



New Transportation Services for NWA Members

At the February Annual Meeting the Board voted to participate in the Western Growers/C. H. Robinson Transportation Program. This innovative service is available exclusively to shipper members of participating trade associations and has moved over 80,000 loads since its inception in 2006. It was developed in response to concerns by the Western Growers Association Board of Directors regarding refrigerated transportation costs, equipment supply and service quality. The success of the Program in resolving these issues for Western Growers shippers led to licensing of the Program to other produce and nursery trade associations throughout the U.S. Present licensees include the major associations in California, Florida, Texas, Georgia and Idaho. The Transportation Program is operated on behalf of the participating trade associations by C. H. Robinson Worldwide (CHRW), a leading international 3rd party logistics company.

The following is a summary description of the Program:

- Designed to combine shipper tonnage to leverage rates, equipment supply and service
- All types of transportation services are provided, including truckload, LTL, intermodal, air and ocean freight
- A CHRW account manager is assigned to each shipper, providing one-call service for all transportation and logistics needs
- On Monday morning shippers are emailed a weekly transportation market forecast and rate projections from their local shipping areas to destinations throughout the U.S. and Canada.
- Freight rates are customized according to the needs of each shipper. Rates offered include seasonal or yearly pricing, ad and promotional pricing, weekly lid pricing and spot market rates designed to take advantage of short term favorable changes in the transportation market
- CHRW provides 24/7/365 communication and monitoring of all shipments
- The large CHRW carrier base (over 50,000 contract motor carriers) provides excellent surge capacity during seasonal and holiday demand periods
- CHRW assumes liability for logistics related loss and damage claims on shipments via its carriers
- CHRW user friendly software allows shippers to easily analyze their transportation costs and to calculate the carbon footprint of their shipments

Use of the Transportation Program is free, without shipper volume commitments and is designed for use by NWA members throughout the country

The Program is turn-key and can be accessed through a single phone call or email to C. H. Robinson. For further information or immediate use, please contact Dante Galeazzi at 1.866.722.2194 or at Dante.Galeazzi@chrobinson.com



PTI COMMITTEE REAFFIRMS MISSION, PLANS ROBUST ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRY

More than 50 members of the Produce Traceability Initiative Steering Committee met in February to engage in a frank and open discussion about the initiative's status and direction. The committee members unanimously reaffirmed their commitment to the two-year-old initiative's goal to drive whole-chain traceability through common data standards, supported a more robust engagement and dialogue with all industry sectors, and recommended a closer partnership with GS1 US to bring expertise and operational support to the initiative.

"The intent of our meeting was to measure PTI progress, identify and prioritize issues facing us, and discuss plans to address these," said Cathy Green, steering committee

PTI continued on page 19

USDA, FDA Coordinating Efforts to Ensure Food Safety

The USDA and FDA are working together to achieve the goals of enhancing the safety and quality of fresh produce in ways that take into account the wide diversity of



farming operations. While USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is in the midst of evaluating a proposed marketing agreement for the leafy green industry, the FDA is currently developing a proposed produce safety regulation. It is expected these products will take into account the diverse nature of farming operations and that any marketing agreement would conform to any regulations that may be promulgated by FDA.

The success of these efforts depends on the feedback and comments received from growers and other produce safety stakeholders. AMS will continue to review the comments that have been submitted to USDA on the proposed marketing agreement.

To further inform its planned rulemaking, the FDA announced the establishment of a docket to receive information about current practices and conditions for the production and packing of fresh produce and practical approaches to improving produce safety. The FDA will work with AMS to have the testimony from the AMS hearings placed in the FDA docket for consideration by the FDA. The FDA encourages all interested persons to submit information they believe will inform the development of safety standards for fresh produce at the farm and packinghouse, as well as strategies and cooperative efforts to ensure compliance with those standards.

Study examines produce food safety outbreaks

The Alliance for Food and Farming released a new report analyzing the cause of produce-related foodborne illness outbreaks in the United States. It noted that 12.3 percent of all U.S. foodborne illness outbreaks from 1990 to 2007 were linked to fresh produce; the rest were caused by other foods.

Of all of the produce-specific outbreaks, ONLY 2.2 percent originated from the growing, packaging, harvesting or processing of the produce items; over 10 percent were associated with improper handling after leaving "the farm." The next leading sources were mishandling at foodservice, community events and in the home, respectively.

The report concluded that improvements are still necessary when it comes to training and educating both consumers and restaurant employees on safe handling of produce.

Findings showed that 65 percent of outbreaks traced back to a produce item can be attributed to improper handling in a restaurant, most likely the result of cross contamination or improper employee hygiene. Mishandling at community events caused 14 percent of the produce-related outbreaks, followed by mishandling in the home which represents 13 percent of outbreaks associated with produce.

Based on the results of this study, changing consumer food safety behaviors in the home environment is also a key educational tool to include in food safety by the federal government.

Many thanks to the Alliance for Food and Farming for their work and analysis of this important industry and consumer issue. The analysis of CDC data and related findings provide valuable information and insight for the produce supply chain in our ongoing quest to improve our food safety capability and deliver healthy, delicious fresh produce every bite, every time.





