



Rookies will dominate next Congress



Here are some eye-opening statistics about the next Congress, which figures to be filled with junior members as a result of the historic class of 2010 and the next class of incoming freshmen, which also looks to be rather sizable. There are currently 100 freshman House members. That's the most since after 1992, when redistricting and the House banking scandal combined to put 110 freshmen in the House.

On top of that, there are currently 62 open Congressional Districts scattered across the country, guaranteeing a high floor for the next freshman class. Some veteran members will surely lose, but a minimum of 162 freshmen and sophomores has already been set for next year.

That is already higher than all but one total over the last 20 years; after the 1994 GOP wave, there were 181 freshmen and sophomores, according to a review of old congressional rosters. If just 20 veterans lose, the next Congress could top that total, and over 40% — perhaps even close to 50% — of the House would be relatively inexperienced as Congress prepares to tackle enormous issues like tax reform and repairing the budget. Some issues will surely need attending after what's poised to be a packed lame duck session.

On the one hand, a dose of new blood might be just what Congress needs, given the historic levels of disapproval it's currently receiving in public polls. Yet there's been quite a bit of turnover in both parties over the last three election cycles and the institution continues to spiral toward gridlock and partisanship.

We have our work out for us. We must educate the new legislators about our industry and needs for reduced regulations, an effective farm bill, immigration reform along with a workable guest worker program, H2-A reforms, and much more. Added to that enormous process is a turnover rate of staffers on the Hill that typically exceeds 50% in recent years following the elections when staffers move to other offices, committees, etc. Getting to know your legislators is paramount to our success.

FDA releases fiscal year 2013 fees



The Food and Drug Administration has announced fiscal year 2013 fee rates for re-inspections and failure to comply with a recall order.

The fees cover domestic and foreign facility re-inspections, failures to comply with a recall order, and importer re-inspections. They are effective October 1st. Comments on the new fees can be submitted through October 31st, according to a Federal Register notice.

The agency said fees will be addressed on an hourly rate of \$221 if domestic travel is required and \$289 per hour if foreign travel is required.

The FDA has the authority to assess and collect fees from, in part:

- The responsible party for each domestic facility and the U.S. agent for each foreign facility subject to a re-inspection, to cover re-inspection-related costs;
- The responsible party for a domestic facility and an importer who does not comply with a recall order, to cover food recall activities associated with such order;
- Each importer subject to a re-inspection to cover re-inspection-related costs.

In fiscal year 2011, the FDA said it spent \$4.5 million for domestic regulatory inspection travel costs related to more than 12,700 domestic inspections.

The FDA spent \$2.1 million in travel costs in fiscal year 2011 on 229 foreign inspections, according to the notice.

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

Texas Chapter
November 8-11, 2012
South Padre Island, Texas

South Carolina Chapter
January 11-13, 2013
Columbia, South Carolina

Western Chapter
January 19, 2013
Las Vegas, Nevada

Georgia Chapter
January 25-27, 2013
St. Simons, Georgia

Mar-Del (Maryland-Delaware) Chapter
February 1-2, 2013
Cambridge, Maryland

Alabama Chapter
February 8-9, 2013
Biloxi, Mississippi



NATIONAL WATERMELON ASSOCIATION
THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
February 20-24, 2013
San Antonio, Texas

Illiana (Illinois-Indiana) Chapter
March 8-9, 2013
Evansville, Indiana

North Carolina Chapter
March 8-9, 2013
Durham, North Carolina

Florida Chapter
March 22 – 24, 2013
Orlando, Florida

Consumer spending on fruits & vegetables impacted by economy

While buying more sweets and processed foods, Americans are spending virtually the same percentage of their budget on fruits and vegetables in 2012 as they did 30 years ago. A study by Planet Money/National Public Radio released this summer shows consumers spend an average of 14.6% of their grocery budget on fruits and vegetables, compared with 14.5% in 1982.

The data, compiled from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, showed processed foods and sweets with the most dramatic gains over the past 30 years, rising from 11.6% of the grocery budget in 1982 to 22.9% in 2012.

Comparing 1982 and 2012, the study found inflation-adjusted prices of selected fruits and vegetables (measured in 2012 dollars) showed mixed trends.

U.S. Grocery expenditures

	2012	1982
Meats	21.5%	31.3%
Fruits/vegetables	14.6%	14.5%
Grains/baked goods	14.4%	13.2%
Beverages	11.1%	11%
Dairy products	10.6%	13.2%
Other foods	5.1%	5.3%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Planet Money/NPR

With this year's drought affecting prices ranging from meat to poultry to grain and corn based products, the statistics will once again have a significant adjustment in the months to come. Maybe fruits & vegetables will be the big winner, with consumer spending at the grocery store remaining stable due to the economy.



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- Uniform large, blocky shape
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- Deep green rind with medium Crimson Sweet stripe
- Excellent yield potential



Distinction

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- 15-18 lbs.
- Rich green rind with Crimson Sweet stripe
- High yield potential



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- Globe shape
- 14-16 lbs.
- Medium green rind with deep green stripes
- Early maturing



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- Large, distinctive globe shape
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Layout - www.rubberneckdesign.com

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Capital City Fruit	Sunterra West	Southern Corporate Packers
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NWA 2013

The Centennial Celebration



The Centennial Year • February 20-24, 2013
Westin La Cantera
Hill Country Resort
San Antonio, Texas
www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com

Hotel Reservations



The National Watermelon Association will be hosted by one of the most beautiful resort properties that we have ever held the national convention. The Westin La Cantera Hill Country Resort & Spa is one of the top rated Starwood properties in North America, with far too many amenities to mention here. Located a few miles outside of downtown San Antonio, the hill country of South Texas provides incredible views and moderate temperatures during February.

To secure your room, please log on or make the call:
Visit:

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=1207164494&key=AFC71>

Call: 1-800-937-8461 Keyword: Watermelon

The NWA has negotiated a discounted rate of \$189 plus tax (through January 25th). Reserve your room today to secure your place at this once-in-a-lifetime convention experience.

Airport Transportation

The San Antonio International Airport (SAN) handles most of the major airlines that fly across our country, so flying in and out should be relatively stress-free. Transportation to the hotel resort can be a mixed bag, considering that it is between a 14-17 mile trip from door to door. Taxi rates start at \$38.00 plus.

Shuttle services are available from three companies that can be reserved by logging on to <http://www.airportshuttles.com/supershuttle.php>.

	SuperShuttle SuperShuttle, also known as Blue Van, leads the nation in shared ride shuttle services. Super Shuttle provides airport transfer service in 33 airports and 50 cities.
	Go Airport Shuttles GO airport Shuttles services over 50 airports and prides itself on providing a cost-effective airport ground transportation services for its passengers.
	Carmel Car and Limo Carmel Car and Limousine provides world class airport car service in 250 cities around the world. Carmel gives you the best discount rates for airport rides.



For more information, log onto

www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com

NWA 2013

The Centennial Celebration



Agenda Highlights

Watermelon Archives:

For three days you will have the opportunity to look at our Watermelon Archives, a collection of history from the NWA and the industry. Take some time to see where we came from, and just imagine where we are going in the next century of service.

Exhibit Center:

Also for three days many of the industry's most prominent suppliers will exhibit their products and services in the NWA Exhibit Center, located in sections H-I-J of the San Antonio Ballroom. They have much to offer to you to fill your business needs. Please stop by, say 'hello', and thank them for supporting the NWA. And remember If you are a watermelon handler, ask one of the exhibiting vendors for an entry to sign up for the exhibit raffle (Open only to farmers, packers, shippers and brokers).

Hospitality:

The NWA will offer our adult attendees a hospitality area in the evening in the San Miguel A-B Room & Terrace, operated by the Westin staff. The evenings and hours of operation are:

Wednesday, Feb 20 9:00 pm – 12:00 am
Thursday, Feb 21 10:00 pm – 1:00 am
Saturday, Feb 23 10:00 pm – 1:00 am

Open evenings:

The NWA has 'no' planned events on Wednesday or Friday evenings which offers every attendee with the opportunity to dine with friends and colleagues or to explore San Antonio. To make your visit more enjoyable, the NWA and Westin are providing complimentary coach buses on Friday evening that will shuttle you to the famous RiverWalk, departing the hotel promptly at 6:00 PM; returning at 11:00 pm. Any visit to San Antonio must include a trip to the RiverWalk. Enjoy!

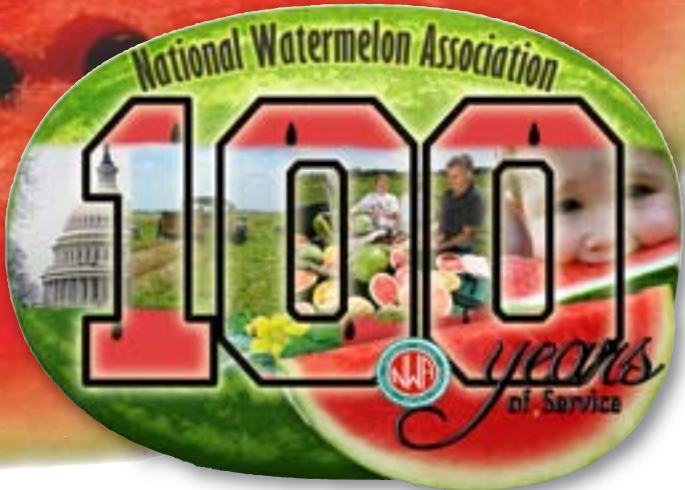
Kids' Programs:

The Westin La Cantera has a full line-up of enjoyment and activities for every age group (children) and supervision for the younger ones. Indoor and outdoor activities will keep them busy while you enjoy the convention events. Log on to http://www.westinlacantera.com/things_to_do/westin_kids_club/ for more details.



For more information, log onto

www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com



The Centennial Celebration



Highlights and Feature Events



Politics, the Economy and Agriculture: What Does The Future Hold?

Special guests to be announced after the November election will provide insights and updates relative to the political environment in Washington and across the country, the economic picture following the elections, and the outlook for agriculture in the years to come.

Blue Jeans and Diamonds: The Celebration Kick Off

The recommended dress is Blue Jeans, Boots and Diamonds for this Texas style kickoff celebration at NWA 2013. After dinner, Ride the Mechanical Bull, sample some of Texas' own products, learn how to Texas Two-Step, and enjoy a private concert from country music recording artists Tracy Byrd and Little Texas.

History to Remember: Archives and History on Display

At NWA 20143 you will see many of the archives and history of the NWA and watermelon industry that date back to the early 1900s. Fathers and Mothers – Grandfathers and Grandmothers – Brothers and Sisters. Look where the NWA came from; Bring back precious memories; Treasure and respect the past; Rejuvenate the spirit of the NWA.



LITTLE TEXAS

ORIGINATING FROM BORN-AND-RAISED TEXANS, LITTLE TEXAS WAS FORMED AND RELEASED THEIR FIRST ALBUM IN 1991. THEY WERE WILLING TO DO JUST ABOUT ANYTHING TO BRING THEIR BRAND OF ROCKIN' COUNTRY TO THE FOREFRONT OF MUSIC. CRISSCROSSING THE COUNTRY THEY WERE KNOWN AS "THE HARDEST WORKING BAND IN COUNTRY MUSIC".

TOP TEN HITS INCLUDE THE EVER POPULAR "KICK A LITTLE", AND THREE NUMBER ONE SINGLE - "GOD BLESSED TEXAS", "WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN" AND "MY LOVE". LITTLE TEXAS HAS WON MULTIPLE AWARDS INCLUDING CWA ALBUM OF THE YEAR AND THE ACM VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR. LITTLE TEXAS WILL COMPLETE THE CELEBRATION WITH THEIR HARD CHARGING COUNTRY ROCK. SO, GET YOUR BOOTS AND HATS READY TO GO DANCING - TEXAS STYLE. LITTLE TEXAS WILL BRING YOU THERE FOR THE RIDE!

THE BAND CRISSCROSSED AMERICA FOR THREE LONG YEARS, PLAYING EVERY BAR AND HONKY-TONK FROM MYRTLE BEACH, S.C., TO LOS ANGELES, CA, ALL THE WHILE WRITING SONGS THAT WERE DESTINED TO CHANGE THE SOUND OF MODERN COUNTRY AND PERFECTING A STAGE SHOW THAT HAS BEEN CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED WORLDWIDE. TODAY, LITTLE TEXAS IS BACK AND RUNNING STRONG! THE MULTI-PLATINUM BAND'S FOUR ORIGINAL MEMBERS— DUANE PROPPES (VOCALS AND BASS GUITAR), PORTER HOWELL (LEAD VOCALS AND LEAD GUITAR), DWAYNE O'BRIEN (VOCALS AND RHYTHM GUITARS) AND DEL GRAY (DRUMS)—WILL ENTERTAIN YOU WITH A PRIVATE CONCERT TO BE REMEMBERED.



A Special Guest Visit

Prepare to be thrilled with our very special guest. For reasons beyond our control we cannot divulge his name, although every one of you will absolutely recognize him immediately.

Known throughout the civilized world, he is a world class communicator and a dear friend of former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee.

Our guest will comment on past and current politics, share his insights, and entertain all of us in a very unique setting. He has agreed to take the time to greet you along with pictures that can be a convention memento for many years to come. You do not want to miss this opportunity and very special event!

For more information, log onto

www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com



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The Centennial Celebration

NWA 2013: The Centennial Celebration will mark the celebration of the 100TH Year of Service of your Commodity Association, the National Watermelon Association. Along with convention co-host, Texas Watermelon Association, we look forward to celebrating our past and creating memories for years to come!

The convention is scheduled for February 20-24, 2013 at the Westin La Cantera Hill Country Resort & Spa in San Antonio, Texas, a beautiful property in the hill country of South Texas. The convention will kick off a special place in our lives - - a **FIRST** in the produce industry - - the **FIRST** centennial of any produce commodity group, Ever! That's your **NWA**! We will soon announce some very special guests that will join us that you all know. Little Texas, the hardest working band in country music, will entertain you at the Blue Jeans & Diamonds themed party on Thursday evening. Speakers will be top notch. And much more....

We are asking you to become a sponsorship partner of **NWA 2013: The Centennial Celebration** (and the NWA). With your help we will create memories that will last for many years. We have numerous (and new) sponsorship programs available for you to choose from, and your support will be recognized throughout the centennial year. Put your company at the forefront with a NWA sponsorship. You will help us to celebrate our past and create memories for the future! We hope to hear from you soon!

