeal” (15%) or “there was insufficient time to appeal” (37%). Only 13% did not appeal because they were satisfied with the OFLC decision.



2. GROWERS SEEKING ACCESS TO A LEGAL WORKFORCE SUFFER ECONOMIC HARM DUE TO H-2A PROGRAM RULES AND ADMINISTRATION.

\$320,000,000 Economic Loss  
Employers reported \$150,408,000 of economic loss due to the inability to get the workers they needed in 2010.

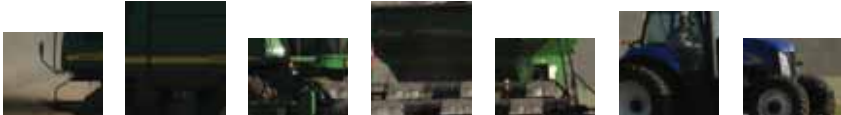
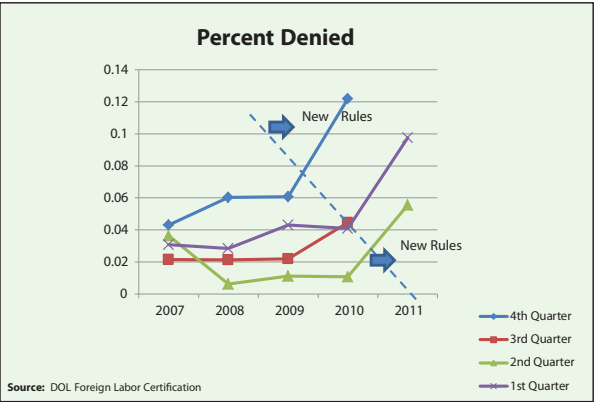
Employers reported an additional \$169,763,000 of loss because the workers they did get were not available at the time they were needed.

3. GROWERS ARE NEVER SURE IF THEY WILL GET THE WORKERS THEY NEED IN TIME.

Business planning requires predictability, the H-2A program is increasingly seen by growers as unpredictable and unreliable.

Denials of H-2A applications have increased dramatically.  
(Source: DOL Foreign Labor Certification Data Center)

Excessive deficiency notices and requests for evidence (RFE) cause serious delays. 72 % of growers reported that workers arrived after the “date of need”, on average 22 days late. Even a day or two can mean the difference between annual profit and loss!

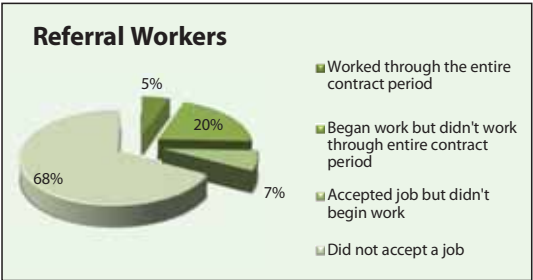


6. THE H-2A PROGRAM IMPOSES LARGE REGULATORY BURDENS AND COSTS ON GROWERS WITHOUT HELPING FIND U.S. WORKERS.

State work force agencies referred 36,000 domestic workers to H-2A employers. Only 5% worked through the contract period.

Referrals are not screened for work authorization, thus adding to growers’ regulatory compliance burden.

Of the 20% percent of domestic workers who began work but did not work through the entire contract period, 59% quit, 15% were terminated for cause, 7% failed to produce acceptable work authorization documents and 16% left for misc. Only 3% left because there was no more work to be performed.



7. DOL APPEARS TO TARGET GROWERS WHO USE THE LEGAL H-2A PROGRAM WITH WAGE & HOUR INVESTIGATIONS, LEAVING H-2A GROWERS AT COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE COMPARED WITH THOSE WHO DON’T.

National Council of Agricultural Employers (NCAE) is the ONLY national association focusing exclusively on Agricultural Labor issues from the Agricultural Employer’s viewpoint. NCAE represents Agricultural Employer interests before Congress and Regulatory/ Administrative bodies such as the Departments of Labor, Homeland Security, Agriculture, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency. NCAE Members are growers, associations, and others whose business interests revolve around labor intensive agriculture.

Only a few (8%) employers report that they were audited before they participated in the H-2A program, but many (35%) report being audited since entering the program. H-2A employers, who have been audited, were audited twice on average.

“It is distressing that a federal program designed to assure American farmers sufficient and timely labor to plant, tend, and harvest seasonal and perishable crops; many of which feed the American people each day, has become so complicated, confusing, and unpredictable that farmers and even professional H-2A agents are routinely forced to hire lawyers to help them get through the process successfully. This is not what Congress intended when the program was instituted.”

–Frank Gasperini, Executive Vice President, National Council of Agricultural Employers.



HARRIS MORAN SEED COMPANY



Crunchy Red

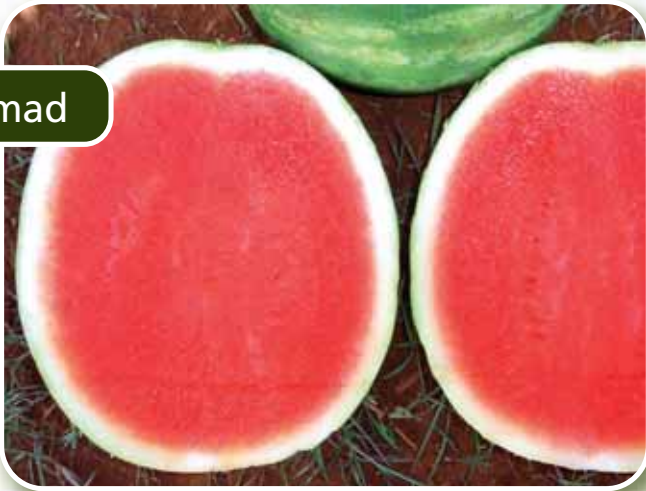


Here's a consistent, widely adapted performer with full season maturity, appealing deep red flesh, and high sugars. Flesh is extra firm and crispy and is well suited for the fresh-cut market. External color is medium-green with medium-dark green stripes. Average fruit weight is 16 to 20 lbs with good shipping ability.