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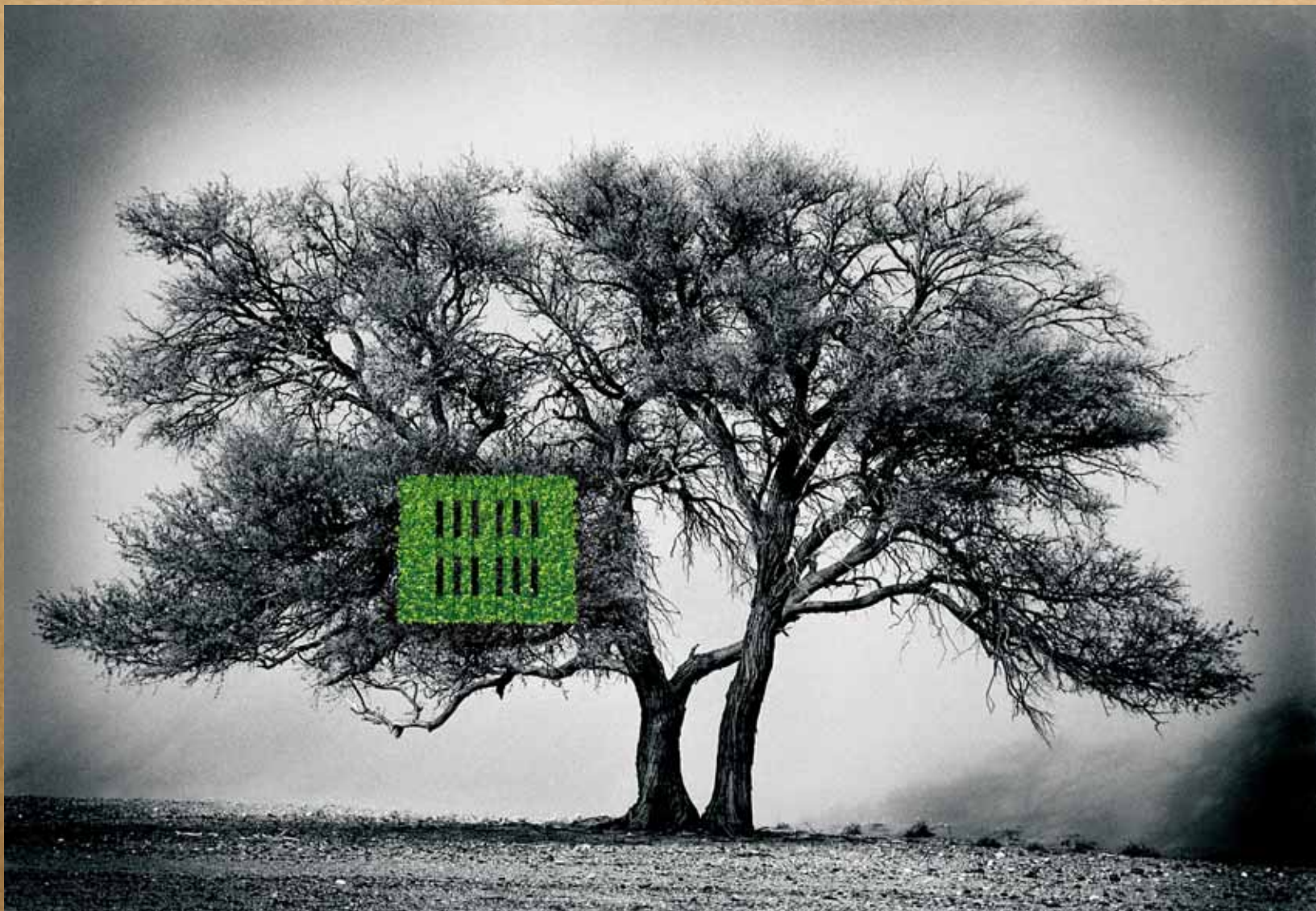
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URGENT NEWS YOUR ACTION IS NEEDED



What is the difference between a High Risk crop and a low risk crop? The answer is the dollars that are required by many customers for additional audits and other food safety measures because of the category's produce outbreak history.

Did you know that a Watermelon by definition is NOT a melon? Did you know that Watermelon has numerous differences to true melons, such as Cantaloupes?

Did you know that the FDA combines Watermelon in the melon category, which makes Watermelon a High Risk crop along with true melons? Even though FDA verifies that there are no outbreaks on record related to Watermelon production practices, our industry is expected to invest heavier than low risk crops?

Food Safety is a standard part of doing business for every crop. Consumers expect it, and the government will mandate it soon. However, being a High Risk crop when the data proves that Watermelon is not is a Major Issue.

Do you want to help to encourage FDA to separate Watermelon from the melon category? Log on to www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com, and follow the simple steps on the home page. A few minutes of your time could make the difference and save the industry hundreds of thousands of dollars in unnecessary costs.

Submit comments to FDA to encourage them to re-define the melon category and put Watermelon in its rightful place as a safe, healthy commodity. Send a letter to your Representative and both Senators in Washington asking them to contact the FDA Commissioner to make this change happen.

Please take 10 minutes to log on, and help the industry to be designated by FDA as the safe, healthy crop that we know Watermelon is.

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8-10		Mostly 45	Medium green
Days to Harvest		Planting Season	
85		SP, SUM, AU	

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Change in H-2A Rule Doesn't Favor Growers

Recently, the Department of Labor announced a final rule for the H-2A program. The H-2A final rule is the result of the Department of Labor's (DOL) review of the policy decisions underlying a previous revision of the H-2A regulations published in late 2008. According to a press release from the DOL, the review focused on the process for obtaining labor certifications, the method for determining the H-2A Adverse Effect Wage Rate, and the protections afforded to both the temporary foreign workers as well as the domestic agricultural workforce. The new rule went into effect March 15.

According to the DOL, the overall benefits of the final rule include increased wages for workers and greater access to the domestic labor market. The H-2A nonimmigrant visa classification applies to foreign workers coming to or already in the U.S. to perform agricultural work of a temporary or seasonal nature. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security may not approve an H-2A visa petition unless the Department of Labor, through its Employment and Training Administration, certifies that there are not sufficient U.S. workers qualified and available to perform the labor involved in the petition and that the employment of the foreign worker will not have an adverse effect on the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers.

Western Growers President and CEO Tom Nassif responded to this change in the guest worker program: "Here we go again," Nassif said. "The Department of Labor is reversing the Bush Administration changes to the H-2A guest worker program, for the second time, which is likely to be met with a court challenge. This cycle never seems

to end. Meanwhile our nation's farmers are stuck with regulations that are cumbersome and not workable because they are too costly and ignore the realities of farming. This mess underscores the need for a legislative solution. We have provided that solution to this administration — a solution that enjoys bi-partisan support, a solution that enjoys support from both farm owners and farm labor groups. This administration must take the lead and encourage Congress to pass AgJOBS.

"Even with an economy that is suffering through 10% unemployed, domestic workers are not applying for these jobs," Nassif continued. "We know our produce is going to be harvested by foreign workers, the question is, will it be here in the U.S. or will it be abroad? We are already dependent on foreign energy, do we really want to become dependent on foreign food? Our government officials have got to quit tinkering around with regulations and really address the problem; it's time to pass AgJOBS."

Ag groups file suit to stop H-2A rule

The American Farm Bureau Federation and the North Carolina Growers Association have filed suit to stop implementation of a final rule for the H-2A program. The final rule introduces changes that farm labor advocates could make wages in some regions as much as \$2 per hour higher for guest workers.

The groups filed suit in federal court in Greensboro, N.C., requesting a temporary restraining order to stop implementation of the new H-2A rules. The restraining order claims that Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis violated the Administrative Procedures Act, Congressional Review Act and Regulatory Flexibility Act in an effort to shortcut the normal process for rule making.

The suit claims that the department didn't sufficiently complete the regulatory flexibility analysis and try to minimize the effect on small business. It is estimated that small businesses, defined as \$750,000 in annual gross income or less, make up about 95% of the companies that participate in the H-2A program.



The Department of Labor said in its rule making that the regulation would only affect 1.2% of all agricultural small business. However, Ron Gaskill, labor specialist with the Washington, D.C.-based American Farm Bureau Federation, said the department should have considered the composition of the firms that participate in the program, not the entire universe of agricultural companies. "Our

numbers estimate that we're talking about a rule that just in the cost alone will cut into 25% to 40% of net farm income in those small businesses," he said. The result will be displacement and loss of growers, he said.