DIAMOND SPONSOR - \$15,000

- EXCLUSIVE Sponsorship of THURSDAY or SATURDAY evening events
- Two complimentary convention registrations for NWA - February 2013
- Complimentary double exhibit space - February 2013 (subject to availability)
- Full page AD in two issues of The Vineline magazine - 2013
- Five minute presentation at the sponsored general session
- Promotional materials at place settings during the sponsored session
- Web Link from NWA website to your company website
- Company Logo on video screens during the sponsored session

PLATINUM SPONSOR - \$10,000

- EXCLUSIVE Sponsorship of FRIDAY or SATURDAY morning events
- Complimentary single exhibit space - February 2013 (subject to availability)
- One-half page AD in two issues of The Vineline magazine - 2013
- Promotional materials at place settings during the sponsored session
- Web Link from NWA website to your company website
- Company Logo on video screens during the sponsored session

HEADLINER SPONSOR - \$10,000

- EXCLUSIVE Sponsorship of Keynote Speaker or Music Entertainment
- Private Meet-and-Greet with the Headliner
- One-half page AD in two issues of The Vineline magazine - 2013
- Promotional materials at place settings during the sponsored session
- Web Link from NWA website to your company website
- Company Logo on video screens during the sponsored session

- ALL 2013 SPONSORSHIPS INCLUDE THESE BENEFITS:**
- Logo displayed prominently on rolling screens during convention
 - Logo displayed prominently on Sponsor banner *
 - Logo displayed on homepage of website throughout the year
 - Logo displayed in The Vineline magazine throughout the year
 - Logo on E-blast conference promotional mailings *
 - Listing in conference program *

* Sponsorship must be received prior to 01/04/13 for these benefits

RUBY SPONSOR - \$5,000

- EXCLUSIVE Co-Sponsorship of THURSDAY or SATURDAY Receptions
- Additional quantity of drink tickets for your distribution

ENTERTAINMENT SPONSOR - \$5,000

- EXCLUSIVE sponsorship of THURSDAY interactive entertainment – Bull Riding
- Sponsorship includes prizes for participants from the sponsor

LOGO ITEM SPONSOR - \$2,500

- EXCLUSIVE Co-Sponsor of your company Logo placement on registration memento
- Up to TWO Sponsorships available

COACH BUSES SPONSOR - \$2,500

- EXCLUSIVE Sponsorship of your 15-minute DVD on coach buses that will shuttle guests to and from the RiverWalk on Friday evening

MILITARY COLOR GUARD SPONSOR- \$1,000

- EXCLUSIVE sponsorship of military color guard and Star Spangled Banner
- Private meet-and-greet available with color guard prior to awards banquet

YOUNG AG SPOKESPERSON SPONSOR - \$1,000

- EXCLUSIVE Co-Sponsorship of this long-standing speech competition
- Up to TWO Sponsorships available to join long-time sponsor, Longview Fibre

* * Please call NWA to secure your EXCLUSIVE Sponsorship. They are offered on a first come – first served basis.

GOLD SPONSOR - \$2,500

- Your sponsorship will contribute to the general convention fund that allows us to provide a convention, agenda, events, good food, and fellowship that you have come to expect.

EMERALD SPONSOR - \$1,000

- Your sponsorship will contribute to the general convention fund that allows us to provide a convention, agenda, events, good food, and fellowship that you have come to expect.

SILVER SPONSOR – All contributions under \$1,000

- Your sponsorship will contribute to the general convention fund that allows us to provide a convention, agenda, events, good food, and fellowship that you have come to expect.

The National Watermelon Association is developing a series of centennial logos, recognizing the numerous programs and services that are provided to their members.

"The logos are a wonderful representation of what the National Watermelon Association does for our members, and will become an emphasis point throughout 2013", says Bob Morrissey, NWA Executive Director. "The question may become how many different logos will be released?"

Here is a small sampling of what you will see more and more as the next year arrives, and the centennial year of service begins. Look for some collectible logo uses at NWA 2013: The Centennial Celebration.



For more information, log onto
www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com



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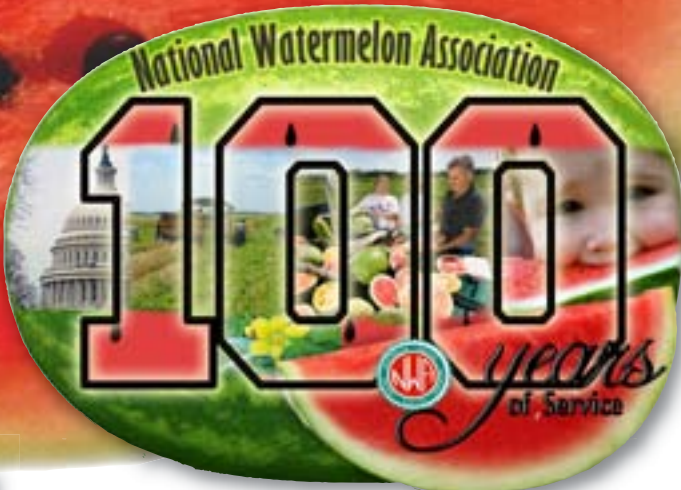
Usage	FRESH/ FRESH PROCESS
Fruit Shape	Blocky
Approximate Days To Maturity	88
Fruit Rind Description	Modern style, dark green, crimson rind pattern
Fruit Weight Range (US - LBS)	15-18
Pip Size	Small-Medium
Fruit Flesh Description	Red flesh color. Penetrometer readings of 2.5-3.0 lbs.



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The Centennial Celebration



NATIONAL WATERMELON ASSOCIATION

February 20-24, 2013
Westin La Cantera
San Antonio, TX

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No refunds or cancellations after Feb. 1, 2013.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS
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Keyword: Watermelon
NWA Rate: \$189 plus tax

QUESTIONS?
Call NWA at (863) 619-7575
Or Email nwa@tampabay.rr.com

CONVENTION

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF SERVICE

Register before Feb. 1, 2013 to receive discounted rates.

REGISTRANT INFORMATION

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Badge Name _____

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Badge Name _____

Company _____ Title _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

	Prior to Feb. 1, 2013		After Feb. 1, 2013		TOTAL
	Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member	
Adult	<input type="checkbox"/> \$350	<input type="checkbox"/> \$450	<input type="checkbox"/> \$450	<input type="checkbox"/> \$550	\$ _____
Child (under 13)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	\$ _____

DAY REGISTRATION / A LA CARTE

	Member	Non-Member	
Thurs., Feb. 21 - Reception, Dinner	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$120 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$150 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$75	\$ _____
Fri., Feb. 22 - Breakfast Session	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$75 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$50	\$ _____
Fri., Feb. 22 - Lunch, Auction	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$120 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$150 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$75	\$ _____
Sat., Feb. 23 - Breakfast Session	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$75 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$50	\$ _____
Sat., Feb. 23 - Reception, Banquet	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$120 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult \$150 <input type="checkbox"/> Child \$75	\$ _____

OPTIONAL EVENTS

Wed., Feb. 20 | 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Clay Skeet Shoot Tournament
National Shooting Complex (NSSA-NSSA) ☐ \$160 Per Shooter ☐ \$100 Station Sponsor ☐ \$1000 Tournament Sponsor

Shooter 1 Name _____ Shooter 2 Name _____ \$ _____

Invitational Golf Tournament
Palmer Course ☐ \$160 Per Player ☐ \$100 Tee Sponsor ☐ \$1000 Tournament Sponsor

Player 1 Name _____ Player 2 Name _____ \$ _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

TOTAL AMT DUE \$ _____

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By Credit Card: ☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX

Cardholder's Name: _____

Credit Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

OFFICIAL CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

Watermelon Invitational Golf Tournament
Palmer Course
Westin La Cantera Hill Country Resort
San Antonio, Texas
February 20, 2013
REGISTER YOUR FOURSOME TODAY

If you want to experience a golf course, designed by Arnold Palmer, with views of the Texas hill country and elevation changes that are simply breath-taking, then this is your opportunity. The annual Watermelon Invitational is always a great event that kicks off the National Watermelon Association convention.

The name says it all: The Palmer Course was designed by the legendary Arnold Palmer. And it certainly doesn't disappoint. The course is primarily perched on 225 acres, offering 18 holes that cover 6,926 yards of golfing bliss, par 71.

Given the spectacular scenery and diverse Hill Country wildlife, it may be hard to keep your eye on the ball. Among its signature holes is the par 3 - No. 4, boasting dramatic waterfalls along the entire front edge of the green and connected to the fairway by the Willie Palmer Memorial Bridge. All carts are equipped with a state-of-the-art ProLink GPS system. Arnie himself played a six-hole exhibition on the course during the grand opening and unabashedly exclaimed, "The Palmer Course at La Cantera is one-of-a-kind and a first-class golfing experience."

If you thought that Torrey Pines a couple of years ago had elevation changes, well, you haven't seen anything yet. So join us on February 20th, 2013 with a 12:00 noon shotgun start.

The price per golfer = \$160
(Includes cart and greens fees, prizes and a goodies bag)

We offer you two opportunities to show your support of the tournament!
Tee Sponsors = \$100 (per hole)
Tournament Sponsors = \$1,000
(Includes 4 players' fees and Logo on every hole sign)

To register your team for the tournament, simply fill out the registration form and return it to the NWA. All tournament registrations must be received no later than February 1, 2013.

Clay Shooting Tournament
National Shooting Complex (NSSA-NSSA)
San Antonio, Texas
Wednesday, February 20, 2013

For the second year the NWA is offering a sporting clay shooting tournament. Only this time around, we are bringing the event to the pinnacle of sporting clay shoots, the National Shooting Complex in San Antonio, Texas, home to the National Sporting Clay Association and the National Skeet Shooting Association.

Located along the edge of the beautiful Texas Hill Country, the National Shooting Complex is not only 671 acres of peaceful rolling hills and picturesque countryside, but to firearms enthusiasts throughout the United States and beyond, this multi-million dollar complex is known as one of the most complete sport shooting and recreational facilities in the world, fully equipped and ready for our event.

After a short coach bus trip from the hotel, you will arrive at the complex to get ready for a great shoot. Teams will be selected out of a hat, with prizes to be awarded the following evening. Bring your own shotgun, or rent one. The complex can outfit you with all of your needs. Call 210-688-3371 or 210-688-2542.

The price per shooter = \$160 (includes coach bus and shells)

We offer two opportunities for you to support the tournament:
Station Sponsors = \$100 (per shooting station)
Tournament Sponsors = \$1,000
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National Report

Happy fall from NWA! So much to share from this amazing year!

Media Training Sponsored by Syngenta in Naples

A special thanks to Syngenta for your very generous sponsorship of this years media training in Naples. It was perfect! Katelyn and I would like to thank Jeff Pomeroy and Dean Liere for the tour of the facility and the fields on Friday afternoon. We had to miss the Sunday tour and training, but thanks to Jeff and Dean, Katelyn got an educational and informative tour of the station! Thank you so much! Thanks to NWPB for another informative event!

Warren Produce & Melon 1 Sponsor Race for the Cure, Minneapolis

We were joined by sponsor Jimmy and Brenda Henderson and their family. This is one of the largest races in the country, tens of thousands attend. The CH Robinson team did a fantastic job with the booth where we were joined by Jimmy, Brenda and NWPB's Chef Joe Poon. Everyone loved the watermelon in the handy cups and Joe's carvings. Mother's Day is the perfect day for this amazing event held at the Mall of America in Minneapolis. Thanks to the entire CH Robinson team and to Warren Produce and Melon 1 for sponsoring us!

Melon 1 Sponsors to Charlotte Truck Race

Katelyn was sponsored to Charlotte, NC for the NASCAR truck race to support driver Ross Chastain in his famously popular watermelon truck! We were joined by the FWA team, Queen Christine, Debra, and Patty. South Carolina's runner-up Brooke was also on hand to support Ross. Chef Joe was there working his magic. This got Joe, Katelyn, Christine, and Brooke national coverage on the Speed channel with Kyle Petty. Congratulations to Ross for all his success this year! Thanks again to Melon 1 for all your support!

Rusty Kinard and Mark Williams Sponsor Freedom Aloft Weekend

We were so pleased to be sponsored by Rusty and Mark to the fantastic Freedom Aloft weekend in Greenville, SC. Ann Bryant did an awesome job with our schedule of events which included, TV coverage from two local stations, a visit to the Shriners Children Hospital and in-store promotions for Bi-Lo and of course serving the thousands of people attending the Hot Air Balloon Festival in Greenville. This year was extra special because we got to ride in the hot air balloons. Katelyn and the girls enjoyed the opportunity to meet and visit with the entertainer for this year's event, Jake Owen as he was practicing for the concert. Jake Owen mother was a former National Watermelon Queen back in 1973 crowned Mitzi Long; she is Mitzi Long Owen, and resides in Vero Beach, FL.

Chiefland Watermelon Festival Sponsored by Billy Smith; Rantz Smith; Nowell Borders; Murray Tillis; Adam Lytch, L&M Companies

We were sponsored to the Chiefland Festival by this group and joined Alabama Queen Amber and Coordinator Katie, Christine the FWA Queen and Anna Kelley filled in for Debra. We also had the Newberry Queen. It was a great weekend with our host Billy, Corliss, and Rantz Smith. We enjoyed the delicious food from Billy's office kitchen, and the pleasure of the group's company! The girls enjoyed smores around the fire pit at the beautiful Gilchrist Club. They all rode in the parade, and attended the event surrounding the festival. We all attended the Chiefland Watermelon Queen pageant, and enjoyed dinner at Billy's! Thanks to Billy, Corliss, and Rantz for your gracious hospitality!

Charleston, SC Media and Hampton Watermelon Festival Sponsored by Coosaw Farms and SC Watermelon Association

We joined SC Coordinator Ann and Queen Katie in Charleston, SC for media work. The girls appeared on Carolina Live with recipes and watermelon tips. We were soon off to Hampton for the festival weekend activities. We stopped by Mark Williams Farms for a visit. We also visited our sponsor, Bradley, Louise, Angelia and Brad of Coosaw Farms. Katelyn really enjoyed seeing the Coosaw operation. We arrived in Hampton in time for the annual street dance. Katelyn was blown away by such a large gathering in a small town. They have such community spirit! The girls rode in the fantastic parade, over two hours long and each on a float. We had the opportunity to visit Rusty Kinard. He gifted us with many watermelons! Thanks Rusty!! We were invited to FH Dicks for lunch. We enjoyed visiting Hamilton, Allison, Michelle and the delicious lunch prepared by Linda! Thanks for your gracious hospitality! Special thanks to the SC Watermelon Association and Coosaw Farms!