Troubadour - HMX 4915

New to Harris Moran's seedless watermelon line-up, Troubadour offers high sugars with excellent interior appearance, deep red flesh color, and excellent overall eating quality. A strong vine habit and mid-early relative maturity provides high yield potential. Blocky fruit shape coupled with 14 to 17 lb average fruit weight allows for higher bin count. Rind color is medium-green with dark green stripes.



Nomad

Nomad features high Brix with red flesh color, medium green stripes, and good firmness. This watermelon delivers large size in the early season. It has vigorous vine, providing good fruit protection. It is well adapted to both cool and warm growing seasons. Fruit weighs between 16 and 21 pounds.



Accomplice - HMX 8920

Our new super pollenizer with all the attributes of Side Kick including high numbers of male flowers and high seedless yield potential with a more durable vine. Accomplice has intermediate resistance to Fusarium wilt races 0 and 1. - Patent 7,314,979

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# Illiana Report

Greetings from your 2011 Illiana Watermelon Queen! July and August proved to be two very busy months of my reign. July began with a visit to Melon Acres on the Go in Terre Haute, followed by the 4th of July Parade in Vincennes. Next up was the Kroger Produce Seminar. For two days, I had the honor of representing the Illiana Watermelon Association at a seminar attended by almost 150 Kroger produce managers. There, I was able to inform them on the importance of our local watermelon industry within their stores and their lives. I also lead a seed spit competition and got the managers pumped up for the NWPB annual watermelon display contest. Attending the conference was a privilege and lead to a record number of participants taking part in our display contest.

In late July, I spent three weeks touring various grocery stores around the Indianapolis Area, including many grand openings and re-grand openings. I was also able to attend the Kroger 200, where the Illiana Watermelon Association passed out our healthy and delicious watermelon to race goers. I would like to immensely thank the Florida Watermelon Queen Katelyn, Georgia Watermelon Queen Jenna, as well as the National Watermelon Queen Whitney for participating in the race events. Your help was much needed and greatly appreciated. Thanks also to Chef Joe Poon, Juliemar at NWPB, and Bob (and Betsy) at NWA for also lending us a hand! Lastly a special thanks to Ross Chastain for working nonstop at our booth and contributing lots of race car driver excitement. July also provided me with multiple growers' tours. On these tours I learned even more about the watermelon industry and the hard work that goes into producing all of those delicious, locally grown, watermelons. I want to thank everyone who shared their knowledge and showed me around their farms and packing facilities.

August brought about even more watermelon promotions. We began with the Knox County Watermelon Festival, where I was able to represent the association in the home of many of our association members. We hosted the seed spit and watermelon eating contests, as well as, helped judge the festival queen pageants. We then ventured back to Indianapolis where we were welcomed into Marsh and Meijer grocery stores. We also attended the Brownstown Melonfest. Finally, we rounded out our summer by providing in-store promotions to the winners of our display contest and preparing for Washington DC and PMA.

Thank You everyone who sponsored me to any of these promotions. I have learned so much and had so much fun everywhere.

Love from Illiana,  
Sabra Boyd



Sabra at Melon Acres on the Go



A busload of FreyCo watermelons.

Thanks to the Melon Patch (Kent Williams) for sponsoring Sabra in the July 4th Parade and the Tim Dunn of JRT Trucking for pulling the float.



The first of Sabra's 4 TV appearances during Watermelon Month.



So this is what a 50 lb. watermelon looks like! Thanks Kenworthy's!



Sabra tried her hand at driving a forklift.



Queen Sabra with Kroger managers, Bob Moeder and Gregg Proctor at the Rochester Kroger Grand Opening.



Kelly Tyner showed Sabra around Platinum Farms.

Thanks to Wabash Valley Growers and Mouzin Brothers for their sponsorships.



Sabra at the Knox County Library Food for Thought event. Thanks Nowaskies.



Checking out the melons in Keller's fields.



Sabra with Michael Andretti at the Race for Riley Go-Cart Race.

A Bin full of melons at Wabash Valley Growers.



Sabra and Chef Joe on Fox 59 TV in Indianapolis



Sabra and Dennis Mouzin checking the cutter's work. Yummy!



Thanks Rich Chastain for providing pit passes for all the queens and coordinators.



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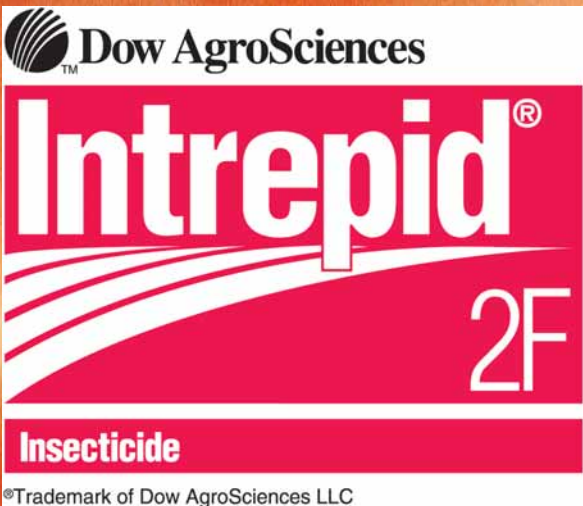
Totally unique class of chemistry controlling powdery mildew with up to 21-day interval.  
Group 3



Highly systemic powdery mildew control.  
Group 13



The standard for gummy stem blight, downy mildew and leaf spot control.  
Group M3



Long-lasting control of leafroller, armyworms, loopers, rind worms and melonworms. Won't disrupt most populations of beneficials.  
Group 18



Outstanding control of worms, thrips and leafminers. Won't flare mites or secondary pests.  
Group 5

Rotating between different modes of action provides a foundation for an Integrated Pest Management approach and helps to prevent pest resistance in melons.  
For more information about Dow AgroSciences products, please visit our website at [www.dowagro.com](http://www.dowagro.com) or call 1-800-258-3033.