"Small businesses are going to find their way out of those kinds of labor intensive agriculture," he said. Agriculture faces serious labor issues that must be fixed. "We've got to have a congressional fix," he said. "This is something that has got to be solved and solved soon," he said.

Judge decides on Restraining Order

On April 9th, the judge in the case denied the plaintiffs' motion for a TRO. The judge said (in a memo from the bench) that an evidentiary hearing was unnecessary because the Plaintiffs failed to carry their burden of demonstrating a likelihood of prevailing on the merits. What this means is the case will proceed normally, which could take as much as two years.

Farm Bureau believes AgJobs could be acceptable with some changes, including a provision for year-round agricultural labor and a wage rate formula different from the one now in place.



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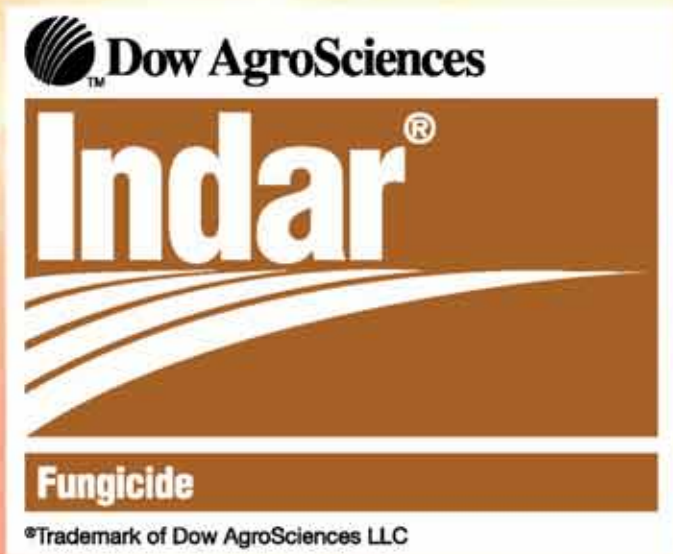
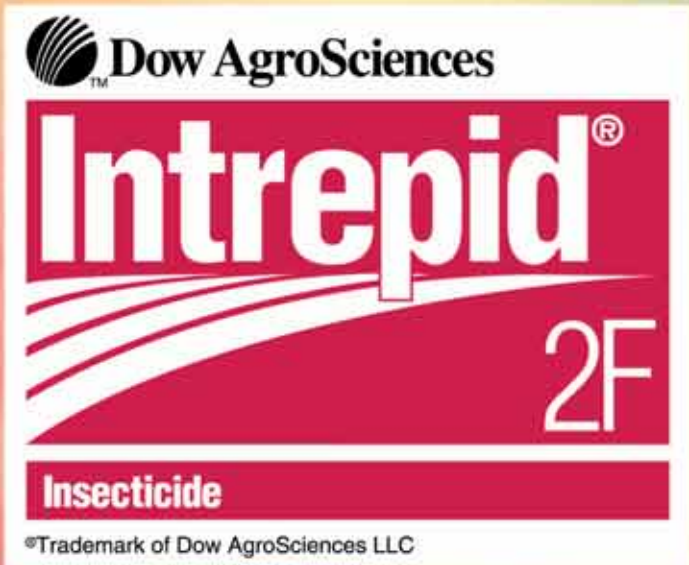


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EPA Sets New Rules on Diesel Engines

EPA is setting the first standards that will reduce emissions of formaldehyde, benzene, acrolein, and other toxic air pollutants from certain stationary diesel engines. The agency asserts these pollutants are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health problems and environmental damage.

“Improving air quality is one the agency’s top priorities,” said Gina McCarthy, assistant administrator for EPA’s Office of Air and Radiation. “Controlling emissions from these engines will save lives and protect our communities from serious health problems, including heart attacks, asthma and other respiratory illnesses.”

USDA proposes PACA fee increases

Industry license fees that enforce the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act will nearly double under a proposal from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The proposal, published March 11 in the Federal Register, would amend PACA to increase annual license fees from \$550 to \$995. Fees for a company’s branch locations would rise from \$200 in excess of nine locations, to \$600 for each branch location, the USDA said.

The maximum amount a licensee would pay per year under the proposal would increase from \$4,000 to \$8,000, the agency said. According to the USDA, only 56 firms currently meet maximum payment standards.

As of October 2008, the agency said there were 14,418 PACA licensees. Of that number, 4,125 were retailers and grocery wholesalers. Retailers and grocery wholesalers pay a \$100 application processing fee but no annual fee.

The agency said the proposed increase in fees would result in estimated revenue of \$12.4 million per year. AMS expects the PACA program will have adequate financing until

The emission limits apply to existing diesel engines meeting certain criteria for age, size, and use. EPA estimates that more than 900,000 of the engines generate electricity and power equipment at industrial, agricultural, and other facilities. The engines also are used in emergencies to produce electricity and pump water for flood and fire control. Emergency engines used at most residences, hospitals and other institutional facilities, and commercial facilities such as shopping centers are not covered by this rule.



To meet the emissions requirements, owners and operators of the largest of the engines will need to install emissions controls, such as catalysts, to engine exhaust systems. Emergency engines covered by this rule need to comply with operating requirements that will limit emissions.

EPA will issue final emissions standards for similar existing stationary engines that burn gasoline, natural gas and landfill gas, known as spark ignition engines, by August 10, 2010.

fiscal year 2015, when reserves will dip below mandated levels another fee increase may be needed. Comments — which can be e-mailed to Pacalicensefee@ams.usda.gov — received before May 10 will be considered before the USDA finalizes the regulation, the agency said. Robert Guenther, senior vice president of public policy for the United Fresh Produce Association, Washington, D.C., said in an e-mail March 11 that the industry will closely scrutinize the proposal’s effect on commercial operations.

“In addition, with such a significant increase it is imperative that USDA clearly articulate and explain the justification for the increase, how does the department plan to utilize these industry funds, and (whether) there will be similar increases two, three or five years from now,” he said.

PACA license fees last increased in 1995. PACA officials said in 2008 that license fee increases were necessary to keep the branch solvent.

PACA upholds contract requirements, mandates full and prompt payment for fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables in interstate and foreign commerce, removes unscrupulous individuals from the trade when needed and provides counsel on PACA trust protection.

E-Verify Misses Half of Illegal Workers

The system Congress and the Obama administration want employers to use to help curb illegal immigration is failing to catch more than half the number of unauthorized workers it checks, a research company has found.

The online tool E-Verify, now used voluntarily by employers, wrongly clears illegal workers about 54 percent of the time, according to Westat, a research company that evaluated the system for the Homeland Security Department. E-Verify missed so many illegal workers mainly because it can’t detect identity fraud, Westat said.

“Clearly it means it’s not doing it’s No. 1 job well enough,” said Mark Rosenblum, a researcher at the Migration Policy Institute, a nonpartisan Washington think tank.