Special Thanks to NWPB for Sponsoring Queen Katelyn
St Johns Newfoundland Sobeys, Prince Edward Island Sobeys, Longos Toronto
Atlantic CO-OP in Moncton, New Brunswick
These promotions are featured on NWPB pages
Photos for National Report Fall 2012

Eleanor T Bullock
 NWA Promotion Coordinator
 eleanor@websign.net 229.273.8638 or 229.322.9933



The girls with Rusty Kinard in Hampton!



Lunch at with the FH Dicks group in the Barnwell Melon 1 office



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National Pictures



These Guys prepared lunch for us in the Arcadia Melon 1 office



Brooke, Katelyn, Ross and Christine in Charlotte



Juliemar and Katelyn in Greenville



Media training in Naples, thanks NWPB and Syngenta



National TV in Charlotte the Speed Network



Katelyn thanks Murray and Rantz in Chiefland



Jeff and Dean give Katelyn hands on training



More National Coverage in Charlotte, Fox Network



Katelyn, Amber and Christine in Chiefland



Thanks Syngenta!



Television coverage in Greenville, SC



Trey, Amber, Billy, Katelyn and Marti



Race for the Cure with Lori, Hailey, Macy and Colton Henderson



Katelyn, Joe and Katie in Greenville on WYFF ch 4



On the air for Carolina Live in Charleston, SC



Katelyn is busy passing out the watermelon!



Hot air balloon ride at Freedom Aloft



The girls visit with Mark Williams near Hampton



Katelyn with Jimmy and James



The girls and Country Star Jake Owen, his Mom is a former National Watermelon Queen from 1973



Thanks to Coosaw Farms!



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Moore Farms, Lenox, GA

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Alabama Report

Greetings from Alabama,

The 2012 tour for the Alabama Watermelon Association has been very productive this summer. We have had the opportunity to spread the watermelon message throughout Alabama. A special thank you to Mr. Hassey Brooks and the Alabama Department of Agriculture; their hard work and support of the watermelon industry and the Specialty Crop Block Grant have been instrumental in the success of many of the queen tour promotions. Queen Amber has been very busy visiting schools, farmer’s markets, grocery stores, local farmers, and welcome centers.

Over the summer Queen Amber and 1st runner-up Meghan Patterson have welcomed many travelers to Alabama at the Alabama Welcome Centers of Houston County, Chambers County, Baldwin County, Sumter County, and Limestone County. The both did an excellent job of passing out refreshing slices of watermelon to all the visitors of Alabama.

In June, Queen Amber was the a guest on WTVY Live at Lunch with Ben Stanfield, where she had the opportunity to share the nutritional benefits of eating watermelon to thousands of viewers. Later in the month Queen Amber handed out hundreds of watermelon slices at the Poplar Head Farmer’s Market in Dothan, AL and was the host of Watermelon Day at the Enterprise Famer’s Market. She helped judge the sweetest watermelon contest, a watermelon fashion show, and seed spit competition.

In July, we headed north to Birmingham where we visited two different Publix stores then southwest to Mobile, AL where we visited Greer’s Market Grocery Stores in Robertsedale, Fairhope, Mobile, and Grand Bay. Each store was very excited to have a visit from the Alabama Watermelon Queen. The customers were thrilled to sample delicious watermelon, receive recipe and carving ideas, and the children were happy to get coloring books and take pictures of with Queen Amber. A special thank you to Ms. Jessica McFarland with Publix and Ms. Lucy Greer with Greer’s for setting up such great promotions for us.

In August, 1st runner-up Meghan Patterson had the opportunity to join Georgia Watermelon Queen, Laurel Higginbotham at Maxwell Air Force Base Commissary in Montgomery, AL. A special thank you to Scott Davis, with Military Produce Group, for inviting the Alabama Queen to this promotion. We had an awesome time and it was a very successful promotion.

This year has been full of great promotions and Queen Amber has represented the Alabama Association with excitement and elegance! This summer has been very busy for her and she is now spreading the watermelon message through the campus at The University of Alabama. She is the recipient of the 2012 Alabama Community College Presidential Scholarship. Congratulations Queen Amber, the Alabama Watermelon Association is so proud of you!

While a great summer has come and gone, we are looking forward to have an amazing fall as we are headed to Washington DC for the Washington Public Policy Conference, Orlando for the Epcot International Food & Wine Festival and California for PMA. Hope to see you all there!

Sincerely,
Katie Eubanks
Promotions Coordinator
Alabama Watermelon Association
Cell:334-237-0600
Email:Katie.eubanks2@gmail.com



Welcome to Alabama!



Greer’s Produce welcomed Queen Amber with a beautiful display.



Queen Amber with travelers passing through Alabama.



Queen Amber passing out slices to these two young men in Mobile, AL.



Mr. David Bell of Bell’s Farms teaching Queen Amber some interesting facts and tips about farming watermelons.



Lights, Camera, Action! WTVY on location with Queen Amber.



WTVY Live at Lunch interview.



Queen Amber and her assistants passing out slices and stickers at the Poplar Head Farmer’s Market.



Visiting local queens and Queen Amber having a Watermelon Day at the Enterprise Farmer’s Market.



Georgia Queen Laurel and Alabama 1st runner up with Mr. Scott Davis of Military Produce Group.



Queen Amber’s Family came to cheer her on at the local seed spit contest at Watermelon Day.



Watermelon Queens support our troops!



These children loved getting watermelon and J-Slice coloring books.



Queen Amber taking a break to enjoy these beautiful sunflowers



Customers at Publix had an educational lesson on choosing a great watermelon.



A Winning Line-up!

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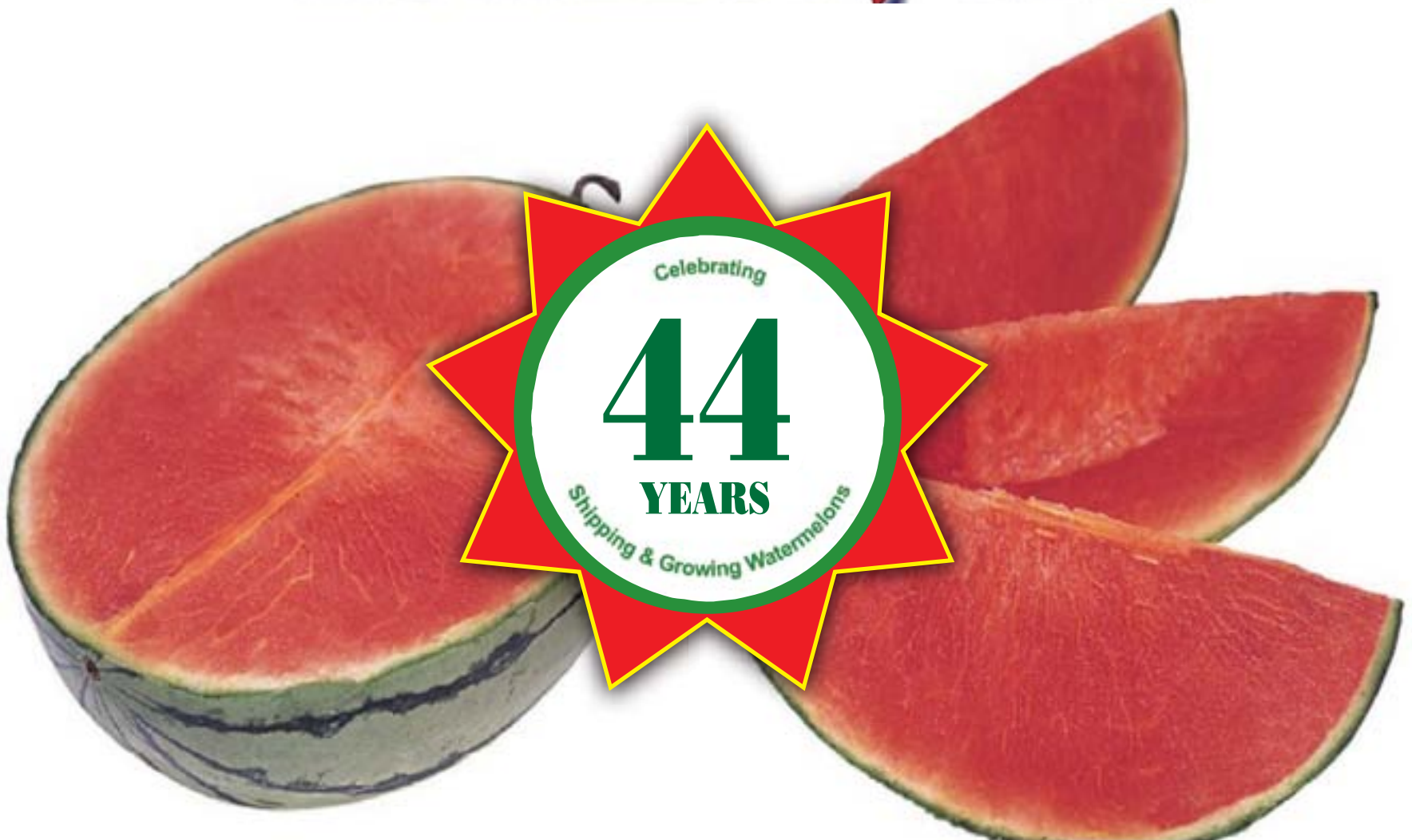
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Florida Report

Happy Holidays from the Florida Watermelon Association...

The months of June and July were off to a busy start that lasted through the month, which was fantastic because the more events we do, the more we get to promote and spread the word about the wonderful WATERMELON! June began with a short trip down to Chiefland, FL. I was able to enjoy the festivities of their watermelon festival and parade, and most importantly get to see the new Chiefland Watermelon Queen Anna Patterson get crowned. I know she will be a wonderful representative for her town. After Chiefland, I was asked to travel to Monticello, FL to assist with judging at the Monticello Watermelon Pageant. It was a fun day filled with beautiful competitors of all ages, who clearly had a passion for watermelon. Later in the month I traveled back to Legoland to work with the FL Department of Agriculture at Florida Watermelon Day. The day was packed with free samples, stickers, presentations, and a seed spit contest! The cool part was the whole theme park was filled with watermelon themed areas, and places where you could learn to build a watermelon slice out of legos. What a great event for children and adults for all ages. After a great few weeks of promotions in Florida, I had the opportunity to travel to Toronto, Canada. This was quite the trip. From T.V. shows, to watermelon eating contests throughout the area I can safely say the watermelon queens took Canada by storm. We were able to see everything Toronto had to offer, all while working closely with the National Watermelon Promotion Board.

July began with an eventful trip down to Winter Park, FL for the annual 4th of July Watermelon 5K Race. This race was incredible. There were thousands of watermelon lovers up bright and early on the 4th of July ready to race! Not only was there a race, there was a watermelon eating contest, photo station and all kinds of goodies for the racers. Towards the middle of July we then traveled out of Florida again to South Carolina, for an extended weekend of grocery store promotions. Following South Carolina, I traveled up for a weekend in Illinois/Indiana. I was able to help with grocery store promotions, and be right in the pits with Ross Chastain at his truck race. We were able to pass out watermelon samples to fans inside and out of the track. They sure were happy because it was unusually hot and humid. A perfect weekend for watermelon.

I certainly have had a summer full of wonderful watermelon experiences and I can't wait to see where this job takes me next. Being able to travel and experience all the different places and the watermelon lovers has had an everlasting impact on my life.

-from your 2012 FL Watermelon Queen Christine Chaloupka

Remember these next few months our Florida FALL watermelons will be in your local grocery stores. Stop by and pick up one and then go to our National Watermelon Promotion Board website to see how to carve watermelons and prepare recipes for your upcoming holidays treats.

Mark your calendar for March 22-24, 2013 for our 45th Annual Florida Watermelon Convention held at Gaylord Palms in Orlando, Florida. President Chandler Mack has already starting working on fun-filled events. Remember this will be our last convention in March so plan on attending because the following year's conventions will be held in January.

Also thanks to everyone that helped with promotions this summer with Christine, Amanda and Kelcee. These girls have done a wonderful job this summer promoting watermelons.

Thanks again to all of our sponsors for such a wonderful summer!

Debra Harrison
Florida Watermelon Promotions Coordinator
Email: debra@flfwa.com
Home Phone: 863-494-1163
Cell Phone: 863-633-8306



FWA is a proud sponsor of "Ross Chastain" in the Nascar Truck Races.



Congrats to the winners of the Longo's Watermelon Eating Contest in Toronto.



Up, Up and away go Queen Christine, Georgia Coordinator Julie Atkins, and GWQ Laurel.



Florida Watermelon "rolls" into the Bi-Lo Grocery Stores in South Carolina.



Florida Queen Christine and South Carolina Queen Katie at Freedom Loft Weekend.



Promoting watermelons at Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.



Welcome to "Legoland"!



Thanks to Billy Smith and his family for your hospitality in Chiefland.



Vice-President Jim Barfield and FWA Queen Christine at Florida Watermelon Day in Winter Park at Legoland.



Thanks to Gibson Produce and Watermelon Sales for sponsoring us at the Chiefland Watermelon Festival.



FWQ Christine, NWQ Katelyn and GWQ Laurel on the morning news channel in Mississauga.



Congratulations to Anna Patterson for being chosen as the Chiefland Watermelon Queen.



Promoting watermelons in Downtown Toronto, Canada.



Visiting with Richard Wojciak at the July 4th Watermelon Race.



Queen Christine handing out coloring books and stickers at Longo's Grocery Stores.



Queen Christine at the Watermelon 5 K Run in Winter Park, Florida.



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To learn more about Syngenta's watermelon program, contact your local Syngenta representative or seed dealer today.

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Georgia Report

Greetings from Georgia!

Our season is winding down, but what a summer Georgia has had! Our queen tour has been successful, and the message we carry on watermelon has traveled around the globe. The wonderful thing about our growing state program is the fact that we do not stay in one state promoting our own watermelons. We now have the capability to travel to other places such as Canada on a state level and spread our story on our nutritious and delicious product.

Ending in June, our tour took us to Cordele for the annual watermelon festival. This is an annual event in south GA to promote watermelon in the Watermelon Capitol of the World. During the festival Queen Laurel visited local farms, Farm Bureau Luncheon, WALB with Ruthie, WSST/Taste of Melons with Phil Streetman, Big Melons contest, Adult and children seed spit, along with the watermelon parade through downtown Cordele. From Cordele we headed on to Toronto with The National Queen, Florida Queen and NWPB. The produce family we have established in Toronto over the past few years with Faye Clack Communications and Longo's is incredible for our industry. We each visited 3 Longo's stores that each hosted in-store watermelon eating contests for the customers and staff. I must include...Canadians take their contests very seriously! The turn out in each store never ceases to amaze me. Longos, Faye Clack along with the help of NWPB do an amazing job setting up these promotions for us all to get the best bang for our buck. A lot of media coverage is always a must, and this promotion is covered with media. The queens joined together while in Toronto to interview with Rogers TV, which is a major network in the Toronto area. The queens talked about the nutrition and demonstrated recipes on air. Thank you NWPB for the work put into this promotion to make it another success!