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# Mar-Del Report

Where do we start? Jordan has been very busy promoting our product. Since the last Vineline we have been to 20 cities and 4 states. Jordan has done 2 TV commercials, 1 Radio commercial and has been interviewed 13 times by radio, TV and papers. As always, she has handled them with poise and knowledge. Jordan's 1st stop was the UUMC Summer Camp where she made watermelon tambourines and taught the attendees why watermelon is so important to their health and fun to eat. Then Coastal Growers sponsored Jordan to attend the BBQ Battle in Washington, DC. There was a lot of work to be done but it was with great people and great fun! What a great promotion! Thank you Coastal Growers. One of the biggest highlights for Jordan and I was producing a TV Commercial with both the Maryland and Delaware Secretary of Agriculture. It was a fun day and at the end we had an awesome commercial. It has definitely been a hit with the public. Then she had the chance to be in some Acme Market stores across Delaware. There Jordan sold a lot of watermelons and served slices. Then we were off to the MD. Governor's Mansion for a Buy Local Cookout with Governor Martin O'Malley. Great fun and Great Food from local farmers. Then it was time to start the DE. State Fair. Jordan did 2 food demonstrations, rode in the parade, did a live interview with WMDT TV and talked with attendees about watermelon. On Governors Day Jordan walked around with the De. Governor Jack Markell and at one point she was able to educate him on how to pick a ripe watermelon and the health benefits. Jordan and I would like to thank Jay Rider, Josh Rowe, Caitlin Dolby, Amanda and Pat Goslee and George & Marlene Collins for helping us at the fair. We really appreciate the time you took out of your day to help us. Wright's Watermelon Festival was after the Fair; Jordan was the MC for the Little Miss Watermelon Princess contest and helped with the watermelon activities during the day. What a great event – thanks Charles and Michelle Wright! Miss Whitney Conner arrived after this for a week of promoting in DE. and MD. Our first stop was the Rehoboth Boardwalk, serving slices with the De. Dept. of Ag, De. Sec. of Ag, Ed Kee and Lt. Governor Matt Denn. Then Giant was celebrating their 75 anniversary. Jordan and Whitney helped them serve samples, judged a watermelon carving and eating contest. The next day we went to the Laurel Auction Market after a live interview with WBOC TV. We had one of the best auctions ever and we are very thankful to all the buyers for their generous donations and support!!! We truly couldn't do what we do without your wonderful support! Then Jordan & Whitney were off to Baltimore, MD where we started with a live interview with WJZ and then served slices to 1500 plus people w/ the Md. Dept. of Ag and Urbanite Magazine at the Summer Concert Series in Belvedere Square. The next day their stop was at Whole Foods in Annapolis. They served slices, judged a watermelon recipe and carving contest with the Md. Dept. of Ag and Md. Secretary of Ag Buddy Hance. Richmond bound for the next stop at the Carytown Festival with Kroeger. Thank you to our sponsors it was a great event. Thank you Jordan for doing such a fabulous and professional job! We have a full fall planned. Even though our season has come to an end doesn't mean Jordan is slowing down. For more pictures please visit us at [mardelwatermelon.org](http://mardelwatermelon.org) or be our friend on Facebook under Mar-Del Watermelon Association.

Watermelon Wishes,  
Dawn Collins  
Promotions Coordinator



These Queens were working hard at the BBQ Battle in Washington, DC. Sponsored by Coastal Growers – Thank you!



While at the BBQ Battle Jordan met up with a fellow Marylander Mr. Jim Perdue



Taking a break from shooting the TV commercial with Delaware Secretary of Ag Ed Kee and MD. Secretary of Ag Buddy Hance.



Acme Market in Hochessin, De went all out to advertise and welcome Jordan to their store.



Jordan thanking Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley & Md. Secretary of Ag Buddy Hance for the invitation to the Buy Local Cookout.



During Governors Day at the Delaware State Fair Jordan spent the day with Delaware Governor Jack Markell and educate him on watermelons.



Jordan working the booth at the Delaware State Fair with Mar-Del Vice President Jay Rider and Multicor Representative Josh Rowe.



The local royalty riding in the parade at the Delaware State Fair.



Jordan and the newly crowned Little Miss Watermelon Princess Jocyln and 2010 Little Miss Watermelon Princess Stephanie at the Wright's Watermelon Festival



Thank you Charles and Michelle Wright for a wonderful Watermelon Festival



Serving slices on the Rehoboth Beach Boardwalk with National Queen Whitney Conner, Delaware Secretary of Ag Ed Kee & Delaware Lt. Governor Matt Denn.



We were visited by a cute little Nate ( grandson of John and Alisa Lapide ) while at the Giant 75th Anniversary celebration



Jordan and Whitney getting ready to ride thru the auction at the Laurel Auction Market



Thank you to all the buyers at the auction held at the Laurel Auction Market. We appreciate your support!



Serving samples at Belvedere Square Summer Concert Series in Baltimore, Md.