E-Verify allows employers to run a worker’s information against Homeland Security and Social Security databases to check whether they are permitted to work in the U.S. The Obama administration has made cracking down on employers who hire people here illegally a central part of its immigration enforcement policy, and there are expectations that some in Congress will try to make E-Verify mandatory.

E-Verify correctly identified legal workers 93 percent of the time, Westat said. However, previous studies have not quantified how many immigrants were fooling the E-Verify system. Much of the criticism of E-Verify has focused on whether U.S. citizens and legal immigrants with permission to work were falsely flagged as illegal workers.

Sen. Chuck Schumer (NY) has fought expanding E-Verify because of its flaws, and said that the fact that E-Verify was inaccurate so often shows that it is not an adequate tool. “This is a wake-up call to anyone who thinks E-verify is an effective remedy to stop the hiring of illegal immigrants,” Schumer said.

A so-called worker verification process like E-Verify is considered essential to any immigration overhaul proposal that has any chance of approval in Congress.

Westat’s report, completed in December 2009 using data from the previous year, was quietly posted on Homeland Security’s Web site Jan. 28 along with a summary that pointed out E-Verify is accurate “almost half of the time.” “While not perfect, it is important to note that E-Verify is much more effective” than the I-9 paper forms used by most employers, the summary said.

Rosenblum, who has studied E-Verify, said Westat’s evaluation shows it doesn’t make sense to substantially expand and invest in E-Verify without fixing the identity theft problem. About 184,000 of the nation’s 7 million to 8 million employers are using E-Verify, the Homeland Security Department says on its Web site.

Congress gave DHS about \$100 million to spend on E-Verify in its 2010 budget.



Senator Lugar Co-Sponsors Bill to Relieve Labor Crisis in Agriculture

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (CA) announced that Richard Lugar (IN) joined bipartisan legislation to provide America’s famers with a steady and reliable workforce. “I am very pleased to have Senator Lugar join the other 21 cosponsors of this bill,” Senator Feinstein said. “More and more people are realizing that America’s agriculture



industry is supported by undocumented workers. In state after state, it’s clear that there are simply not a sufficient number of workers to carry out the necessary planting and harvesting of crops. This is true in the dairy industry, the sheep industry, in cultivating row crops and throughout all of agriculture. The Ag JOBS bill has been negotiated with growers and farm workers over more than a decade. It is good policy. I believe the votes are there to pass it on the floor. Hopefully it can be part of a comprehensive immigration reform bill in the future.”

“This legislation is important to maintaining domestically grown supplies of healthy foods. It incentivizes employers to hire a legal workforce and streamlines procedures for agriculture workers under the existing H-2A program where U.S. workers are not available,” Senator Lugar said.

The Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits and Security Act (AgJOBS) would reform the broken H-2A seasonal worker program, provide farmers with the stable, legal workforce they deserve, and offer a pathway to citizenship for hard-working, law-abiding immigrants already employed on American farms.

AgJOBS is a workable solution to the labor crisis facing our growers and farmers. It is a two-part bill. The first part meets the immediate needs of U.S. farmers by providing a one-time opportunity for experienced agricultural workers who commit to working in U.S. agriculture for the next 5 years to become citizens, if they first pay a fine and show that they are current on their taxes and undergo a criminal background check. Importantly, these workers will have encrypted, biometric identifiers, which provides, in effect, a biometric identifier for 1.35 million people who are undocumented but in the country today.

The second part meets the long-term needs of farmers by reforming the broken H-2A visa program so that if local workers cannot be hired, farmers and growers have a legal path to hire workers to harvest their crops.

Across the country, farmers are reporting that they do not have enough labor to plant, tend and harvest their crops, and that there are not enough workers to milk cows. As a result, farmers have been forced to decrease the size of their farms and switch to less labor intensive and less profitable crops. Efforts have been made for years to get Americans to do the work but they simply won’t do it.

Without reform in place, some farmers are simply closing up shop. American farmers have moved at least 84,155 acres of production to Mexico from California and Arizona alone. As a result, 22,285 jobs cultivating crops, including avocados, green onions and watermelon have also moved south of the U.S. border.

When farmers suffer, there is a ripple effect felt throughout the economy, including in farm equipment manufacturing, packaging, processing, transportation, marketing, lending and insurance. For every job lost on family farms and ranches, the country loses approximately three jobs in other agriculture-related industries.

More than 200 agricultural organizations support this legislation, including Western Growers Association, Dairy Farmers of America, National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, National Council of Agricultural Employers, Chamber of Commerce, United Farm Workers, Farm Labor Organizing Committee (AFL-CIO), and many more.

Reps. Howard Berman (CA) and Adam Putnam (FL) have introduced companion legislation in the House.



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Health care bill could mean new industry costs

Agricultural employers and other industry businesses will face administrative challenges and costs increases by 2014 as a result of just-passed landmark health care reform legislation.

House Democrats approved the Senate version of the health care reform, HR 3590, by a vote of 219-212. The legislation was signed by President Obama on March 23.

Details are still emerging about the \$940 billion health care reform package. The health care legislation holds significant administrative challenges and the economic burdens for growers. Many business and agriculture groups have expressed concern about health care legislation.

“We’re really concerned about the competitiveness of U.S. agriculture,” said Frank Gasperini, executive vice president of the Washington, D.C.-based National Council of Agricultural Employers. He noted only about 10% of farm workers now have employer-paid health coverage, and increasing that number will create a big jump in expenses. “It is very difficult to understand how a plan like this would fit for migrant or seasonal kind of workers like we have in agriculture,” Gasperini said.

The employer and individual mandates for health insurance coverage begin in 2014. The legislation makes an exception for employer mandates for companies with 50 or fewer full-time employees. If an employer has fewer than 50 full-time employees - defined as those who work 30 hours per week or more - that employer wouldn’t have to pay into the health care system for those employees. If an employer with more than 50 employees does not provide health insurance to employees - and one of the company’s workers gets a subsidy from the insurance exchange - then that company will pay \$167 per month per employee. If a company does offer coverage and employees cannot afford

EPA Calls for Scientific Review Of Proposed Runoff Standards

Congressman Adam Putnam (FL) welcomed an announcement from the EPA that it will delay a portion of its new and complex rules for nutrients in Florida waters and will invite a third party scientific review of the standards.

“EPA promised to review the rigor of their science when they met with me and other members of the Florida congressional delegation earlier this month,” said Putnam. “It appears they may have known their science was lacking. This has been an example of the danger of them charging ahead on a tight deadline with thousands of technical standards for every Florida water body when Florida’s Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Florida Water Management Districts don’t believe those standards are supported by science.”

In a letter to the Florida DEP, EPA said it expects to delay implementation of “downstream protection values” for nutrients in waters until 2011 and that it will consult with the FDEP on the scope of the scientific review. The

that coverage, then the employee who can’t afford the plan can go into the exchange and get a subsidized plan. In that case, the company would owe \$3,000 per year for that employee.