While Queen Laurel and I were promoting in Toronto, our Association held a promotion at the Braves stadium. Our members, board members and staff handed out slice after slice watermelon along with recipe cards. If I remember correctly, this particular June day was a record hot day for our GA summer, but that did not stand in the way of our dedication to serve watermelon at the Publix tailgate for the Braves fans! Thank you to Nicole (our runner up) and also niece of Ricky and Charolette Jackson of Jackson's Farm-for filling on for us while we were double booked. Nicole has been raised with a strong work ethic, and is a natural people person, we were fortunate to have her fill in.

In July, Queen Laurel visited Ft. Benning Commissary in Columbus, GA with the Military Produce Group. It is always a treat to promote watermelons at the commissaries. This July day was very warm and the watermelon slices were very much appreciated! Scott Davis is a wonderful supporter of our queen program, and does an incredible job displaying the watermelons in each store to make the events over the top! Thank you Scott.

Queen Laurel and I joined NWPB along with Judy Bennett with Coleman's in Deer Lake Newfoundland for 3 in-store promotions. Again, the displays at each store were unlike I've ever seen in my life. When we say we're having a display contest...Coleman's says- "Bring it on!" Each store was very different in size, one store was The Gardens, and was the newest store made out of a former Hockey stadium, the next store was very nice and medium size, and the third store was the oldest and smallest, but I can't express through words the quality of staff and displays that went on at each store. No matter the sizes or ages of the stores, they were all incredible, unique and a staff every store needs to be a success. We visited Newfoundland with NWPB because the promotion fell during the GA watermelon season. Each Coleman's store were selling GA watermelon. The wonderful thing about the chain Coleman's is it's a family owned grocery store. Their staff is very active in each store, and the relationship Coleman's has with their staff, the communities of each store and relationships they maintain with local media, is exactly what we need to make a promotion exactly what we want to make it successful. Thank you, Judy Bennett for helping us promote GA watermelon, no one can promote in a store like Judy Bennett. Also, thank you NWPB for helping make these promotions possible. NWPB is helping our industry take our message with watermelons over and beyond what we could ever ask for.

From Newfoundland, Queen Laurel and I promoted watermelons in Roswell, GA at Roswell Farmers Market. This was such a unique farmers market and everyone that visited enjoyed the watermelon and the watermelon eating contest we held for the children.

We have so much more to share with you on our 2012 tour, and we'll pick up from here in our next issue to share our promotions with you.

Please take time to mark your calendars for our upcoming 2013 Georgia Watermelon Convention that will be held January 25-27, 2013 in St. Simmons at the King and Prince. This will be a new location for us, and we are excited to share this beautiful location with you while gathering for our annual convention filled with educational sessions, auction, banquet and lots of fun and fellowship.

Sincerely,

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



Cordele Watermelon Parade...Queen Laurel.



Laurel with all the children that participated in watermelon eating contest at The Gardens store in Newfoundland.



GWA Family at the Big Melon and Seed Spit during the Cordele Watermelon Festival.



Coleman's Display



Laurel with Ft. Benning watermelon display.



Ft. Benning Watermelon Eating Champion



Queen Laurel giving the kids a lesson on picking a good watermelon!



One of Coleman's Display



Roswell Farmers Market



Laurel on Coleman's Ad!



CTCB 570 AM Interview



Gordon Hunt and Queen Laurel during Coleman's children's eating contest.



Queen Laurel and Scott Davis with Military Produce Services Group



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NWPPB UPDATE

PMA 2012

PMA Fresh Summit in Anaheim, California continues to be a great success. We enjoy serving as a home base for all things watermelon on the show floor, where our industry members can meet, mingle, and make connections. The 11th Annual Watermelon Industry Reception is not possible without the continued generosity of our sponsors:

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On behalf of the NWA and NWPPB we'd like to thank you all again so much for your generosity and support of this event. See you in New Orleans next year!



Fan Favorite



Most original



Best watermelon.org

Carving Contest Winners!

It was a super sweet summer for watermelon. In celebration of July as National Watermelon Month, NWPPB held the 3rd Annual Watermelon Carving Contest open to watermelon lovers everywhere. Submissions came in from across the globe to enter a watermelon carving in to one of five categories: *Most Original*, *Funniest*, *Most Elegant*, *Best Fruit Basket*, and *Best Watermelon.org Carving* from Watermelon.org's carving database. Surprisingly, there were no entries in the *Best Halloween Jack O'Melon* category, which prompted the new *Best Fruit Basket* class to be determined. Each category awards a 1st, 2nd and 3rd place cash winner. A final grand prize category, the Fan Favorite, was voted on through a gallery hosted at the What About Watermelon blog.

The Watermelon Carving Contest "Fan Favorite" grand prize winner is Areeat Wancowicz with her watermelon carving display of a 50th Birthday Party and a Watermelon Bear. The other 1st place carvings were:

Most Original: Finding Nemo Clownfish
Funniest: Mike Wazowski from Monsters Inc
Most Elegant: Arc Sculpture
Best Watermelon.org: Hedgehog
Best Fruit Basket: Cupcake

You can view all of the carving contest entries on our Watermelon.org facebook page. Congratulations to everyone!

Watermelon

Makes a Splash at EPCOT®!

Watermelon is being featured at the 2012 EPCOT® International Food & Wine Festival from September to November in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. “Mr. Food’s Watermelon Patch” is placed at the entrance to the world showcase showcasing growing watermelons and storyboards educating attendees about watermelon’s many health and culinary benefits. Watermelon is also part of the “3D Disney’s Dessert Discovery Experience” and is being featured in Mr. Food’s culinary demonstrations. 2012 will mark the 17th annual festival, a signature event for the Walt Disney World® Resort and is a destination in itself for many park guests. The backdrop of the festival is the World Showcase at EPCOT with its 11 existing country pavilions plus 25 additional countries and regions showcasing unique selections of food, wines, spirits, beers, and entertainment.



The festival’s attendance is over 1.4 million guests in 45 days, with a healthy mix of international, domestic, and local attendees. Thank you to the watermelon queens who staffed the patch, Mr. Food, and to all those who could visit the festival.



Watermelon Queen Program

continues to soar in Canada

The Watermelon Queen program has proven to be an effective tool in watermelon awareness and sales this year more than ever. Retailers in Canada have increased their requests for watermelon queen visits at their stores and the payoff has been successful.

The National, Mar-Del, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina watermelon queens have all made appearances at in-store promotions and have been featured in radio, print, and television throughout Canada.

Aside from the already successful annual watermelon eating contest held by Longos each year, Colemans, CoOp Atlantic, and Sobeys have had watermelon queen-driven promotions at several of their locations during the US watermelon season.

Sobeys Atlantic has even managed to break the record for having the world’s largest watermelon display, showcasing 200 bins of watermelon in the month of August. The actual display was built August 23, 2012 and received a visit from Mar-Del watermelon queen Terra Tatman, as the watermelons displayed were from Maryland and Delaware.

Kevin Kane with Sobey’s remarks, “The Watermelon gave the Halifax region a lift in sales in just one week. The display was awesome and the customers are still talking about it!”

NWPB is thrilled to have coordinated and supported these promotions, bringing the effectiveness of watermelon queen visits to Canadian retailers this year. We hope that next year we will see even more retailers requesting queens to build awareness, traffic, and ultimately sales in the produce aisle. Thank you so much to Brad Brownsey and Cece Krumrine, NWPB retail merchandising representatives, for all their hard work in Canada.



Watermelon

Everywhere!

So far, this year has been a record year for watermelon in the media and at retailer stores. So much so that label companies have sent out over 4 million generic labels with our QR code on it this year alone! When scanned, the QR code links directly to our mobile-friendly website for easy access to recipes, carvings, tips, and nutrition.







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Membership

In the late 1700s when the U.S. became a nation, about 90% of the country was made up of farmers. In the late 1800s, about 30% of the country’s population was employed in farming. Today, less than 2% of all Americans work in agriculture.

How does that have anything to do with ‘Membership’? Take a look at your advocate on the front lines, the National Watermelon Association, and see what it means.

We have federal legislators that debate bills and pass laws that affect you, your business and your future. Over 96% of those legislators are far removed from farming and your way of life. You have an advocate that is front and center with the goal to ensure that those regulations, policies and laws will not impede your ability to grow your business and succeed. Your NWA membership guarantees that your voice will be heard.

We invest tens of thousands each year into production research with Universities and USDA labs that seek solutions to grower problems. Whether they be disease pressures, cosmetic issues (i.e. hollow heart) or potential uses of culls (i.e. ethanol), we are making a difference to help growers produce a crop and make a profit. Your NWA membership provides a forum for you to help guide future research initiatives.

We are on the forefront of food safety and state-of-the-art traceability by authoring our own food safety program called the “Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for the Fresh Watermelon Supply Chain”. We recommended a state-of-the-art traceability program that far exceeds PTI requirements, and will track each

individual watermelon from farm to consumer. And, we have advocated for federal legislation with Congress and FDA that will be commodity-specific and risk-based.

Our National Watermelon Queen is well trained to be a spokesperson and ambassador in promoting the health benefits and consumption of watermelon, and participates in many promotions throughout the U.S., and in recent years has reached out to Canada, Mexico and Japan. The program is complimented by eight (8) Chapter Queens who compete for the National position at our annual convention. If you have a promotion need, we have the expertise to make it successful.

We publish three communications programs that keep our membership up to date on our programs and news that is key to the watermelon industry. The Vineline is our quarterly member magazine that is sought by all of our members. The Off The Vine newsletter is issued via email quarterly to our members and supplements the magazine. And, our web site, www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com includes all NWA programs and services.

And last but certainly not least, we hold one of the most fun-filled industry conventions every year. Crisscrossing the country over 450 industry members gather to learn about new trends, locate suppliers, determine policy and programs for the coming year, raise funds through the auction to finance those programs, share fellowship, and have a lot of fun.

The complex and integrated nature of the industry is making membership more valuable than ever before. The services provided by the association are becoming more important because we are in a world that is moving quicker.

The NWA was organized by the commodity itself in 1914 to provide a focused and direct benefit to the industry, while businesses joined forces with their colleagues to make a difference. The extent of services provided is dependent on one thing – the members. The best associations are dynamically member-driven and tailor their programs to what the members want and need. That is the NWA. Join us.

Potential for Watermelon Diseases high after major water events

Following heavy rainfalls from the storms (remnants of Hurricane Isaac) over Labor Day weekend in Illinois, a University of Illinois crop scientist warned vegetable growers to be on the lookout for outbreaks of downy mildew of basil, downy mildew of cucurbits, Phytophthora blight of cucurbits, and Phytophthora blight of peppers throughout the state.

“These diseases are caused by oomycete pathogens,” said Mohammad Babadoost, professor of crop sciences at the University of Illinois. “The excessive moisture in the soil due to the recent rainfall makes conditions perfect for these pathogens to spread. We will closely monitor the development of these diseases and release recommendations, as needed,” he said.

Downy mildew of basil, caused by the oomycete pathogen *Peronospora belbahrii*, is a new disease in Illinois, first detected in 2009. This disease now occurs in Illinois every year. Downy mildew develops very rapidly and can cause 100% crop loss in a short period of time. Growers may not realize their basil has a disease because the most noticeable symptom on affected plants is yellowing, resembling a nutritional deficiency.

Downy mildew, caused by *Pseudoperonospora cubensis*, affects all cucurbit crops (cucumber, gourd, muskmelon, pumpkin, squash, watermelon, zucchini). The pathogen overwinters in the southern U.S. where cucurbits are grown during the winter. It progresses northward with cucurbit production each spring. The pathogen might have moved from the South to Illinois by the Isaac storm. The first symptom of cucurbit downy mildew is usually the appearance of indistinct, pale green areas on the upper leaf surface.

Phytophthora blight, caused by *Phytophthora capsici*, is one of the most serious diseases of cucurbits and peppers in Illinois. It will likely develop in cucurbit and pepper fields with a history of Phytophthora blight. The infection usually appears first in low areas of the fields where soil remains wet longer. *P. capsici* causes crown rot, vine lesions, and fruit rot in cucurbits, and root rot and crown rot of peppers.

Source: University of Illinois, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences; Debra Levey Larson



Downy mildew on cucurbits

Lawsuit seeks FDA action on food safety



The Washington, D.C. - based Center for Food Safety has brought a lawsuit against the Food and Drug Administration and the Office of Management and Budget for their failure to issue regulations required by the Food Safety Modernization Act. The environmental advocacy group filed the lawsuit on August 30, ‘because food safety rules have been unlawfully delayed by more than a year and a half’, according to a release.

The lawsuit seeks a court to issue a deadline requiring the FDA to enact Food Safety Modernization Act regulations, according to the release. The lawsuit would also prohibit the Office of Management and Budget from delaying FDA compliance with the deadline. “If the Obama administration has lost the political will to make FSMA a reality, we’re here to help them find it,” Andrew Kimbrell, executive director of Center for Food Safety, said in the release. “It’s a disgrace that a crucial, lifesaving law sits idle while the bureaucracies of FDA and OMB grind along without a hint of results. The American people shouldn’t have to wait another second for safer food policies that are already law.”

David Gombas, senior vice president of food safety and technology for the United Fresh Produce Association, said it is hard to determine who is holding up the food safety rules. “If I had to make a phone call to find out what its status was, I wouldn’t know who to call,” Gombas said Aug. 31.

Critics say the delay in the food safety regulations puts Americans at risk.

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In anticipation of November’s presidential election, United Fresh posed questions about critical industry issues to the Obama and Romney campaigns. Below are the responses from the campaigns.

Romney Campaign Responds to Questions



Obama Campaign Responds to Questions

IMMIGRATION - Congress has failed repeatedly to enact comprehensive immigration reform. The fruit and vegetable industry relies upon a strong, stable and mostly international workforce to bring our products to consumers in a timely and efficient manner. Our industry needs an adequate, legal workforce so we can remain competitive in the global marketplace. What is your plan to eclipse the rhetoric that has dominated this debate and enact comprehensive immigration reform in the next Congress?