Maryland Sec. of Ag Buddy Hance, Deputy Sec. of Ag Mary Ellen Setting, Whitney Conner and Jordan at Whole Foods in Annapolis, MD



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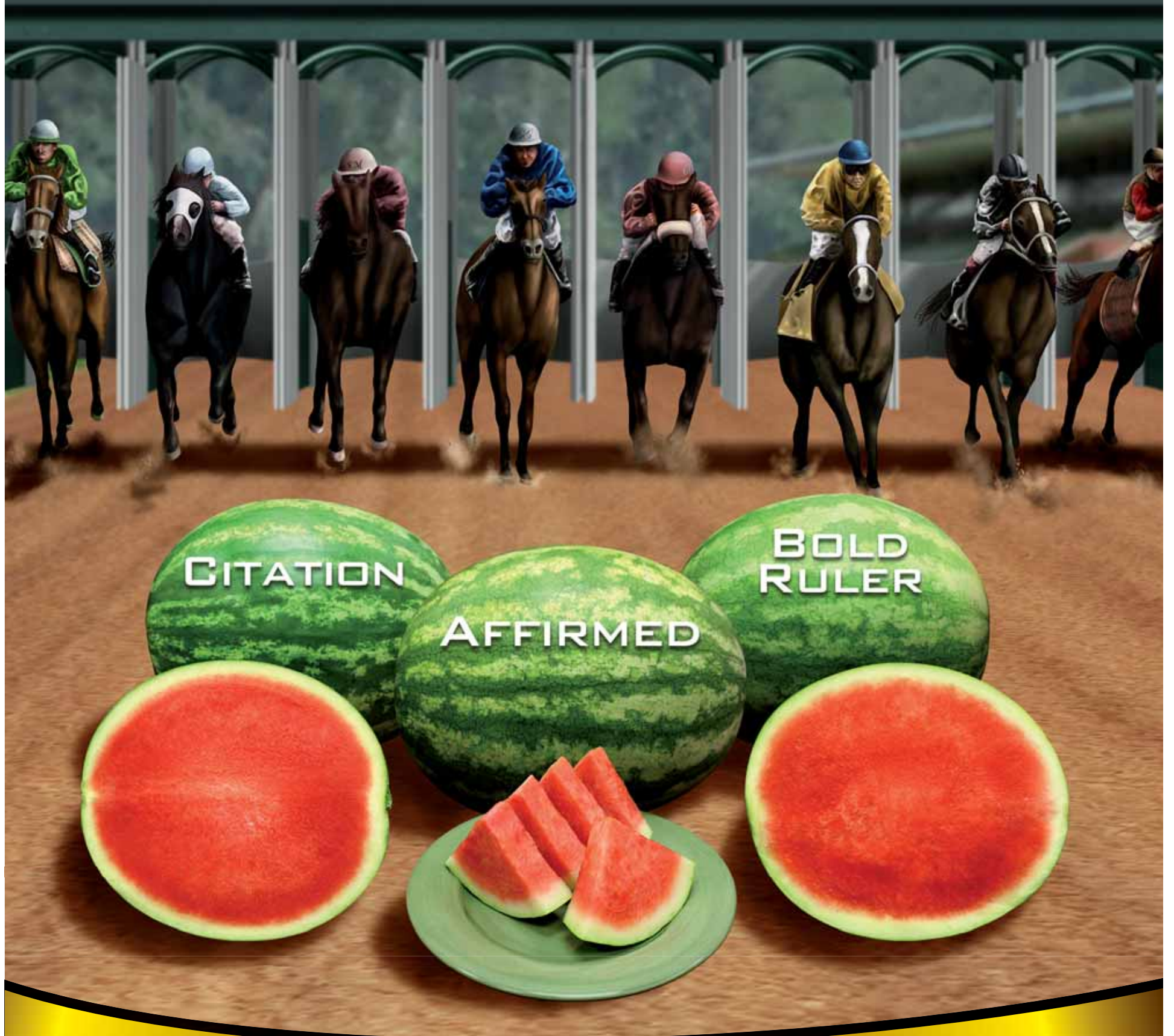
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Sakata highly recommends using our Ace non-harvestable pollenizer or Sweet Harmony our All Sweet diploid as a pollenizer because their early and prolonged flowering matches the early full flowering of our triploids.

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# North Carolina Report

Greetings from our North Carolina Watermelon Association!!!

It hardly seems possible that the summer is behind us, and what a busy summer it has been! Queen Alycia and I have traveled north, south, east, and west in this great state of ours. We visited each of the state’s farmers’ markets as they celebrated Watermelon Day. We met so many wonderful people in Asheville, Lumberton, Charlotte, Raleigh, and Colfax. Each of these markets had unique personalities and traditions, and we so enjoyed getting to know the caring people who make sure North Carolinians can enjoy the Goodness that Grows in North Carolina!! Everyone enjoyed the cool refreshing slices of watermelon on those HOT summer days. Queen Alycia was appreciated at all locations.

In addition to visiting the various farmers’ markets across the state, Queen Alycia and I were able to serve watermelon to our state’s senators and house members at the invitation of Senator Brent Jackson. Everyone enjoyed some of the sweetest watermelons ever raised, and Queen Alycia and Senator Bill Rabon entertained with an impromptu seed spitting contest. Queen Alycia and I came away with a greater appreciation of our state representatives.

Watermelon Festivals are a summer tradition Queen Alycia and I both enjoy tremendously!!! There is fun, fellowship, good food, talent, fireworks, great bands, and sometimes BINGO (Queen Alycia LOVES BINGO) !!!!! On July 22 we were in Fair Bluff for the N.C. Watermelon Festival in the southeastern part of our state. Queen Alycia was treated like the Queen she is, being driven in a beautiful horse drawn carriage in the parade, provided by our own NCWA president, Mr. Joe Jones. She also enjoyed the beautiful Lumber River from the River Walk! Mrs. Becky Enzor of Drowning Creek Farms made sure Queen Alycia had royal accommodations, and Mrs. Francis Bunch came to help chaperone our queen while I took care of my duties with the festival in Fair Bluff. The only dark spot to the festival was that South Carolina took the Quality Award again this year! The S.C. Watermelon Queen, Holly Whatley, and her coordinator, Mrs. Ann Bryant, were on hand to help congratulate the S.C. grower. I hope our N.C. growers across this state will make N.C. proud next year!! We can take that title!!!! Then, the very next week-end, we were in Murfreesboro for the N. C. Watermelon Festival in the northern part of our state!!!! AND we were able to be with Mrs. Francis Bunch again, as she and Mr. Percy graciously hosted us in their home! Bands each night, fireworks on Saturday night, rides to ride, great food to eat!!! AND BINGO!!! Again Queen Alycia was given the royal treatment! She rode in the parade on a beautiful float that is only for the N.C. Watermelon Queen! Our very own Senator Brent Jackson was the parade marshal, and President Joe Jones was a dignitary in the parade. Mr. and Mrs. Don Hiller were on hand to help with the slicing and serving of those sweet juicy watermelons. Mr. Nick Augostini, NCDA&CS Marketing Specialist, was a big help at both festivals with the seed spitting contests which are a tradition at Murfreesboro and Fair Bluff, as well as watermelon eating contests.