A key provision for growers that use migrant labor is the definition of seasonal worker. In the bill, a seasonal worker is defined as an employee who works 120 days or less. If workers are employed for more than 130 days, for example, they are considered full-time employees, and employers would be subject to penalties if insurance is not provided to them.

Administratively, keeping tabs on seasonal workers who work for multiple employers in the course of a year will be a difficult task.

Stay tuned as the months and years progress toward full implementation of the bill.



agency also said it expects to announce further details regarding the scientific review in April.

In February Putnam organized a letter to EPA from 20 members of Florida’s congressional delegation, calling for the agency to extend its comment period for the proposed rules, which are scheduled to begin going into effect later this year. In response, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson met with the Florida delegation earlier this month to discuss their concerns. “In that meeting it was clear that there was inadequate communication between the state and federal regulators. I urge Administrator Jackson to come to Florida and sit down with FDEP Secretary Michael Sole to see firsthand and better understand the issue from Florida’s perspective.”

Florida may very well serve as an example to other states that may face similar EPA water issues in the future.



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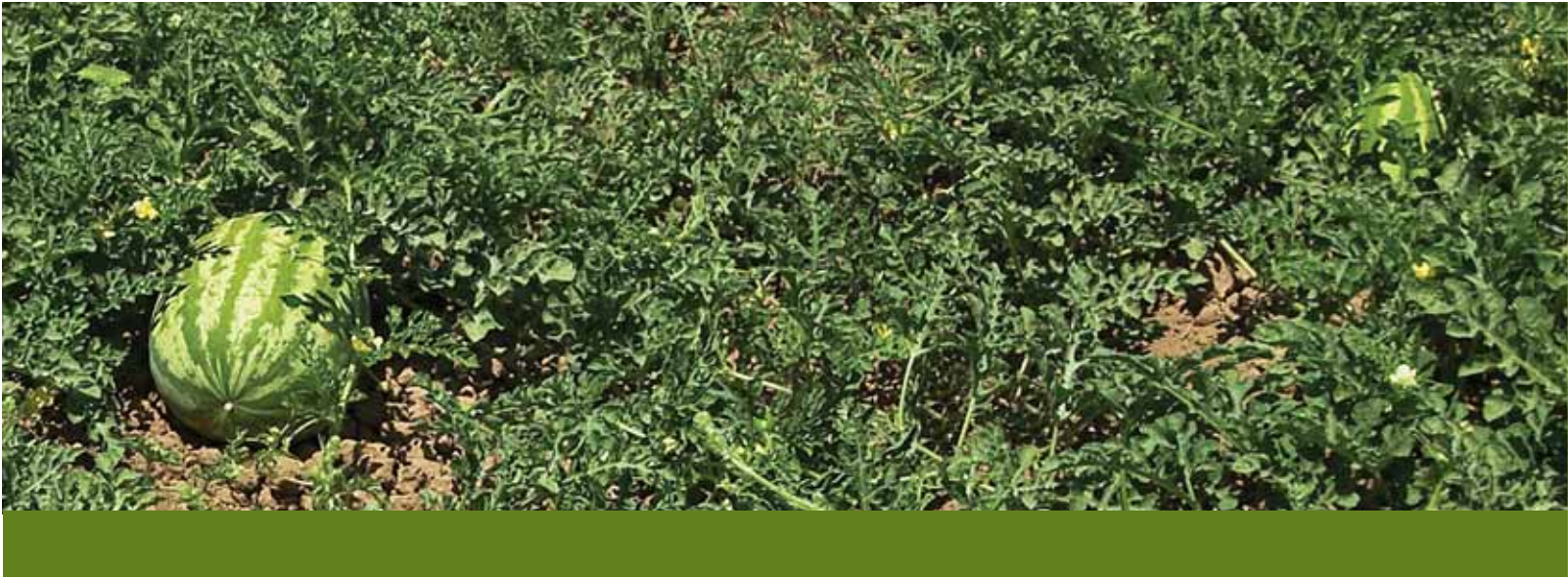
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Watermelon Research Focus in 2010

NWA Board of Directors approved seven (7) grants for 2010 at its meeting in February to continue two projects and to begin five projects of high interest to growers throughout the industry. A number of Universities and USDA laboratories will be involved in the projects. And, some new names and universities join in the mix in 2010. They are:

- **Field Trials for Gummy Stem Blight Resistance**
 - o University of Georgia (Athens, GA) - Cecilia McGregor
 - o University of Georgia (Tifton, GA) - David Langston
- **Generation and evaluation of a mutation-line collection useful for enhancing resistance for poty-viruses and major diseases of watermelon**
 - o USDA, Charleston SC - Amnon Levi, Kai-Shu Ling, Patrick Wechter
 - o USDA, Griffin GA - Ming-Li Wang
- **Evaluation resistant rootstocks for managing root-knot nematodes in grafted watermelon**
 - o USDA, Charleston SC - Judy Thies
 - o Clemson University (Charleston) - Richard Hassell
- **Evaluation of new fungicides as soil and foliar treatments for control of *Phytophthora capsici* on watermelon**
 - o University of Georgia (Tifton, GA) - Pingsheng Ji
 - o University of Georgia (Tifton, GA) - Alexander Csinos
- **Frequency and distribution of old and possible new viruses in watermelon**
 - o University of Tulsa (Tulsa, OK) - Akhtar Ali
 - o USDA, Lane OK - Benny Bruton
 - o University of Georgia (Tifton, GA) - David Langston
 - o University of Florida (Immokalee, FL) - Pamela Roberts
 - o University of Florida (Immokalee, FL) - Shouan Zhang
 - o USDA (Charleston, SC) - Shaker Kousik
 - o University of Auburn (Auburn, AL) - Edward Sikora
- **Development and evaluation of early monitoring techniques for Squash vein yellowing virus, the cause of watermelon vine decline**
 - o USDA (Ft. Pierce, FL) - Scott Adkins
 - o USDA (Ft. Pierce, FL) - Craig Webster
 - o USDA (Charleston, SC) - Shaker Kousik
- **Evaluating fungicide programs for reducing severity to gummy stem blight**
 - o Crisp County Extension Agency (Cordele, GA) - Tucker Price
 - o University of Georgia (Tifton, GA) - David Langston

Gummy stem blight of watermelon: Leaf symptoms. Photo by Tom Isler, TAEX, Weathers, 1997



Gummy Stem Blight



Gummy Stem Blight



Phytophthora



Nematodes

Nematodes with eggs attached to plant root



Vine Decline

We wish our research partners great luck as they pursue solutions to our industry’s production issues and crop diseases.