Romney Campaign - As president, Mitt Romney will implement a national immigration strategy to address our nation’s broken immigration system. He will reach across the aisle and work with Congress to forge lasting solutions. Mitt Romney understands and appreciates the critical role that foreign workers play in the fruit and vegetable industry. He also understands that our current system for issuing visas to temporary, seasonal workers is broken. Too often, harvest or tourist season passes before temporary worker visas are approved. Indeed, in 2006 and 2007, 43% of all applications for temporary Agricultural workers were not processed on time. As president, Mitt Romney will make the system for bringing in temporary agricultural workers and other seasonal workers functional for both employers and workers. He will get rid of unnecessary requirements that delay issuance of a visa, and he will speed the processing of applications. A legal immigration system that works will provide a lawful alternative to workers who would otherwise enter illegally and employers who face the choice of either turning to illegal labor or reducing operations.

Obama Campaign - Our immigration system has been broken for too long. I believe in comprehensive reform that strengthens our economy and reflects our values as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. I support legislation—that until recently had bipartisan support—that would invest in border security, hold employers accountable, demand responsibility from undocumented immigrants while creating a path to legal status, and reform the legal immigration system to attract the best and brightest and keep families together. And until Congress acts, my administration is taking important steps to secure our borders and enforce our immigration laws in a way that is more fair, efficient, and just. Today, by many measures, the Southwest border is more secure than at any time in the past 20 years. Illegal border crossings are at a 40-year low and the Border Patrol is better staffed than at any time. Immigration officials are prioritizing the deportation of criminals, rather than young people who were brought here illegally through no fault of their own and are pursuing an education.

AGRICULTURE REGULATON - Our members are using cutting edge technology and utilizing research to make our food supply healthy and safe, while responding to consumer demand for fruits and vegetables. We are business owners and operators that create thousands of jobs – but we cannot be saddled with burdensome regulations. Can you shed some light on what USDA & EPA should and should not be doing from a regulatory point of view? What do you believe these agencies should be doing to ensure their regulatory policies take into account the tools that farmers need to ensure their own competitiveness, and the work producers are doing to meet consumer demand while being good stewards of the environment?

Romney Campaign - Farmers are good stewards of the land because they derive their living from the land. With this fundamental truth in mind, Governor Romney realizes that farmers are looking for certainty and predictability when it comes to both new and existing regulations promulgated by the EPA. Too often, issues such as land and water use, air quality, and resource access are dictated by staff level actions and initiatives, or by NGOs that sue the EPA to force a settlement they deem appropriate for farmers. All of these activities occur with very little input from key stakeholders, including farmers, or with full transparency in the decision making process. The inconsistent use of fully-vetted science to support changes in farming practices, as well as the lack of peer review or cost analysis, leaves farmers vulnerable to bureaucratic overreach, reducing their competitiveness in today’s global marketplace.

Obama Campaign - I believe strong and prosperous agricultural communities lead to a strong and prosperous America. That’s why I have signed three historic trade agreements with Panama, Columbia, and South Korea which will create tens of thousands of jobs by further increasing exports. I am also expanding regional food markets and have bolstered the number of farmers markets by 53 percent since 2008. Under my leadership, agriculture has been one of the fastest-growing parts of our economy, creating one out of every 12 American jobs. I know farmers want to work their land; they don’t want to spend days upon days on paperwork. With smart, sustainable policies, we can continue to grow our agricultural economy and protect our environment for ourselves and our children. That’s why my administration has worked with farmers to identify and reduce regulatory burdens on agricultural producers and streamlined federal oversight of economic activities in rural America. I know that farmers are ultimately the best stewards of our lands and I am committed to working together to find innovative solutions that ensure farmers are competitive in the global market.

FARM BILL - The 2008 Farm Bill made historic investments in the specialty crop industry, focusing heavily on nutrition, research and many other priorities. We are pleased that an industry that represents half of all cash crop receipts in America now has a seat at the agriculture policy table. It is imperative that the next Administration continues this recognition. As you weigh farm policy issues, how do you perceive the fruit & vegetable industry participating in the debate and crafting a 21st Century agriculture policy? Will you work to maintain those investments in specialty crops and what do you believe is the role of specialty crops in America’s future agriculture policy?

Romney Campaign - Agricultural policy in this country is evolving, moving away from decades of government intervention and subsidies toward a more market-based system. Governor Romney appreciates the importance of federal investment in initiatives the federal government is uniquely positioned to undertake, such as research on and help with pest and disease control. These are valuable investments that benefit both producers and consumers, and for which federal investment is necessary. Governor Romney also recognizes that the United States cannot remove government assistance for American farmers in a global marketplace where other nations continue to heavily subsidize their own producers. He will pursue pro-trade policies that encourage all governments to promote free and fair competition, while opening new markets for American farmers around the world.

Obama Campaign - Specialty crops are one of the many important components of our agricultural system. Fruits, nuts, vegetables and other similar crops are vital components for the health and well-being of the nation. They also contribute about \$18 billion to our economy each year. That’s why I have endorsed a farm bill that recognizes the diversity of American agriculture and the importance of providing access to healthy foods by supporting programs that focus on fruits, vegetables, nuts and organic crops. I am also committed to seeing these products widely adopted as part of a healthy American diet. To help families make healthier food choices, my administration has revised the dietary guidelines to reflect the latest science on diet, health and physical activity. And we are ensuring children have access to more nutritious food by bringing more fruits and vegetables into our schools. Today, more than 31 million children participate in the National School Lunch Program and over 11 million participate in the School Breakfast Program. Raising the nutrition standards for programs like these benefit everyone: our children, our families, and our farmers.

TAXES - One of the most onerous taxes that impact our members is the death tax. If Congress and the next Administration do not take action, the current law will sunset, and in 2013 will revert back to a 55% tax rate and an exemption of \$1,000,000. At these levels, our members would be forced to comply with paying high taxes instead of creating jobs and investing back into businesses and technology. Would you be an advocate in urging Congress to extend the current estate tax policy? If not, what is the tax rate and exemption amount you support?

Romney Campaign - As president, Mitt Romney will seek a full repeal of the death tax, which he recognizes is a huge concern for farmers. Agricultural families have many of their resources tied to the land and limited liquid assets to pay exorbitant taxes when a farm is passed from one generation to the next. These families are forced to close their business, sell their land, and eliminate jobs to pay the death tax. A Romney Administration will focus on creating jobs by cutting taxes and government red tape, and encouraging American entrepreneurship.

Obama Campaign - I am calling on Congress to extend the middle class tax cuts for the 98 percent of Americans making less than \$250,000 for another year. In fact, my proposal extends tax cuts for 97 percent of all small business owners in America. But at the same time, we need to ask the wealthiest to pay their fair share. I remain opposed to the extension of tax cuts for those with household incomes above \$250,000 and support the return of the estate tax exemption and rates to 2009 levels, which would return the top tax rate on estates to 45 percent and reinstate the \$7 million per-couple estate tax exemption. This would exempt all but the wealthiest 3 in 1,000 decedents from tax. Together, these proposals would reduce our deficit by \$968 billion over 10 years.

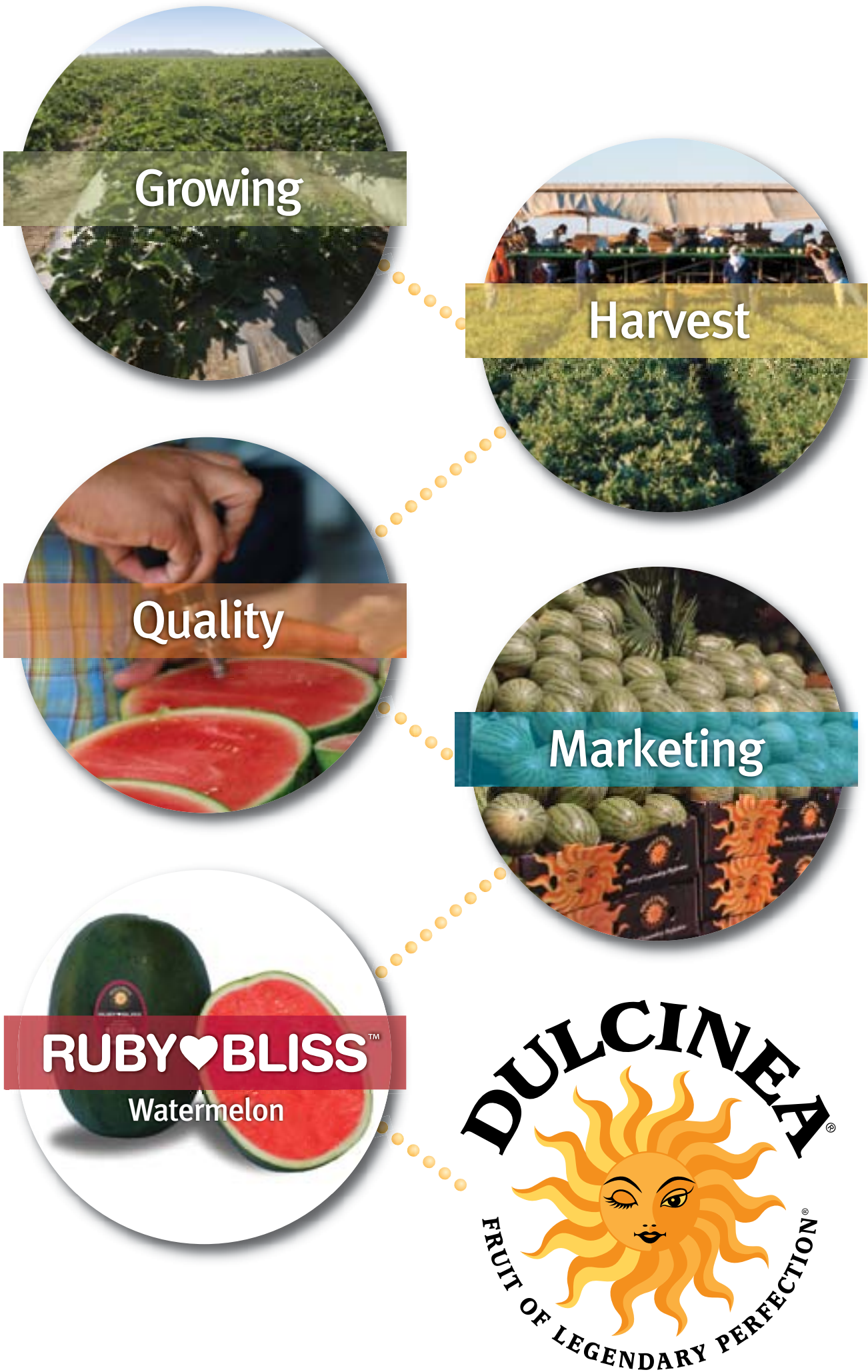
FOOD SAFETY - Congress passed the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act which brings several improvements to our nation’s food safety. The produce industry continues to make significant strides in adopting practices that reduce the incidence of foodborne illness associated with fresh produce. With greater regulatory oversight, and greater investment by the industry into food safety, how can your administration ensure that food safety events (detections, outbreaks, recalls) are conducted in a way that protects public health without imposing crippling costs and liabilities on produce industry companies? Do you believe that food safety programs that are mandated by federal regulations are of benefit to the general public, and therefore should be funded largely by the federal government?

Romney Campaign - Thankfully, American farmers and producers, specifically the produce industry, have a long history of taking responsibility for food safety. Preventive practices are the best tool to reduce the incidence of food-borne illnesses, provide more control over the potential risks of contamination, and are generally the most cost effective. Governor Romney believes preventative practices are best developed by growers, handlers, processors, and others in the supply chain with specific knowledge of the risks, diversity of operations in the industry, and feasibility of potential mitigation strategies. Governor Romney believes the FDA must collaborate with industry, in cooperation with state agencies and academia, to develop specific guidance for the commodities most often associated with food-borne illness outbreaks. A Romney Administration will prioritize this type of cooperation and collaboration with industry on the part of all agencies charged with protecting public health.

Obama Campaign - When I took office, our food safety system needed to be updated – 1 in 4 people were getting sick every year due to food-borne illness, and children and the elderly were more at risk. Each year, foodborne illness affected 48 million Americans, hospitalizing a hundred thousand and killing thousands. I established a Food Safety Working Group to help look at how we can improve America’s food safety system. I also passed the most comprehensive reform of our nation’s food safety laws in decades – giving FDA the resources, authority and tools they need to make real improvements to our food safety system. We are looking for creative ways to coordinate with the food industry and take advantage of modern technology to achieve our food safety goals, including being able to rapidly and effectively trace contaminated foods. We are making it easier for farms of all sizes to reduce their own food safety risks by developing an online tool. Effectively managing risk is important to all producers, and having an acceptable food safety program is in the best interest of consumers, buyers, and the farmers themselves. I am committed to working to ensuring that food safety regulations do not place an unreasonable burden on the food industry.

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Illiana Report

Grab your tennis shoes because you are going to need them to keep up with the fantastic summer Queen Sidney had representing the Illiana Watermelon Association.

During June Sidney attended the Knox County Chamber of Commerce dinner in Vincennes, IN. We were privileged to attend the MASDA luncheon at the Joe Kelsay farm in Indianapolis and serve them the famous watermelon salsa. Mr. Kelsay is the Indiana Director of Agriculture.

A quick return home took us to the annual Old Oaken days in Oak-town. What a fun day of seed spit contest, watermelon eating contest and what would a festival be without a parade with Brad Toney and family driving Queen Sidney. Thank you Kim Cardinal for sponsoring this event!

July 4th was hot! We served watermelon to cool people off at Big Lots and then headed over to the traditional July 4th parade. Things were great until half way through the parade when a beautiful thunder storm appeared. Those watermelon umbrellas really do come in handy. Our sponsor for the day was Just For Fun Photography. We headed to Chicago and our first stop was Sunset Foods in Highland Park, Northbrook, Lake Forest, Libertyville, and Long Grove, IL. Thank you so much R.H. Dietz & Sons for your sponsorship. What fantastic stores!

Three days later and we were off to the Joliet area. There Jewell was promoting Mouzin Farms, our sponsor. Dennis Mouzin joined us along with Ross Chastain, National Queen Katelyn Kelley with Miss Eleanor, Florida Queen Christine Chaloupka, and South Carolina first runner up Brook, and her mother, Lisa Miller at the Jewel grocery stores. What would a trip to Joliet be without supporting Ross Chastain at the Chicagoland Speedway. Who knew trucks could be so exciting! The girls had a fantastic time handing out watermelon to Ross and the other drivers. It was wonderful to have such a fantastic welcome from everyone there. We greatly appreciate the contributions to the Riley Children's Hospital.