Our Queen Alycia is a student at N.C. State University studying to become an agriculture teacher, so when we got the chance to visit with Senator Brent Jackson and Mr. Michael Bunch at their respective watermelon farms ,and to see how it is done on a large scale, we were excited and grateful. We found well organized, knowledgeable, technology savvy agri-businessmen with lots of family support! Alycia was able to learn so much about her favorite commodity thanks to the time spent at these fine facilities. I personally had never seen watermelon fields that large ever!!

We finished up our summer promotions at Lake Lure at the Dirty Dancing Festival in the N.C. mountains. What a great way to end our summer! We were there with the watermelon queens from South Carolina, Georgia, and Maryland-Delaware, as well as our national queen, to work with Bob Morrissey, the NWA Executive Director. We served a lot of melon, held seed spitting contests, watermelon carrying races, and kept watermelon on the minds of many. The Queens learned some pretty good dance moves! Queen Alycia and I were proud to share one of the many beautiful places in N.C. with our national watermelon family!

That brings us up to date for now. Hope you all enjoy a beautiful, crisp fall!

Sue Jenkins  
N.C. Queen Promotions Coordinator  
jenkinsbb@yahoo.com

Summer 2011 was surely an eventful and HOT time for the North Carolina Watermelon Association and the Queen Tour. I have been blessed with opportunities that have enabled me to grow as an agriculturalist, watermelon enthusiast and young adult. I now have seen my wonderful state through a totally different perspective; a watermelon queen’s perspective. Farmers Market visits, NC Watermelon Festivals, parades, farm tours and media appearances were among a few of the summer adventures that awaited my coordinator Mrs. Sue Jenkins and I. Thank you to Mrs. Becky Enzor for being a gracious host during the NC Fairbluff Watermelon Festival and for being an inspiration to this future agriculture teacher. Also, thank you so much to Mr. and Mrs. Percy Bunch for having me during the NC Murfreesboro Watermelon Festival and for making feel like a true queen. With Mrs. Bunch, Mrs. Wade and Mrs. Jenkins by my side, I was always in the best of company. The experiences I have gained will always be cherished but more importantly I will never forget the amazing people that I have met throughout my journey as the NC Watermelon Queen.

Best wishes,  
Alycia McLamb  
2011 NC Watermelon Queen



Dr. Richard Reich of the N.C. Dept. of Agriculture at the Farmer's Market in Colfax



Queen Alycia with Senator Brent Jackson and a few of the senators who enjoyed those tasty melons.



N.C. Watermelon Queen Alycia with the N.C. Watermelon Festival Queen at the festival held in Fair Bluff.



Queen Alycia with the Watermelon Princess contestants in Murfreesboro.



Queen Alycia being interviewed by Tammy Jones on Mix 96.5 in Asheville!



Raleigh Farmer's Market showing off their watermelon fans on a hot summer day. Slices of watermelon went well with the fans!!!



Queen Alycia learning the ropes at Jackson Farming!!



Senator Bill Rabon and Queen Alycia having a seed spitting contest.



Queen Alycia on her own special float!



Watermelon Carry winner at Dirty Dancing Festival with our National Queen Whitney Connor!



Queen Alycia taking a tour with Mr. Michael Bunch of his facility.



Watermelon eating contest in Murfreesboro being supervised by two of the best, Queen Alycia and Francis Bunch!!



Queen Alycia with Frank Suddreth and Arlene at the Charlotte Farmer's Market



Watermelon eating contest winners in Asheville on Watermelon Day!!



Queen Alycia with Mr. Percy Bunch during the North Carolina Watermelon Festival in Murfreesboro



Watermelon Queens and Coordinators learning some facts about Lake Lure.



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## SUGAR HEART




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Weight (Lbs)	Shape	Count	Rind
16-20		Mostly 45	Medium green
Days to Harvest		Planting Season	
85		SP, SUM, AU	

## SUGAR COAT




Vigorous plant / High yield / High brix / Excellent uniformity / Very firm flesh / Good crispy texture / Red flesh color / Large fruits / Hollow heart tolerance

Weight (Lbs)	Shape	Count	Rind
16-20		45's and 36's	Medium green
Days to Harvest		Planting Season	
90		SP, SUM, FL	

## POLLEN PRO



Deep red flesh color & crispy flesh texture / Good uniformity of fruit size & shape / Very high yield / Excellent fruit quality / Early maturing

Weight (Lbs)	Shape	Count	Rind
16-20		Mostly 45	Medium green
Days to Harvest		Planting Season	
82		SP, SUM, FL	

## A SENSE OF TASTE



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Meir Peretz, 760 8312629 / Carl Woody Speir, 229 8945398 / Robert Arriaga, 956 330 8649 / [www.zeraimgedera.com](http://www.zeraimgedera.com)



# South Carolina Report

Our long hot summer is over and here comes fall, but we are still selling those melons. Holly has been one very busy watermelon queen completing 41 promotions since June 1st.