Many research projects that sought to find answers and solutions to research issues and questions in past years are posted on the NWA web site. Please take a look at many of the previous projects, which may provide some answers that can possibly help you in your business.

www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com

PTI continued from page 1

chair and President of the Food Lion family of companies. “We focused strongly on feedback received from industry surveys, from other committee members, and from our own experience over the past 18 months. As the leader of a supermarket company committed to PTI, I found it very gratifying to hear for myself that other committee members are also moving forward to meet the milestones established in the PTI plan.”

The day-long meeting included discussion of surveys conducted to benchmark progress as well as barriers to PTI implementation. A broad cross-section of industry leaders representing many facets of the supply chain attended.

“Several PTI working groups have made a lot of progress in driving implementation forward since the steering com-

mittee last met in August 2008. At the same time, the business environment has changed and one of the key lessons we’ve learned is that we need the right model of leadership engagement and structure in place to drive the initiative forward,” said Bryan Silbermann, PMA President & CEO. “This must include more senior executive engagement, as well as better ongoing communication and educational outreach aimed at all industry sectors.”

“With the hard work of implementing these traceability steps well underway, the complexity and cost of this effort is proving challenging to many companies,” said Tom Stenzel, United Fresh President & CEO. “The steering committee candidly discussed the need for greater stakeholder involvement across the industry, a clearer understanding of the most cost-effective strategies for addressing each milestone, and a focus on ensuring that PTI results in the ability to more narrowly define future

recalls and produces a real ROI for the industry.”

“CPMA remains committed to supporting the PTI for our members who are active in and ship to the United States or to any organization implementing PTI,” said Jane Proctor, vice president of policy & issues management, who confirmed that work is ongoing to ensure that PTI’s best practices are aligned with GS1 standards.

GS1 US has agreed to become an integral partner in the initiative. A strategic implementation plan will be developed drawing on the considerable expertise of GS1 US in working with industries to implement broader use of data standards. The plan will include opportunities for involvement by higher-level executives and interested stakeholders. It will also provide increased education and communication about the initiative as well as greater assistance with implementation of data standards.

National Report

My apologies to The NWPB sponsor of PMA and to Al Harrison Co. Brent and Susan Harrison, and Cactus Melon, Ramón and Barbara Murillo, sponsor to Nogales Produce Convention, for photos being omitted from the last report. They will be included in this issue. Thanks again for your support!

Texas Watermelon Association Sponsors

Maggie and I were delighted to be sponsored to the Texas Watermelon Convention in January. It was an awesome time! We thank the Texas Watermelon Association for sponsoring us to McAllen. The convention and auction were a huge success. I would also like to thank Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Garcia for safely escorting a large group of us to Mexico, we really enjoyed it! Congratulations to Mariana Perez on being crowned 2010 Texas Watermelon Queen! You have a great year ahead of you!

Georgia Watermelon Association Sponsors

Maggie was delighted to be sponsored to the Georgia Watermelon Association's convention in Cordele, Georgia. Maggie and I enjoyed the fellowship and visits and GWA! We appreciate their support and congratulate them on a fun and successful convention and auction! Congratulations to Whitney Conner the 2010 Georgia Watermelon Queen, I am sure an exciting year awaits you! *Weather prevented attending the Mar-Del and Alabama Conventions, Congratulation on your Successful Conventions!*

Jessica Southard is Crowned 2010 National Watermelon Queen during National Convention in Dallas, Texas

Our 96th annual convention was a huge success, record breaking attendance and auction! Congratulations go to President John Lapide and wife Alisa, Executive Director Bob Morrissey and NWA Secretary Laurie J. Hofts on our outstanding National convention in Dallas, Texas! I want to thank all the girls that participated in the competition; each of you represented your associations so well! Thanks also to Maggie for doing a fantastic job for us! Best wishes to our new President Brent Harrison!

We congratulate Jessica Southard our 2010 National Watermelon Queen! Jessica represented the Florida Watermelon Association. We are both looking forward to a fantastic Year! Congratulations to Melinda Gooch, Alabama Watermelon Queen, on being selected Miss Jubilee and second runner-up. Congratulations also to Lindsey Mann, Georgia Watermelon Queen, on being selected first runner-up! All of you were incredible!

A special thank you to all those that donated and purchased at this year's successful auction! That is why we are a success! A very special thank you to the following people that donated scholarships and prizes to Jessica; Kelly and Jean Marinaro, Waterford vase; \$2000.00 scholarship from MultiCorr; Seminis for the pewter trays for Jessica and the runner-ups; Jackson Farming, Brent and Debbie Jackson, a \$500.00 scholarship in memory of their son Adam; Sue Childers, \$500.00 scholarship in memory of her husband Oren; Bob Miller and Nunhems Seed for a laptop computer for Jessica; Chris and Leslie Bloebaum, Delta Fresh for \$500.00 scholarship in memory of his of his dad Bob; Scholarship from Tommy Smith in memory of his wife June; Wiggins Watermelons for the luggage purchased for Jessica; Richard Wojciak, Abbott & Cobb for the digital camera; and to all that purchased auction items for Jessica, a sincere thank you to each of you!

Illiana Watermelon Association Sponsors

Shortly after Jessica was crowned we were off to Evansville, Indiana for their annual convention at the Casino Aztar hotel and convention center. It was a grand time, and another successful auction! Jessica and I appreciate all the hospitality shown us by IWA. She also appreciates all the many items purchased for at their auction! Congratulations to Sylvia Crowder on being selected the IWA Queen! Thanks IWA for sponsoring us, we had a great time!

Please let me know if you would like to sponsor Jessica for promotions, she is ready to get to work! I will be contacting 2009 Sponsors.

Best of the Season to You!
Eleanor Bullock
NWA Promotion Coordinator
229.273.8638 office
229.322.9933 cell
eleanor@websign.net

National Pictures



NWPB booth at PMA, Mark, Gordon, Maggie, Susan and Brent



Maggie poses with Mark and Leslie



Maggie and sponsors, the Harrison Family in Nogales



Sponsors at Cactus Melon, The Murillo Family in Nogales



With Barbara and Susan in Mexico for lunch



Stephanie with Mollie and Maggie at Texas Convention



Maggie chats with Texas President, Mr. & Mrs. Roy Larralde



Mollie, Maggie and former Texas Queens Congratulate Mariana Perez, 2010 Texas Watermelon Queen



Georgia Queen Lindsey Mann and Maggie enjoy some time at the GWA convention



Julie Akins, Georgia's Promotion Coordinator and Maggie Congratulate Whitney Conner the 2010 Georgia Watermelon Queen



Maggie crowns Jessica Southard the 2010 National Watermelon Queen



Congratulations Jessica!



A RECORD number of former National Queens attending National Convention in Dallas! What a fantastic group!



Jessica with First Runner-up Lindsey Mann(R) and Second Runner-up Melinda Gooch, and Miss Jubilee(L)



Jessica and her proud parents, Gary and Kathi Southard



President John Lapide, wife Alisa, their daughters and their husbands congratulate Jessica



Maggie, Alisa, and Ranell surprise Wanda with this Award, Congratulations Wanda!