Our next stop took us to Indianapolis. We began there with Kroger in-store promotions sponsored by Wabash Valley and Mouzin Brothers and a visit to Riley Children's Hospital. There are truly no words to express how fantastic this hospital is to each and everyone that enters their doors. They welcomed us at their Progressive Dinner. The following morning we were off to Race for Riley to present them with a check for \$2,000 that was raised at the truck race in Joliet, IL. Amazing is all that we can say! Chef Poon arrived to help us with his creative phenomenon at the Kroger stores and on WXIN and WTHR television. Just being with him makes a person excited. His energy and talents are an unexplainable gift.

Meijer stores were next on our list in the Indianapolis area, with Mouzin Brothers as our sponsor. We visited stores from the north tip of Indy to the Greenwood/Southport area.

Next we were off to visit the Marsh stores sponsored by Sunstate Produce. We went from downtown Indy to Bloomington to Zionsville to Muncie and Carmel. Our tour with Marsh, thank you to Tim Doerstock, ended with the Symphony on the Prairie, featuring a salute to the Beatles.

Summer wouldn't have been complete without the annual Knox County Watermelon Festival where Queen Sidney served as a judge. She said it was just as challenging as competing. Thank you to Nowaskie Melons for your sponsorship and donation of watermelons!

Fall felt like it was in the air for our final promotion at a Salute to WWII Veterans at the Indiana Military Museum, now open at the former site of Wabash Valley Growers in Vincennes. Watermelon was enjoyed by all and collections were taken for the museum. It was like a walk through history that many of us could never imagine but sincerely appreciated. Thanks go to our sponsors for the weekend, Melon Acres, AFC Farms and Wabash Valley Growers. The watermelon was free, and over \$3,000 was collected in donations for the Museum!

Queen Sidney looks forward to seeing everyone in the coming months, but for now we just want to thank everyone that helped in any way possible to help us to Promote Illiana Watermelons!



Queen Sidney at Sunset Foods/ Fantastic Truck!



Chef Poon and Sidney "cutting up" at Kroger.



Queen Sidney with Sunset Foods



Meijer welcomes Queen Sidney



Queen Sidney makes donation at Riley Go Kart Races



Queen Sidney and Ross Chastain serving watermelon



All the lovely ladies at Ross Chastain's race



Grand Opening of the Vincennes Military Museum




Queen Sidney and IWA promoting Ross Chastain



Queen Sidney at the Military Museum




Queen Sidney at Riley Children's Hospital with a little cutie Queen



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Mar-Del Report

Greetings from the Mar-Del Association!!! Our summer season has been a busy one and Terra has done an excellent job promoting our product. To start where we left off we attended the BBQ Fest in Washington, DC with Coastal Growers. We served watermelon to the thousands of attendees during the two day event. Thank you Will Hales & Travis Hastings of Coastal Growers for sponsoring us to this event. Next we taped our 2012 TV Watermelon Commercial with both the Maryland Secretary of Ag. Buddy Hance and the Delaware Secretary of Ag Ed Kee. This commercial was a hit with our two local stations. Then Terra attended Ag Day at the Shorebirds Stadium. Terra served watermelon, threw out the 1st pitch and rode the car around throwing out T-Shirts with the mascot in between innings. The next event was quite a tasty event. The Buy Local Cookout at the Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley’s mansion. This cookout showcases local produce in many unique and tasty recipes. Watermelon was used in several dishes at the cookout. Then we were off to the De. State Fair. We were at the fair for 3 day, the first being Kids Day. Terra did a demonstration on how to make watermelon sundaes which the kids loved and Terra’s father made the Assoc. a large watermelon bean bag toss that was a big hit. Thank you Mr. Tatman and the Tatman painting crew for a great job! The 2nd day we did another food demonstration and while doing this the film crew from Content Delaware filmed and interviewed Terra for a clip on their website (contentdelaware.org), then she was interviewed by WMDT at the Fair. The next day was Governors Day. Terra taught Delaware Governor Jack Markell how to pick a ripe watermelon and spent the day with him. We would like to thank the people that took the time out to their busy schedules to help us at the booth. Shelley Givens, Marlene & George Collins, Pat & Amanda Goslee, Caitlin (Dobly) Givens, Jay Rider and Josh Rowe. The next day we were at the Sharptown Carnival serving slices. Then Wright’s Market Watermelon Festival. Terra was the Master of Ceremonies for the 2012 Wright’s Watermelon Princess Contest and helped out with the other events during the day. Thank you Charles & Michelle Wright for a wonderful day! Shortly after was the National Queen Tour of Mar-Del but this year not only were we treated with Katelyn Kelley but the GA Queen Laurel, FL Queen Christine and the SC Queen Katie. What a treat! We definitely made an impact with 5 Queens. We started the tour with an interview w/ WMDT 47 and then went to the Rehoboth Boardwalk to serve slices. After the Boardwalk we went to Giant Foods in Rehoboth for slices, a carving and watermelon eating contest. The next day we had an interview with Froggy 99.9 radio. During the break we had a seed spit in the hallway of the radio station where Terra won but we gave Randy the male award with a crown. Next was the Laurel Auction Market where we raised \$9000. Thank you to all the buyers and supporters. We really appreciated you generous donations. This year the girls were treated with a sweet ride thru the auction a 1953 3600 Chevrolet Truck used by the Dickerson Family to haul watermelons to the block. The truck was restored by the family and we appreciate them letting us use it again for hauling watermelons and beautiful ladies. The Queens were asked to be part of a video that will air on the Race channel with Michael Waltrip and Ross Chastain. This was a great treat for the girls.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that came out to help at our promotions. We really appreciate it !! A special thank you to Jay Rider and Jordan Calloway. So many promotions and not enough space. In the next vineline I will continue the Nat. Queen Tour, talk about our Mar-Delicious Campaign in Boston and Canada.

Until then..
Watermelon Wishes,
Dawn Collins
Promotions Coordinator



BBQ Fest in Washington,DC with Travis Hastings and Will Hales of Coastal Growers



Taping the 2012 TV Commercial with the Md. Sec. of Ag Buddy Hance and De. Sec. of Ag Ed Kee



Terra during Ag Day at the Shorebirds Stadium



Buy Local Cookout in Annapolis, MD with MD Governor Martin O’Malley



Teaching De. Governor Jack Markell how to pick a ripe watermelon.



A big thank you to the helpers @ the fair. Pictured here are Mar-Del President, Jay Rider, Multicorr’s Josh Rowe, Past President Mark Collins, Dawn Collins and Queen Terra



Thank you Charles, Michelle and Morgan Wright for all the fun at your festival!!



Pictured here at their interview with Channel 47 WMDT, National Queen Katelyn and Terra



Thank you everyone that helped at the Rehoboth Boardwalk and to the De. Dept. of Ag for putting it together.



Giant Foods in Rehoboth Beach. Lots of watermelon activities and fun!



The Queens pictured here with Whiskey and Randy from Froggy 99.9 after the seed spit and Interview



Our lovely Queens with President Jay Rider at the Laurel Auction Market



A huge thank you to all the generous buyers at the Block Auction



The Queens pictured here with Michael Waltrip



This bus never hauled anything this pretty before



This bus never hauled anything this pretty before

Proud partner with NWA for 4 years.

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North Carolina Report

Greetings from the North Carolina Watermelon Association

We have had a very busy season traveling and promoting watermelons throughout North Carolina. Queen Rachel has been on quite a few in-store promotions with Harris Teeter, Food Lion, and Roses sampling the delicious watermelons grown here in North Carolina and handing out stickers, coloring books, and recipes and bringing smiles to everyone around her.

Queen Rachel began June with an in-store promotion for Harris Teeter in Charlotte, NC where she greeted customers and handed out samples of sweet, juicy watermelon. Robert Tubbs, Harris Teeter watermelon buyer, stopped by to meet Rachel and was kind enough to stand for a picture. We continued our tour with a trip to Variety Wholesale (Roses) in Elizabeth City, NC. This is Variety Wholesale's first store with a full service grocery side. Mr. Craig Kintner, store manager, had a beautiful display set for Rachel to sample watermelons and greet customers. At the end of the day Rachel had doubled watermelon sales for that week. Rachel was honored to be invited by Military Produce to visit the Commissary at Cherry Point to help bring a smile, and a slice of delicious watermelon, to our brave men and women who protect our country. Alicia McLamb (2011 Queen) was as lovely as ever and made an appearance at the Food Lion Appreciation Day in Salisbury as Rachel was booked for the Fair Bluff festival. Queen Rachel's tour continued with visits to our state farmers markets where we were treated to a watermelon eating contest. We issue a big thanks to Mr. Nick Augostini for all his hard work slicing and preparing the watermelons for all visitors to have a sample. We were also honored to have our first runner-up Sydney Edwards fill in for Queen Rachel at the Lumberton Farmers Market.

Queen Rachel made appearances on three TV stations including WRAL on August 2nd, News 14 and UNC TV on August 3rd. Queen Rachel was also privileged to be interviewed by radio station WOXL 96.5 in Asheville. Rachel had a lot of fun attending our states watermelon festivals this year. Mrs. Francis Bunch was kind enough to chaperone Queen Rachel at the Fairbluff Watermelon Festival. Queen Rachel also attended the Murfreesboro festival where she was treated to a helicopter ride, a beautiful fireworks display and rode in the Murfreesboro parade in a beautiful float made for her by Percy and Michael Bunch. Rachel was treated to a tour of Michael Bunch's farm on the following morning. Many Thanks to Mr. Percy and Mrs. Francis Bunch for opening their home to Rachel and myself during our stay at the Murfreesboro Watermelon Festival. The 24th of August found us at the Winterville Watermelon festival where Rachel was treated to concerts by "Chairman of the Board" Friday night and "Tyler Farr" and "Montgomery Gentry" on Saturday night. Rachel rode in the Festival parade on Saturday morning.

Rachel and I would like to issue a big Thank You to everyone for making this a wonderful and fun filled watermelon season!

Sincerely,
Denise Harrell
Queen Coordinator



Queen Rachel standing proudly with our military at Cherry Point NC



Queen Rachel standing proudly with our military at Cherry Point NC



Visiting with Roberts Tubbs during in-store promotion at Harris Teeter



Sydney Edwards showing that "Goodness does Grow" in North Carolina



Queen Rachel with the winners of the watermelon eating contest in Asheville, NC



Mr. Nick Augostini and the Asheville Farmers market team take a break to have a picture with Queen Rachel



Alicia McLamb at Food Lion Customer Appreciation Day



WRAL's Brian Shrader interviews Queen Rachel and Ronnie Best, manager of Raleigh Farmers Market



Schools take time to visit with Queen Rachel at the Raleigh Farmers Market



Our future watermelon queens pose with Queen Rachel at Murfreesboro Watermelon Festival



Michael Bunch and Queen Rachel tour the watermelon fields



Queen Rachel is honored to dance with Chairman of the Board at Winterville Watermelon Festival



Winterville Watermelon Festival finds Queen Rachel riding in the parade all smiles



Delicious watermelon samples at Harris Teeter store promotion



Craig Kintner with Queen Rachel at Roses in-store promotion



Visiting Tammy and Pat at WXOL 96.5 in Asheville



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South Carolina Report

What a busy summer for SC Watermelon Queen, Katie Taylor! On June 5th, Katie appeared on WRJA, Making It Grow in Sumter, SC where she prepared a delicious watermelon ham roll for the viewers. It was then off to Charleston, SC on June 9th, where Katie threw out the first pitch at the River Dogs Baseball Game. Brad Boozer brought in the melons and Gilbert Miller along with an intern helped to prepare the slices for the crowds. The Peggy Denny Show in Greenville, SC featured Katie on June 19th, where she prepared 5 different recipes and was interviewed by Peggy for the 30 minute show. WLTX hosted Katie on the Morning Show on June 21st in Columbia, SC, and then she was interviewed on a local radio talk show to finish out the morning.

Eleanor Bullock and National Queen, Katelyn Kelly, joined us in Charleston, SC for an appearance on Low Country Live. Katelyn and Katie were both interviewed and then prepared a recipe during their segment. From Charleston, we traveled on to Hampton, SC and the annual Hampton Watermelon Festival. The girls both participated in the parade and then enjoyed visits with the O’Neal family at Coosaw Farms in Fairfax, the Dicks family at F.H. Dicks in Barnwell, Rusty Kinard at Kinard Farms in Lodge, and Mark Williams at Williams Farms in Islandton.

On June 27th-29th, Katie and I traveled to Kentucky and the Nascar Truck race in Sparta where Ross Chastain was sponsored by the SC Watermelon Association. Brooke and Ross appeared at a Sam’s Club in Jeffersontown, Kentucky and another Sam’s Club in Florence, Kentucky promoting our delicious watermelons.

Piggly Wiggly in Sumter, SC was our next stop on July 3rd. Thanks to Bennie Hughes for arranging this promotion for us. We traveled on to Charleston, SC where we met Deborah Harrison and Florida Queen, Christina Chaloupka for Bi-Lo promotions across Charleston and Mt. Pleasant.

Stevie Still was the featured grower on July 5th, at the Paris Island Marine Base Commissary in Paris Island, SC. Brooke Allender, our first-runner up joined Stevie at Paris Island for this promotion.

July 12th-15th, found us in beautiful Newfoundland, Canada. Katie was overwhelmed with the wonderful hospitality and the huge turnouts at the locations where she appeared. Coleman’s hosted us in St. John’s and Mount Pearl, and Swyer’s hosted us in Bonavista where southern grown melons were featured. Each store presented Katie with a cake and beautiful flowers in appreciation of her visit. We were also treated to a spectacular whale watching adventure by the Swyer family on their Boston Whaler.

While Katie was in Canada, Brooke Allender, filled in for Field Day in Blackville, SC on July 12th. Brooke thoroughly enjoyed getting to go out into the field with Gilbert Miller as well as the delicious luncheon that was served afterwards.

Brooke again filled in on July 19th-22nd, for a NASCAR Truck Race in Joliet, Indiana. Thanks to the Illiana Association for inviting all of the queens to attend this function that was sponsored by their association.

Katie attended the Pageland Watermelon Festival in Pageland, SC on July 21st. Billy and Barbara Jenkins’ granddaughter, Carla Griffin, rode in the parade with Katie and thoroughly enjoyed waving to the crowds along the way.

Harris Teeter in Rock Hill, SC hosted Katie on July 28th.