In June, July and August, Holly along with Blair Boozer (2010 SCWQ) worked 18 in-store promotions for Bi-Lo. Stores participating were in Greenville, Simpsonville, Greer, Mauldin, Greenwood, Columbia, West Columbia and Cayce.

During June, Holly made media appearances on Your Carolina in Greenville, the Peggy Denny Show in Greenville, Making It Grow in Sumter, and Low Country Live in Mt. Pleasant. She also spoke at a SCFB Youth Leadership Conference in Newberry and visited with Bradley and Louise O’Neal at Coosaw Farms, Rusty Kinard at Kinard Farms, and Mark Williams at Williams Farms.

On June 24th, Eleanor Bullock and National Queen, Whitney Conner, joined us for the River Dogs Baseball Game in Charleston as well as the Hampton Watermelon Festival in Hampton. Gilbert Miller brought several interns along to help cut melons for the double header in Charleston where temperatures were soaring. Before the game, Whitney and Holly enjoyed a tour of Charleston’s famous Market District as well as a walk along The Battery. In Hampton on June 25th, the girls were joined by Anna Dicks and a close friend for the 2 hour parade from Varnville through Hampton. Thanks goodness for a covered carriage.

July 1st started at 4:00am with an early morning appearance on the Curtis Wilson Show, WLTX in Columbia. Not only did Holly prepare a recipe, but she also joined Curtis and the General Manager of the Blowfish Baseball Team in a hotdog eating contest. It was almost too close to call between Holly and Curtis, but Curtis pulled off the win. From there it was on to Magic 95.5 and the “Woody” Show in Cayce. Later in the afternoon Holly visited Scotty Sandifer and Family at Sandifer Farms, Hamilton Dicks and Family at F.H. Dicks, and Stevie Still.

Field Day in Blackville was held on July 7th. Holly enjoyed going out into the field and sampling all of the melons. Gilbert Miller was happy to see Holly as well as NC Watermelon Queen, Alycia McLamb. As usual, the lunch was delicious and Gilbert had another very successful turnout.

Blair Boozer, 2010 SCWQ, filled in for Holly at the Grand Opening of the new SC Farmers Market on July 9th. Even though the day was hot the turnout was large and the melons flew off of the table. Brad Boozer and Sonny Dickinson did a great job of organizing this event.

The Pageland Watermelon Festival was held on July 15th-16th. Holly loved having Billy Jenkins’ granddaughter, Carla Griffin, join her for the parade that was held in downtown Pageland. Carla was a little pro waving to the crowds.

Another road trip took us to Fair Bluff, NC for the Fair Bluff Watermelon Festival on July 22nd-24th. Holly enjoyed visiting with Alycia McLamb and riding in the parade. We were also treated to a delicious luncheon and fabulous watermelon sherbet. Thanks Alycia and Sue for inviting us to this event.

August 1st had Holly in Clemson for the Bob Schuster Radio Show. We also traveled to Ehrhardt on August 19th-20th where Holly participated in the Schutzenfest Festival, parade and luncheon. Benny Hughes and Rusty Kinard joined us for the luncheon. Holly ended the month of August by serving watermelons to the USC Gamecocks, the Clemson Tigers, the Furman Paladins, and the Presbyterian Blue Hose.

We are looking forward to many more events in September and October. What a fantastic watermelon season this has been!

Ann Bryant  
S.C. Promotions Coordinator  
864-303-3995  
abryant028@charter.net  
ann.bryant@furman.edu



Bi-Lo Store Grand Opening in Greenwood, SC.



Rusty Kinard and Scotty Sandifer join Holly at Field Day in Blackville, SC.



Preparing Breakfast Lasagna on Your Carolina in Greenville, SC.



Blair Boozer steps in at the Grand Opening of the new SC Farmers Market.



Commissioner Hugh Weathers and his wife joined Holly for the River Dogs Game in Charleston, SC.



Carla Griffin enjoyed her ride in the Pageland Parade with Holly.



Anna Dicks and friend enjoyed riding in the Hampton Parade with Holly.



USC Gamecock Coach, Steve Spurrier, enjoying his watermelon.



Visiting with Bradley and Louise O’Neal at Coosaw Farms.



Holly enjoyed entertaining and spending time with the folks in Ehrhardt.



Stopping by to see Mark Williams at Williams Farms in Islandton, SC.



Holly meets Clemson Tiger Coach, Dabo Sweeney at the Clemson cutting.



Visiting F.H. Dicks Company and the Dicks family.



New Furman Paladin Coach, Bruce Fowler, enjoyed having the watermelon folks visit the campus.



Gilbert Miller in Blackville, SC with NC Queen Alycia McLamb and Holly.



The Presbyterian football team enjoyed having Holly back on campus and cutting melons for the team.



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# Texas Report

Greetings from the Texas Watermelon Association.

On July 1-2 Queen Veronica promoted WATERMELONS at the MARKET STREET SUPER MARKETS in the Dallas, Fort Worth area. They were great promotions, and we were sponsored at United by the National Watermelon Promotion Board.

On July 15-16, the National Watermelon Promotion Board also sponsored us at the SAMS WHOLESALE in Fort Worth, Texas for 2 days. This was our first promotion at a SAMS WHOLESALE, and it was great.

On Labor Day weekend we spent Saturday at the Yoakum County Watermelon Festival in Plains, Texas. This is always a fun promotion in watermelon country, Thank you to Anderson Produce, and McWhirter Farms for this fun promotion, and a special thanks to the McWhirter Farms for the wonderful dinner following on the eve of the festival.

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TELEPHONE:  
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Convention Chairman Brandon Henderson- telephone  
956-821-6571

There will be a golf tournament early morning on Thursday 19th.