NWA's new President, Brent Harrison Congratulates Jessica!



Jessica is welcomed to the Illiana Convention by IWA President Brad Tony and Family



Emily, our own Maggie and Anita welcome Jessica



NWA's Executive Director, Bob Morrissey and Jessica



Jessica Congratulates 2010 IWA Queen, Sylvia Crowder



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Thanks to Jim, Randy & Mike



Maggie Congratulates Jessica

*Congratulations
Jessica!*

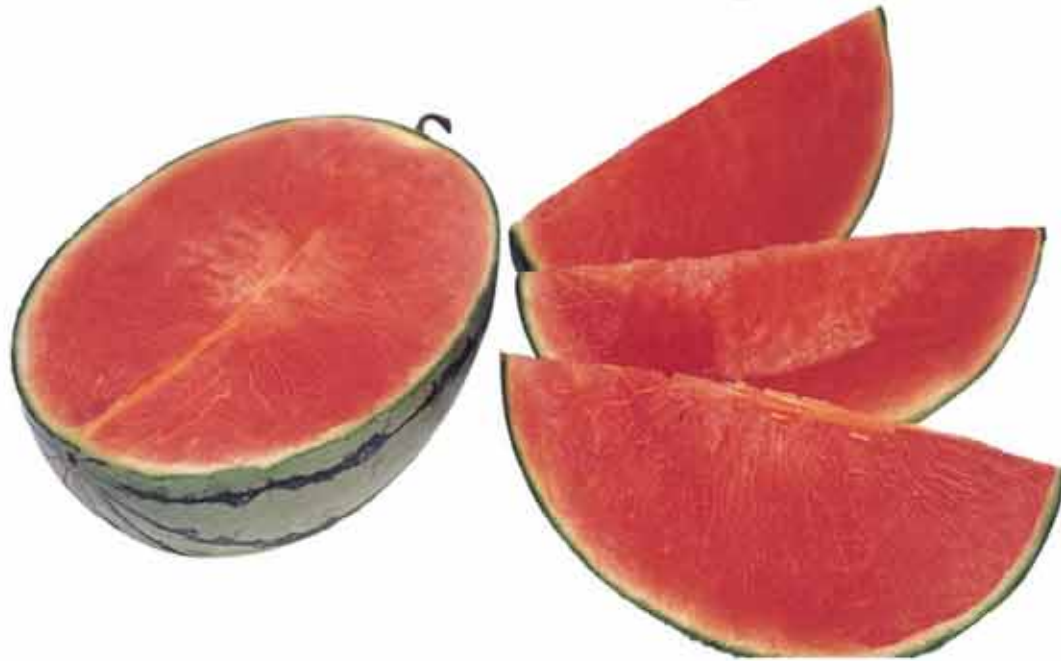


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Alabama Report

We'd like to start by saying Congratulations to our 2009 Alabama Watermelon Queen for being named 2nd Runner Up and Miss Jubilee at the 2010 National Watermelon Convention! We are so proud to call you our Queen and we're very sad to see you go!

The Alabama Watermelon Association held their 2010 AWA Convention on February 12th & 13th at the Beau Rivage Resort & Casino in Biloxi, Mississippi. With an unexpected winter storm rolling through the U.S. that weekend, there was snow in 49 states, including Alabama and Mississippi. Unfortunately, the unexpected cold weather limited our attendance; however, it did not put a damper on our spirits! Despite the low number of only 50 in attendance, the AWA still managed to have a record breaking auction, raising \$78,925. Thank you so much to those donors and buyers who make our association and convention possible!

At the annual banquet, AWA President Billy Smith, awarded Past President Terry Jones with the Lifetime Achievement Award, Cindy Vaughn the Outstanding Service Award for her dedication to the AWA Queen Program, and 1st Vice President Cheryl Hicks the Jan Ware Award. Josh Moore with First Choice Melon Growers was named the King Buyer and Arnold Mack with McMelon, Inc. was named the King Donor. The Seed Spit Champion, Jim Mastropietro, was also crowned, with the Queen Contestant Seed Spit Winner being Anne Marie Urrutia.

Also recognized at the banquet were our 2010 Convention Sponsors; Gold Level - Jim Mastropietro, International Paper; Jeff Garrett, Clifton Seed Company; Arnold Mack and Terry Jones, McMelon; Silver Level - Myron Harrison, Temple-Inland; Bob Miller, Nunhems USA; Cheryl Hicks, Smurfit-Stone; Bronze Level - Billy Smith, Billy Smith's Watermelons; Jay Jones, Sakata Seed; Kelly Marinaro, Sunny Fresh; Rex Johnson, JR Transportation; Dave Genecco, Genecco Produce; Luke Reinstetle, Morgan Wood Products; and the 2009 Queen Program Sponsors: Tom Daughtery, Valdosta Plant Company; Jeff Garrett, Clifton Seed Company; Myron Harrison, Temple Inland; Cheryl Hicks, Smurfit-Stone; Jay Jones, Sakata Seed Company; Terry Jones & Arnold and Brenda Mack, McMelon, Inc.; Kelly and Jean Marinaro, Sunny Fresh; Jim Mastropietro, International Paper; Josh Moore, First Choice Melon Growers; Billy Smith, Billy Smith's Watermelons, Inc.; and Harry Vaughn, Gulf Seed. We are very thankful for the sponsorship these members have provided this past year. We could not have had such a great year and great convention without them.

We had five outstanding young women competing for the title of the 2010 Alabama Watermelon Queen, and after an extremely tough competition, Kimberly McCay of Oneonta was crowned. Kimberly is the 20 year old daughter of Keith and Joanna McCay and she is currently studying Public Relations at the University of Alabama. While we were extremely sad to say goodbye to our amazing 2009 Alabama Watermelon Queen, Melinda Gooch, we are all very excited to welcome Kimberly into the watermelon family. Get ready for an exciting year!

Ali Vice Rauch
AWA Promotions Coordinator
ali.rauch@gmail.com



Queen Melinda with Georgia Queen Lindsey take advantage of the photo and video booth during the President's Reception.



Queen Melinda & Florida Queen Jessica play around with their cheerleading pals at the President's Reception.



Queen Melinda sees the sights in downtown Dallas as she visits the Longhorn Stampede.



Queen Melinda with incoming coordinator as she prepares for the final evening gown portion of the national competition.



Team Melinda! Coordinators Ali & Cindy, Queen Melinda, Casey Vaughn, and Past AWA & NWA Queen Candice.



Brand New 'Has-Beens' - Maggie & Melinda!



Queen Melinda with her proud father at Nationals!



Queen Melinda with one of her many sponsors, Josh Moore at the AWA Convention.



Arnold Mack rocking out those watermelon shades at the AWA Auction.



Jim Mastropietro with AWA President Billy Smith as he's being named the Seed Spit Champion.