On August 2nd-5th, Katie met with other queens for the MarDel Queen Tour. This visit included visiting Melon 1 and filming a commercial with Michael Waldrip and Ross Chastain for the SPEED Channel. The girls also appeared at Whole Foods and worked the Crab Feast in Annapolis, Maryland. Thanks to Dawn Collins for coordinating this wonderful event.

The NASCAR Truck Race in Pocono, PA, was attended by Brooke Allender on August 2nd-5th. Brooke and Ross Chastain appeared at the grand opening of the largest ShopRite Store in the US.

Ingles in Duncan, SC hosted Katie on August 15th for their grand opening.

Brad Boozer joined us at the Citadel on August 18th, where melon slices were passed out continuously during their 3 hour long pre-season scrimmage game. This was our first appearance at the Citadel and we were a huge hit with the crowd.

Watermelon Slices were served to the Clemson Tigers on August 21st, the Carolina Gamecocks on the morning of August 22nd, and the Presbyterian Blue Hose in the evening on August 22nd.

Katie’s final appearance for the month was on August 25th, at the Schutzenfest Festival in Ehrhardt, SC. As always, we were warmly welcomed by the community and enjoyed the fellowship luncheon after the parade.

Until next time,
Ann Bryant
SC Promotions Coordinator
864-303-3995
abryant028@charter.net • ann.bryant@furman.edu



Katie making an appearance on ETV “Making It Grow” in Sumter, SC.



Visiting with the F.H. Dicks family in Barnwell, SC.



Throwing out the first pitch at the River Dogs Baseball Game in Charleston, SC.



Katie and Ross Chastain at the Sparta, Kentucky Speedway promoting those delicious watermelon slices prior to the race.



Whipping up watermelon recipes on “The Peggy Denny Show” in Greenville, SC.



First Runner-Up, Brooke Allender, filling in at the Pocono, Pennsylvania Speedway and getting to visit the ESPN Booth with Georgia Queen, Laurel Higginbotham.



Describing how to pick the perfect melon on the Columbia Morning News in Columbia, SC.



Over 250 children came to the Coleman’s store in Mount Pearl, Newfoundland to visit with Queen Katie.



National Queen, Katelyn Kelly, and Katie making a Watermelon Ham Roll and giving an interview on Low Country Live in Charleston, SC.



Watermelon Queens promoting their product at Whole Foods in Maryland.



Katie and Katelyn visiting with the O’Neal family at Coosaw Farms in Fairfax, SC.



Our first year cutting watermelons at The Citadel was a huge success.



Visiting with Rusty Kinard at the Hampton Watermelon Festival in Hampton, SC.





Brooke Allender enjoyed her trip to Clemson and getting to meet Dabo Swinney and his Tigers.



Royalty getting ready for their ride in the Hampton Watermelon Festival Parade.




Katie enjoyed getting one on one time with Steve Spurrier who was very pleased that our Watermelon Queen was a Gamecock!



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Texas Report

Howdy and “warm” wishes from the Lone Star State! I hope all of our friends in the watermelon world have had a wonderful, prosperous season. I truly can’t believe it is already September and fall is almost upon us again. Of course, here in the Rio Grande Valley fall weather may still take months to arrive.

In the last newsletter I mentioned how Queen Kimberly and I were looking forward to the summer promotions and that is what we have been busy doing. We have really enjoyed visiting with all the friendly customers in the different stores and Kimberly has done a great job of getting people to try different recipes like the watermelon salsa. It has been interesting to see some of the reactions to the recipe, because when people look at the salsa, they think it is tomato. Then, when they find out it is watermelon, they have to try it. Many people have told us they would make the recipe at home and they appreciated receiving the recipe cards. Queen Kimberly also did a great job of encouraging people to take the different recipes even if they did not want to try samples, and she has done a fantastic job of educating customers on the health benefits of watermelon. She has also taught customers how to pick out a good watermelon, which they really appreciate. She has also been promoting watermelon on her Facebook page. She loves her job, and it shows!

The first few of our promotions were in San Antonio where we visited different HEB stores. Each store is a little different and has a different clientele so we experience something new every time we are there. Next, we took a long drive through miles of windmills to the friendly city of Lubbock where we visited the United Fresh Markets. Queen Kimberly got to work helping people pick out watermelon and handing out promotional materials as they received the delicious samples. After Lubbock there were more HEB promotions where we worked with a past Texas Queen, Emily Laffere, who sets up these promotions and is almost always there with us working alongside us. Thank you, Emily, for being a great example for Kimberly and for making the job even more fun!

Finally, I want to invite everyone to our convention this year at South Padre Island, Texas. It is November 8th-10th and should be a lot of fun. We will also be honoring Miss Wanda on Saturday evening, so plan on attending! It will be at the Isla Grand Hotel (956-761-6511) so make your reservations as soon as possible and contact me if you do not receive registration forms or need any other information.

Many blessings to all of you,
Barbara Duda TWA Queen Coordinator/ Secretary
Bcduda62@gmail.com
(956)605-7636



Queen Kimberly beginning the day at a United Fresh Market



Queen Kimberly and the 2006 Texas Watermelon Queen, Emily Laffere.



Saying “Hello” to another beauty



Kimberly and another watermelon lover



Queen Kimberly autographing her first watermelon



Kids are some favorite visitors!



One more autograph for a birthday



Queen Kimberly handed out numerous promotional materials.



Lots of watermelon was sold in Lubbock.



Handing out samples of the watermelon salsa



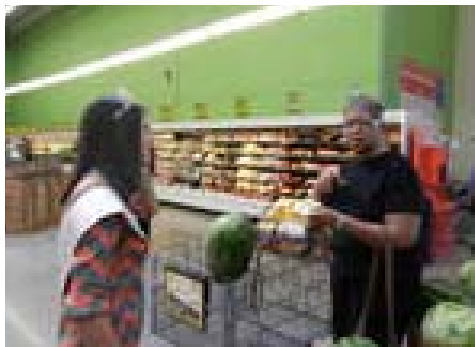
Kimberly helping a customer choose a watermelon



The kids loved the stickers and coloring books and especially the watermelon!



Queen Kimberly and Charles, an HEB produce man



Another happy customer



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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. But please don't forget that watermelons can be enjoyed 365 days a year! As we prepare and plan for next season, the new year 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? 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 in spectacular Las Vegas, NV once again on January 19, 2013. This convention holds multiple purposes, first off 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! After all 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.



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Evaluation of virus resistant rootstocks to manage watermelon vine decline and diseases caused by other potyviruses

Watermelon vine decline caused by Squash vein yellowing virus (SqVYV) is an emerging disease that has caused severe losses to Florida watermelon growers in recent years. Papaya ringspot virus type W (PRSV-W) is one of several watermelon-infecting potyviruses long present in the southeastern U.S. Long term effective management of virus diseases of watermelon is currently limited by a lack of resistance to several viruses including SqVYV and PRSV-W. Previous research has identified Citrullus and Lagenaria germplasm that show resistance to these viruses and is being investigated in ongoing experiments. Efforts to introduce this resistance to commercial watermelon cultivars through conventional plant breeding techniques are expected to take time and may be difficult due to the genetic distance from commercial watermelon types. Therefore, short term alternative methods for deploying this virus resistance in watermelon are desirable. Grafting is one such method, and with partial funding from NWA we evaluated resistant germplasm as rootstocks for commercially available triploid (seedless) watermelon scions. This strategy has been used to control other diseases of watermelon (particularly soil-borne diseases) and has also been reported as effective for several viruses.

We tested a range of cucurbit germplasm (previously identified as resistant to SqVYV or PRSV-W) as rootstocks for commercial triploid watermelon scions. Self-grafted triploid watermelon plants and non-inoculated grafted plants of each type were included as controls. Leaves of the scion were mechanically inoculated twice

with Florida isolates of either SqVYV or PRSV-W, monitored for visual symptoms of infection, and rated weekly for a month on a 1 to 9 scale of symptom severity. At one month, stem tissue from below (rootstock) and above (scion) the graft union was collected and tested by enzyme linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) using either SqVYV antiserum developed during a previous NWA funding cycle or commercially available PRSV-W antiserum.

Symptoms of virus infection were observed at three (SqVYV) or two (PRSV-W) weeks post-inoculation in inoculated plants. Typical symptoms were observed for both viruses including vein yellowing, chlorosis and petiole collapse of lower leaves for SqVYV, and leaf silvering, and mosaic and leaf deformation of upper non-inoculated leaves for PRSV-W. The average symptom severity rating of ten inoculated plants for each rootstock type was not significantly different for self-grafted commercial triploid watermelon or virus resistant rootstock plants. Control plants remained symptomless and were confirmed virus-free by ELISA.

Our results from the rootstocks tested in these experiments suggest that no effective resistance to SqVYV or PRSV-W is translocated from the rootstocks to the susceptible commercial triploid watermelon scions. Thus, grafting to virus resistant rootstocks appears to have a

limited role in the management of viral diseases of watermelon, especially those caused by SqVYV and PRSV-W. No significant reduction in virus symptoms was observed in scions grafted onto any resistant rootstock tested. Virus was detected in large numbers of scions. This was especially the case for SqVYV, and we would expect these infected scions to decline as we observed in our earlier studies.

Research will continue on development of SqVYV resistant germplasm as sources of resistance. Such resistant lines will be released for use in public and private watermelon breeding programs.

Scott Adkins, Craig Webster, Richard Hassell, William Turechek and C.S. (Shaker) Kousik

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Development and evaluation of quantitative early monitoring techniques for Squash vein yellowing virus, the cause of watermelon vine decline

Watermelon vine decline caused by whitefly-transmitted Squash vein yellowing virus (SqVYV) is an emerging disease that has caused severe losses to Florida watermelon growers in recent years. Although the late stage symptoms of watermelon vine decline are basically diagnostic for the presence of SqVYV, early symptoms are not as obvious and may be confused with other causes including the recently introduced whitefly-transmitted Cucurbit yellow stunting disorder virus (CYSDV) and Cucurbit leaf crumple virus (CuLCrV). During the two most recent



NWA funding cycles, we have developed a simple and reliable ELISA (enzyme linked immunosorbent assay) diagnostic test for early monitoring of SqVYV, and a quantitative early monitoring real-time PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test for SqVYV that is able to detect the virus up to eight days before the earliest symptoms of vine decline appear.

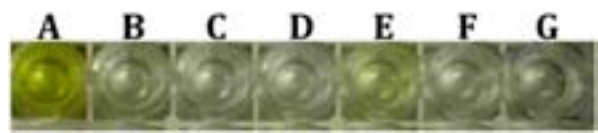


Figure 1. ELISA diagnostic test for SqVYV. The yellow color visible in samples A and E indicates the presence of SqVYV, the virus that causes watermelon vine decline.

Accurate identification is the first step in management of any pathogen including SqVYV. Multiple, independent detection methods are normally required to identify a given virus with certainty. On the other hand, a rapid, reliable yet simple virus detection method is required to routinely analyze sufficient numbers of plant samples from commercial farms with certainty. ELISA diagnostic tests are routinely used for this purpose with other viruses due to their specificity and simplicity. With partial funding from NWA, a rapid and reliable ELISA test for SqVYV was developed. This test complements the two previously developed complex diagnostic assays (tissue blots and conventional PCR) that have significant drawbacks limiting widespread implementation. Development of an easily visible yellow color in the newly developed ELISA test indicates the presence of the virus in the plant sample (Figure 1).

The SqVYV ELISA diagnostic test has been demonstrated for growers, and transferred to scientists at University of Florida and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for use in their diagnostic programs. This ELISA diagnostic test is expected to detect the virus if it is present in sufficient concentration in the sample. However, a more sensitive (able to detect smaller amounts of SqVYV) and quantitative nucleic acid-based diagnostic test for SqVYV would be useful as a second, independent means of early monitoring. During the current funding cycle, we developed and optimized a robust real-time PCR diagnostic test for SqVYV to address this need. A region of the SqVYV genome that was unique among cucurbit viruses was specifically targeted for this test.

Validation of the ELISA and real-time PCR diagnostic tests with greenhouse and field samples demonstrated that both tests were capable of sensitively detecting SqVYV in watermelons and several related cucurbits, while showing no significant reaction with healthy (non-infected) watermelon and squash plants. A selection of additional viruses commonly infecting watermelons and other cucurbits in Florida, including recently introduced whitefly-transmitted CYSDV and CuLCrV, and long-present aphid-transmitted Papaya ringspot virus type W (PRSV-W), Watermelon mosaic virus, Zucchini yellow mosaic virus and Watermelon leaf mottle virus, did not react in the SqVYV ELISA or real-time PCR diagnostic tests. In contrast, a variety of SqVYV isolates collected from watermelons and cucurbit weeds were detected by both tests highlighting their ability to detect multiple isolates of the virus. Both of these diagnostic tests are expected to detect all SqVYV isolates currently known given the similarity of SqVYV isolates collected across Florida during the past six years.

The sensitivity of the newly developed real-time PCR diagnostic test was compared with our previously developed SqVYV ELISA and conventional PCR diagnostic tests. Al-

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VIRUS continued on page 42

Melon genome sequenced

A consortium of nine research centres has obtained the melon genome, a horticultural specie with high economic value around the world. It is the first time that a Spanish initiative that unites private and state-run centres has obtained the complete genome of a higher organism, in this case a plant, which produces flowers and seeds. Also, it has been done by applying massive sequencing technologies.

Besides the complete melon genome, scientists have obtained the particular genomes of seven melon varieties. The study is published in the magazine Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). The scientific Project has been lead by Pere Puigdomènech, at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), and Jordi Garcia Mas, at the Institute for Research and Technology in Food and Agriculture (IRTA). Both scientists work at the Center for Research in Agricultural Genomics (CRAG), in Barcelona. Also, the team lead by Roderic Guigó, at the Genomic Regulation Center has made an important contribution to the project.

The Melonomics project was launched by the Spanish Genome Foundation. Nine research centres have been involved in it, having the support of 5 companies and of five Spanish autonomous communities. Results have shown that the melon genome has 450 millions of base pairs and 27.427 genes. It is much bigger than the genome of its nearest “relative”, the cucumber that has 360 millions base pairs. “This difference is due mainly to the amplification of transposable elements. We didn’t find recent duplications within the genome, which are very common in plant species”, highlights Puigdomènech.

“We have identified 411 genes that can be related in disease resistance. They are few but, nevertheless, the melon has a high capacity of adaptation to different environments”, explains the CSIC scientist. During the work, when comparing this genome with others that are near phylogenetically, they have observed how changes occur to the genome of this species, which is known for its high variability. Another question of interest is that related to the ripening of the fruit, a process which determines fruit characteristics such as taste and flavour. Scientists have identified up to 89 genes related with some aspects of this process: 26 genes related to the carotenoid accumulation -which gives the colour to the melon flesh- and 63 related to the sugar accumulation and the taste of melon. 21 genes out of the last 63 had never been described before.