To the Texas Watermelon Association Board Members, Vendors, and all members, **YOU ARE THE BEST.** I have enjoyed working with you these some 30+ years. I do not believe that you ever said no to me on anything I asked of you. Actually I began this journey with the Texas group in 1972, as a member, then coming aboard as secretary I believe in 1981, at the request of Joe Mark Mahan whom a lot of you know, a watermelon grower in days gone by....It has been a wonderful and great experience for me.

Also, thanks to the National Watermelon Association, a great organization, bringing everyone together to promote our great watermelons, **THANKS, Bob,** for all you do.

To the National Watermelon Promotion Board, You are great, got to be the best around... Please allow me to introduce you to the New Texas Watermelon Association Secretary, Queen Coordinator:

Barbara Duda  
1805 Sundance St.  
Palmhurst, Tx 78773  
956-519-7497  
Mobile 956-605-7636  
e-mail: bcduda62@yahoo.com

Just to let you know . . . Palmhurst is in the McAllen, Texas Area.... Barbara is a retired school teacher, and she will bring so much to the Association. Might just add, she is the mother of past 2004 Texas Watermelon Queen and 2005 National Watermelon Queen, Stephanie Duda.....

Thank you. Wanda.....

Wanda Letson  
Texas Watermelon Association  
P. O. Box 903  
Weatherford, TX 76086  
melonred@sbcglobal.net



Connie always enjoys the festival even though it is so hot.



Tony, keeping the sun away and staying cool..



Lovely past Texas Queen Lacy Jones



The proud grandparents



A beautiful grandmother and granddaughter.



Having fun with the kids.



Teretha really likes this quilt.



Queen Veronica and past queen Lacy



Just having a good time at Festival.



A big crowd at the festival.



These guys could get in trouble.....



The Roundup drink special – pineapple; where's the watermelon?



A beautiful Future watermelon queen.



Ava enjoying the watermelon.



Thank you Connie for always remembering the queen.



The beautiful quilt made by Sue Randall.....



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## Western Report



It's that time of year again when the cool air starts to blow and the color of the leaves begin to change, signifying the end of the domestic watermelon season. Please don't forget that watermelons can be enjoyed 365 days a year though! As we prepare and plan for the coming year, the new season will offer opportunities to build new relationships within the organization and industry. Each member will be given the chance to gain new insight improving your business and the industry as a whole.

Have you visited our website lately... [www.westernwatermelon.org](http://www.westernwatermelon.org)? The website has so much to offer including recipes, fun facts and pictures of past events. This is also a great way to find out what events are coming up soon on the calendar. Our annual Western Watermelon Association convention will be held at the Monte Carlo Hotel in spectacular Las Vegas, NV on January 14, 2012. The purpose of our convention is three fold. First, to bring together growers, shippers, distributors and related service providers to the watermelon industry in a relaxed environment that allows for the free flow of information and exchange of ideas. Second, to offer guest speakers that will provide attendees with an informative and educational experience. Last but not least, to have fun... you will be in Vegas! Please come and join us!

For more information on the Western Watermelon Association, please visit our website at [www.westernwatermelon.org](http://www.westernwatermelon.org)



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# What Do Consumers Say – “Without Being Asked?”

We have an intriguing idea that we would like to explore, with your help.

Many of our member companies (farmers, packers, shippers, etc.) periodically receive ‘unsolicited’ letters and/or emails from consumers that are passionate about their ‘positive’ experience with watermelon. Those consumers, our ultimate customers, felt so good about their experience that they took the time to write a letter (or email) and mail it to your business.

Many of your companies have received letters as we just described. Our question is ..... Would you consider sharing a copy with us?

Note - - - We are NOT interested in creating a contest - - - that would eliminate the spontaneity that these unsolicited letters provide and turn them into a contest entry. What we truly wish to accomplish is to reveal the passion and positive experience that some letters express.

If you would consider helping us, it is a simple process ..... Send us a copy in the mail, or by fax or via a scan through email.

At the end of every day, week, month and season, the ‘consumer’ and how they purchase, use and feel about our crop is what truly matters. We would like to recognize some of those consumers in the future and share their passion and experience. Positive letters can be contagious and spread like wild fire. After all, consumers are the true customer for all of us.

Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate it very much.

# Appeals court shoots down Virginia’s healthcare challenge

A federal appeals court dismissed one of the highest-profile challenges to President Obama’s healthcare reform law.

The 4th Circuit Court of Appeals said Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli does not have a legal right to sue over the law’s requirement that most people buy insurance. The court vacated a lower court’s ruling in the case and instructed the lower court to dismiss the suit. The Supreme Court is almost certain to have the final say on whether the coverage mandate is constitutional. Most legal observers expect the court to hear arguments during the term that begins in October, and rule in the summer of 2012.

The 4th Circuit’s long-awaited decision isn’t a huge surprise. Those who attended oral arguments in the suits said the judges seemed skeptical of the mandate’s critics. All three of the judges who heard the case were appointed by Democratic presidents, and two were appointed by Obama.

The mandate has a mixed record in federal appeals courts. The 6th Circuit upheld the requirement in a June decision, while the 11th Circuit, which heard the high-profile challenge filed by 26 state attorneys general, ruled that the mandate is unconstitutional. Unlike those 26 states, Cuccinelli sued on the grounds that enforcing the mandate would violate Virginia law. As Congress moved closer to passing healthcare reform, Virginia enacted a law that says state residents can’t be forced to purchase insurance.

But the 4th Circuit panel said Virginia does not have standing to sue over the mandate because it lacks a “personal stake” in the issue. The judges seemed concerned during oral arguments that allowing his suit to proceed would essentially allow the states to exempt themselves from whatever federal laws they might choose.

## H-2A continued from page 21

on site 365 days per year but employers will just need to figure out how to run two or three or four different crews throughout the year to ensure they are always covered in terms of a workforce.

3. The current H-2A program has a slow, bureaucratic labor certification process through the U.S. Department of Labor.

o Since there is a chronic shortage of agricultural workers, HARVEST establishes a labor attestation process for agricultural employers to utilize in order to get workers on the farm in a timely and secure manner. With the attestation process, employers attest all recruiting and other requirements have been and will be met.

o If and when the Secretary of Labor can certify that there is an adequate agricultural workforce in a state where an employer is seeking H-2A workers, then it will revert to a labor certification process.

4. The current H-2A program requires employers to pay the adverse effect wage rate, which is neither occupation nor geographic-specific.

o This bill re-defines the adverse effect wage rate as 115% of federal minimum wage or state minimum wage (whichever is higher) – this equals out to about \$9.15.

o In the mean time, this bill commissions a study by USDA on agricultural wages to see what an appropriate occupation and geographic specific wage methodology would be to prevent the depression of U.S. farm worker wages.

5. The H-2A program requires employers to provide housing to H-2A workers without consideration to whether or not it is feasible to provide employer-built housing.

o This bill allows for a housing voucher in lieu of employer-provided housing.

6. The current H-2A program does not have a provision for border operations who use employees who wish to cross the border each day.

o HARVEST establishes a cross-border H-2A worker program. Essentially the same rules apply except the employer does not have to provide housing or a housing voucher, and no transportation either.

7. Current immigration laws prohibit someone in the country illegally from starting to use the H-2A program.

o This bill provides a one-time waiver for current illegal aliens to access the H-2A program. They must depart the country to get their visa. If they have criminal convictions they will be ineligible.

## COOL continued from page 5

In addition, the OIG report said AMS has not yet issued any civil penalties to retailers, which are allowed up to \$1,000 per violation, even though these may have been warranted in some cases.

“By analyzing the 1,005 follow-up reviews AMS initiated between February 2010 and September 2010, we identified 21 retailers who had more instances of recorded non-compliances at the time of the follow-up than were noted in the initial visits, and whose non-compliances repeated those noted previously,” Harden said in the report.

“While these represent only a small portion of the total follow-up reviews, they do indicate the possibility that some retailers may be deliberately violating regulations, which may require monetary penalties.”

The report made 14 recommendations about COOL oversight, and the report indicates that AMS told the OIG that the agency generally agrees with those recommendations. Jarvis said the USDA plans to enforce fines soon on retailers who are willful violators. “Right now (USDA) is putting together language that will come out in the final rule that will allow the imposition of fines,” he said.

The USDA Office of General Counsel will impose the fines, he said. Jarvis said he could not say when the rule will be published.

# Alabama Immigration Law Can’t Be Enforced

Alabama’s new immigration law, which gives police the power to verify the immigration status of people stopped for questioning, was temporarily blocked by a U.S. judge three days before it was scheduled to take effect.

U.S. District Judge Sharon Lovelace Blackburn in Birmingham barred enforcement of the law that includes provisions requiring police to verify the status of people stopped whom they suspect may be in the country illegally. The law also makes it a crime to knowingly rent housing to unlawful immigrants.

Christian clergy, the federal government and the American Civil Liberties Union asked Blackburn to halt the measure’s enforcement. Alabama deputy attorneys general John Neiman and Misty Fairbanks said the state has the right to police people in its own borders.

“In entering this order, the court specifically notes that it is no way addressing the merits of the motions,” Blackburn said in her two-page decision. The judge said she’ll determine the legality of the act no later than Sept. 28 and that her order remains in effect until Sept. 29 or until she issues that ruling. Alabama Governor Robert Bentley signed the law broadening police powers on June 9, following Arizona Governor Jan Brewer in requiring local authorities to identify illegal immigrants.

The law, which had been set to take effect on Sept. 1, also requires businesses to use the federal E-Verify database to determine whether job applicants are eligible for employment. Alabama was the fifth U.S. state to adopt laws addressing illegal immigrants, bringing it into conflict with the federal government, which maintains that only it has the power to do so.

“Setting immigration policy and enforcing immigration laws is a national responsibility that cannot be addressed through a patchwork of state emigration laws,” U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder said in Aug. 1 press statement announcing the federal government’s filing of a lawsuit challenging the Alabama measure.

Leaders of three Christian denominations representing 338,000 Alabama residents also filed suit, as did the ACLU. All three cases were consolidated before Judge Blackburn. The U.S. Justice Department and the ACLU argued that federal law preempts the state measure. “My job is to decide if this is constitutional,” Blackburn told lawyers for both sides.

## E-VERIFY continued from page 19

“The dangerous and intrusive precedent set by the bill opens the floodgate of additional incursive and contentious employment verification hurdles. Mission creep is the signature of all bureaucracies,” the groups wrote. “After enactment of the Legal Workforce Act, employers could soon be required to verify whether employees are delinquent in the payment of federal, state, or local taxes, in compliance with child support or alimony decrees, on a terrorist watch list, or convicted or even accused of crime.”

Texas Gov. Rick Perry, a leading contender for the GOP presidential nomination, has also attacked E-verify, saying last year that it “would not make a hill of beans’ difference in what’s happening today.”The federal e-verify proposal is sponsored by Rep. Lamar Smith (TX), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. The legislation would force all employers to screen prospective hires through a Homeland Security Department database to weed out those in the country illegally.

“Twenty-three million Americans are unemployed or cannot find full-time work. At the same time, seven million people are working illegally,” Smith said Thursday. “These jobs should go to American citizens and legal workers.”

Immigration rights groups have used the conservative criticism to pounce on Smith’s proposal. “Assuming Smith does muscle his bill out of his own committee, the real question is, what will Speaker Boehner do?” Frank Sharry, executive director of America’s Voice, an advocacy group, said in a statement.

“Does he really want to bring forward legislation that divides the right, hurts small business, decimates agriculture, and embarrasses the party’s leading Presidential candidate?”





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