“Knowing the genome and the genes related to the characteristics of value for agriculture will allow us to improve this species for obtaining more disease resistant varieties and with better organoleptic properties”, points out the IRTA scientist Jordi Garcia Mas. Melon belongs to the family of cucurbits, that also includes species such as cucumbers, watermelons and squashes. Cucurbits have relatively small genomes. “These are species of high financial interest, especially in the Mediterranean, Asian and African countries. Diseases that affect them, such as the mosaic virus

Research sweetened with DNA sequence

Colored melon flesh is full of nutrients. Plant breeders may develop even better varieties now that the melon genome with hundreds of DNA markers has been mapped. People smell them, thump them and eyeball their shape. But ultimately, it’s sweetness and a sense of healthy eating that lands them in a shopper’s cart.

Plant breeders now have a better chance to pinpoint such traits for new varieties, because the melon genome with hundreds of DNA markers has been mapped by scientists with Texas AgriLife Research. That means tastier and healthier melons are likely for future summer picnics. “This will help us anchor down some of the desirable genes to develop better melon varieties,” said Dr. Kevin Crosby, who completed the study with Drs. Soon O. Park and Hye Hwang. “We can identify specific genes for higher sugar content, disease resistance and even drought tolerance.”

The results are reported in the Journal of the American Society of Horticultural Sciences. They are fleshy, edible cucurbits grown worldwide in a multitude of varieties. Not only are they economically important, the scientists noted, but they are a favorite among consumers internationally. Scientists from France and Spain already had completed partial maps of segments of the melon DNA sequence.

Controlling Gummy Stem Blight on Grafted Watermelon Seedlings with Fungicides

Watermelon seedlings grown as transplants are susceptible to gummy stem blight, caused by the fungus *Didymella bryoniae*, during greenhouse production. Cucurbits used as rootstocks to graft watermelon—bottle gourd (*Lagenaria*) and hybrid squash (*Cucurbita*)—also are susceptible.

Gummy stem blight can be particularly serious on grafted watermelon seedlings. After grafting, plants must be misted or held at high relative humidity for one week while the graft heals. This long, uninterrupted period when leaves stay wet can lead to a serious disease outbreak. The objectives of this project were i) to test five rootstocks for susceptibility to gummy stem blight and ii) test fungicides that control gummy stem blight in the field for control on grafted watermelon seedlings in the greenhouse.

All five rootstocks tested, bottle gourd ‘Macis,’ ‘Emphasis,’ and ‘WMXP 3945’ and hybrid squash ‘Strong Tosa’ and ‘Shintosa Camel,’ were equally susceptible to gummy stem blight. They had as much gummy stem blight as seedless watermelon. The pattern was the same for both the number of plants that developed symptoms and the area of the cotyledons covered with gummy stem blight.

Several fungicides registered on cucurbits were phytotoxic on bottle gourd, hybrid squash, or watermelon seedlings. Inspire Super at the field rate (in 50 gallons

in the case of cucumber or fungi can cause high financial losses. Therefore, we hope the genome sequentiation will have an important impact on improving this crop”, says Pere Puigdomènech.

According to figures of 2009 from the Food and Agriculture Organizations (FAO) of the United Nations, the production of melon worldwide is 26 million tones every year. Spain is the fifth biggest producer in the world. Approximately a third part of the production is exported, which makes Spain the biggest exporter of melon. The melon genome project has been lead by the Center for Research in Agricultural Genomics (CRAG), which is a consortium of different institutions and universities, where they have done the sequencing and assembling of the genome. The Center of Genomic Regulation has annotated the genome.

Also, the project has had teams working on it at different centres and universities: the Pompeu Fabra University (Barcelona), the CSIC’s Centro de Edafología y Biología Aplicada del Segura of the CSIC (Murcia), the Centro Nacional de Análisis Genómico (Barcelona), the Universidad Politécnica in Valencia and Wisconsin University (U.S.). Furthermore, the company Roche Diagnostics has facilitated technologies in order to help the genome assembling.

Journal reference: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Provided by Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

The Texas researchers connected those segments with new findings in their study to complete the entire melon genome map.

For the study, the Deltex ananas melon was crossed with a wild melon called TGR 1551. More than 100 of the offspring from that cross were grown in the AgriLife Research greenhouses at Weslaco, Crosby noted. DNA was extracted from leaf tissue collected 21 days after planting. Results from these tests were integrated into partial maps created by other researchers.

Previous knowledge of melon DNA was like two sets of directions - one from Miami to Houston and the other from El Paso to Los Angeles. That would make one wonder how to get from Houston to El Paso. The study by Crosby’s group, in essence, devised the path from Miami to LA and all points between.

In addition to the complete map, the researchers located genetic markers linked to fruit sugars, ascorbic acid (vitamin C) and male sterility, which is useful for developing hybrid varieties.

The trio said the genetic map will be helpful for future studies in identifying fruit sweetness, quality, size, shape and resistance to disease.

Source: Texas A&M AgriLife Communications

of water), Luna Experience at the field rate, and Kocide caused injury to all three cucurbits. Inspire Super and Luna Experience still caused injury on the rootstocks at the field rate in 100 gallons of water, but not on watermelon. Difenconazole (Inspire) and cyprodinil (Vanguard) were not phytotoxic when used alone, but they were phytotoxic when combined (Inspire Super).

Tebuconazole in the fungicides in Monsoon and Luna Experience stunted seedlings of hybrid squash, bottle gourd, and watermelon. Cutting the concentration by one-half did not eliminate the stunting. Vanguard and Inspire provided the best control of gummy stem blight on grafted seedless watermelon seedlings, even in a humidity chamber. However, neither Vanguard nor Inspire is registered for use on cucurbits. Thus, these fungicides are not options at this point.

Manzate and Switch reduced the number of plants with gummy stem blight (disease incidence) compared to the water-sprayed check, but not to an acceptable level. However, Manzate and Switch did significantly reduce disease severity on both rootstocks (less than 0.5%). It was not clear why Switch was less effective than Vanguard, as both contain the same amount of cyprodinil. Topsin M was not effective because of widespread resistance in the gummy stem blight fungus. The grafting process itself had no effect on gummy stem blight; the self-grafted control had as much disease as non-grafted seedlings.

If multiple fungicide applications are needed before or after grafting, it is crucial to use different products for each application to reduce the risk of fungicide resistance. The risk of resistance to Inspire, Vanguard, and Luna is medium to high. Mancozeb was relatively effective and has no risk of resistance. It should be the first choice for a greenhouse fungicide and should be used in rotation with Switch if additional control is necessary. Inspire Super and Luna Experience can be used but only on watermelon seedlings at the field rate dissolved in 100 (not 50) gallons of water.

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though all three techniques correctly detected SqVYV in most samples, the real-time PCR diagnostic test always detected SqVYV in additional samples demonstrating the increased sensitivity of this method. In addition, watermelon and squash plants inoculated with SqVYV in the greenhouse were monitored daily for symptoms of infection. Samples were collected daily for testing by the newly developed real-time PCR and previously developed conventional PCR and ELISA diagnostic tests. The real-time PCR diagnostic test detected SqVYV eight days before symptoms appeared in watermelon highlighting the promise of its use for early monitoring because the virus was detected one day earlier than by conventional PCR and two days earlier than by ELISA. In contrast, all three diagnostic tests detected SqVYV one day before symptoms appeared in squash.

Towards the goal of detecting two viruses with a single test, we also developed and optimized a robust real-time PCR diagnostic test for CYSDV. SqVYV, CuLCrV and PRSV did not react in the CYSDV real-time PCR diagnostic test. In contrast, CYSDV was detected by the real-time PCR diagnostic test in a selection of field samples previously determined to be infected with CYSDV by conventional PCR.

The ELISA and real-time PCR diagnostic tests we developed are able to accurately detect SqVYV in infected watermelon plants, even if they are also infected with closely related viruses. The sensitivity of the SqVYV real-time PCR diagnostic test allows it to reliably detect even small amounts of virus, making it possible to detect SqVYV in watermelon plants eight days before the earliest symptoms of vine decline appear. We will continue to improve the SqVYV and CYSDV real-time diagnostic tests. We are currently working to combine them into a single test capable of detecting both viruses, and to optimize them for virus detection in whiteflies. In the future, we would like to develop a single test for SqVYV, CYSDV, CuLCrV and PRSV-W so that these four watermelon viruses can all be detected at once.

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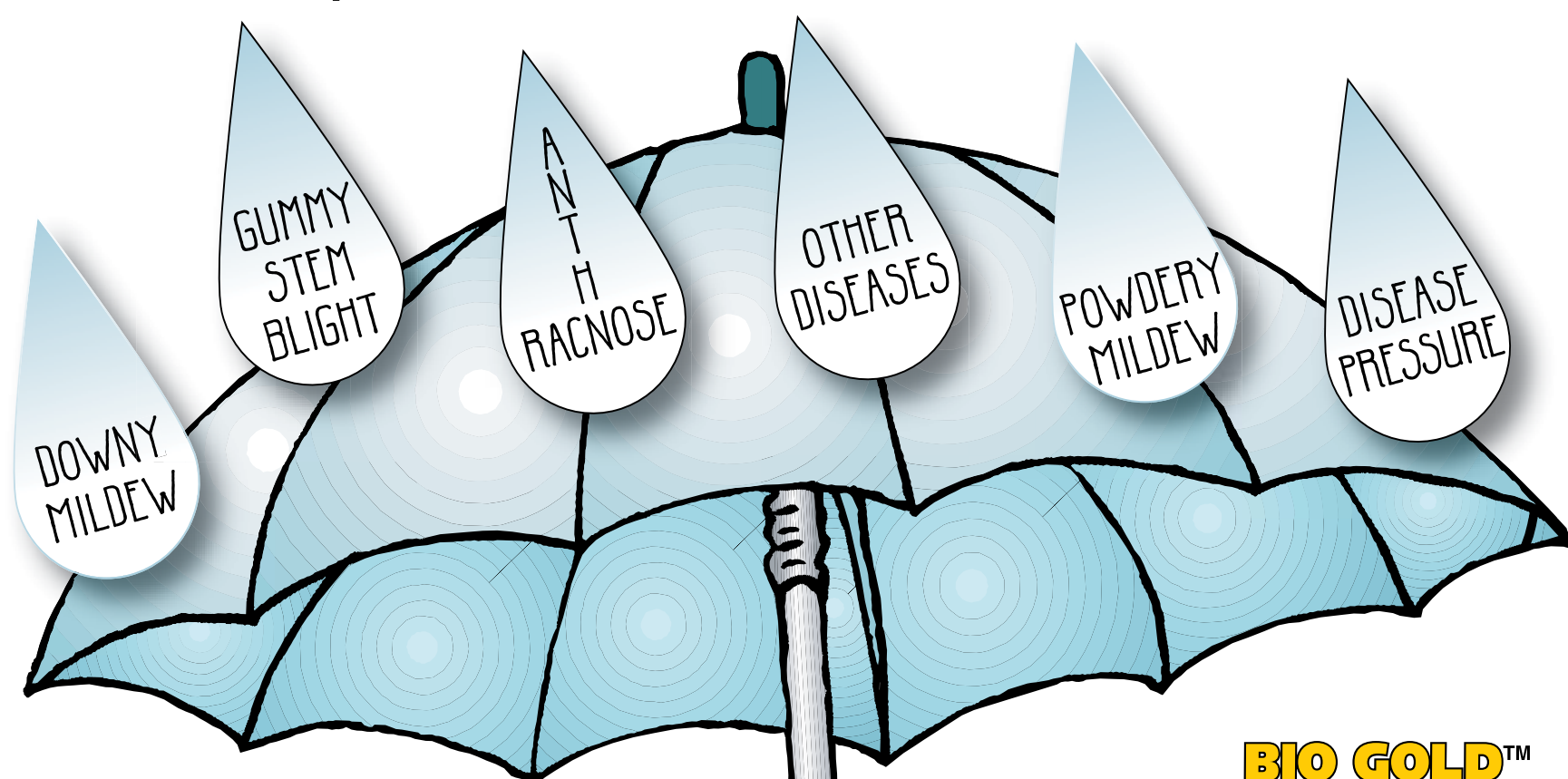
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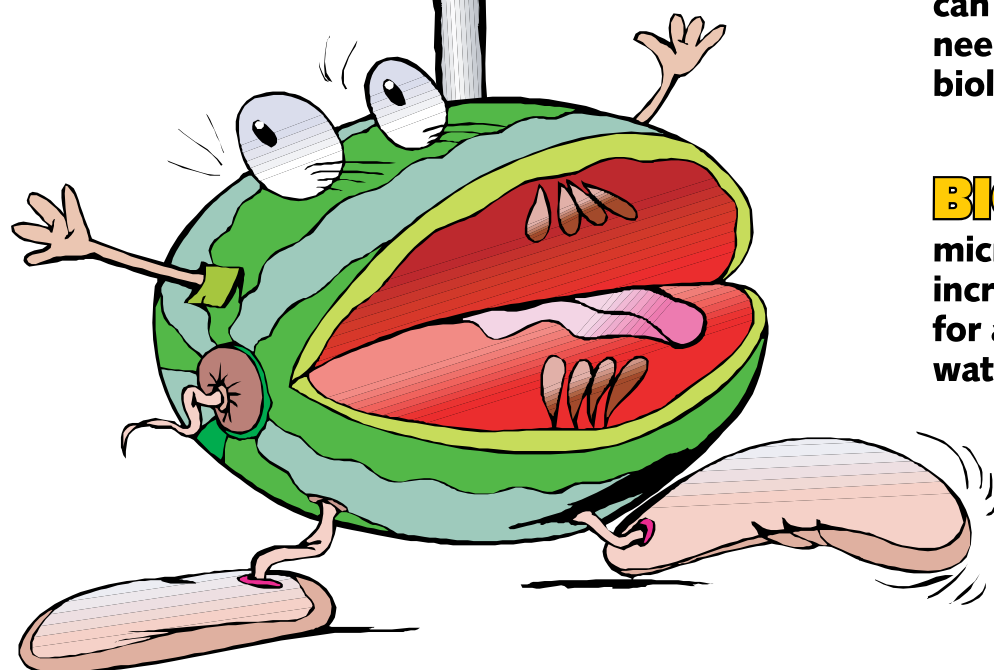
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