Billy Smith awarding Josh Moore as the King Buyer at this year's annual banquet.



Brenda Mack accepting the award for King Donor from AWA President Billy Smith.



An honored, and speechless, Past President Terry Jones, accepting the Lifetime Achievement Award.



Outgoing Queen Coordinator, Cindy Vaughn, accepting the Outstanding Service Award from President Billy Smith.



Our newly crowned 2010 Alabama Watermelon Queen, Kimberly McCay.



Kimberly McCay, 2010 Alabama Watermelon Queen, with her sponsor, Terry Jones of McMelon, Inc.



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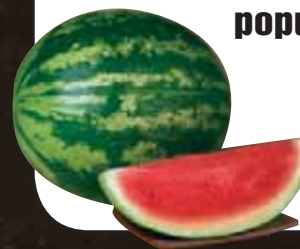
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Florida Report

Greetings from the Sunshine State of Florida

Our year started off traveling to the Georgia Watermelon Convention held in Cordele, Georgia sponsored by Melon 1 at the Lake Blackshear Resort. Thanks to the Georgia Watermelon Association for a wonderful convention. Congratulations to Whitney Conner for being selected as the 2010 Georgia Watermelon Queen.

Due to terrible snow storms, Queen Jessica and I did not get to make it to the Mar-Del Watermelon Convention and Alabama Watermelon Convention held in February. Congratulations to the Mar-Del Watermelon Queen Parris Travers and the Alabama Watermelon Queen Kimberly McCay as being selected as their newly crowned queens. We also want to wish blessings to Dawn Collins (Mar-Del) and Ali Rauch (Alabama) as you begin your new adventure as their Watermelon Promotions Coordinators.

Then it was off to Dallas, Texas for the 96th Annual National Watermelon Convention held at the Fairmont Dallas Hotel & Resort.

Congratulations to “Jessica” for bring home the National Watermelon Title! We are so proud of you!

The Florida Watermelon Association is very proud of Jessica for the job that she has done this past year. In 1991 Florida Watermelon Queen Bonnie Jo Rankin brought home the National Watermelon Title and then in 1996 Gina Crews brought home the National Watermelon Title and then she went on to be in the 2001 episode of “Survivor”. Who know where Jessica may end up a few years? Be on the lookout for her, she may end up with Katie Couric or Dancing with the Stars! There are many great achievements headed Jessica’s way. Way to go Jessica!!! We are all very proud of you!!!

What an amazing year Queen Jessica and I have had this year. We would like to thank all of our sponsors for making this a wonderful and memorable year. We would also like to thank Jessica’s family Gary and Kathi Southard for sharing her with us this past year and providing lots of support!

March 6th was a beautiful day in Tampa, Florida with the Southeast Produce Marketing Association. Our First runner-up Maddie Kelley was busy all day with our Florida Watermelon “Plinko” game. Everyone that attended the event enjoyed playing it. Thanks to Melon 1 for sponsoring Maddie and I.

Be sure and check out the next edition of the Vineline to see who will be our new elected Florida Watermelon Queen.

* Please note my email address has changed

Wishing everyone a successful watermelon season.... until next time

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



NWQ Jessica along with AWQ Melinda Gooch and GWQ Lindsey Mann “Congratulations to all of you!”



Queen Jessica with the John and Alisa Lapide & Richie and Rhonda Chastain at the Georgia Watermelon Convention



“A new beginning”



“FWA Board”



Congratulations to the 2010 Georgia Watermelon Queen, Whitney Conner!



Queen Jessica is visiting with Bob and Betsy Morrissey, at the Cowboy Stadium Locker Room.



Thanks FWA for the beautiful arrangement of flowers



Queen Jessica and Tommy Smith visiting at the National Watermelon Convention



NWQ Jessica and SCQ Summer having fun at the National Watermelon Convention.



Jessica and Cheryl Hicks visiting in Dallas, Texas



Maddie at the NWPB Booth with Mark Arney and Trey Miller



Maddie at the Southeastern Produce Conference with John and Hamilton. Thanks Melon 1 for sponsoring me!



Queen Jessica in her speech competition.



Jessica having fun at the watermelon auction!



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Congratulations Jessica, we are very proud of you!”



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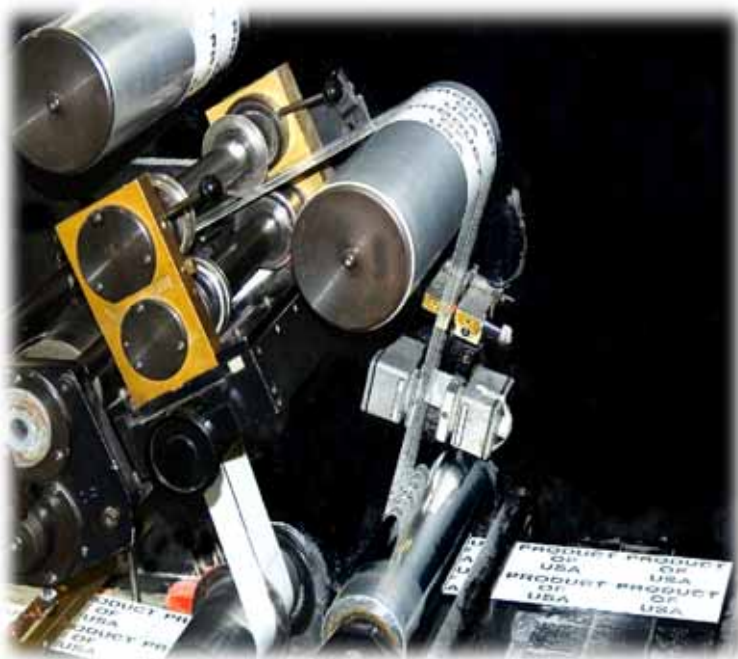
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Georgia Report

The Georgia Watermelon Association is pleased to announce our annual meeting, held at Lake Blackshear Resort and Golf Club in Cordele, GA, was a great success. The two day event, held January 19-31, 2010, boasted the highest attendance numbers in recent history with more than 234 attendees. The educational sessions, our live auction and Georgia Watermelon Queen pageant, held during our banquet was a huge success. Miss Whitney Conner was crowned 2010 Georgia Watermelon Queen during our annual meeting. Whitney is the 20 year old daughter of Ronnie and Debbie Conner of Abbeville, GA. Whitney will graduate in December of 2010 with a nursing degree from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Miss Summer Nix of Dalton, GA is our first runner up and Miss Amanda Murray of Americus, GA is our second runner up. GWA would not have been able to make this annual meeting such a success without the help of our corporate sponsors. We would like to thank the following for their support: Platinum Sponsors-Temple Inland, Melon One and C & L Packing, Gold Sponsors-McMelon Inc., Borders Melons East, Zeraim Geder, Clifton Seed, LTF Greenhouses, LLC., Georgia Pacific, First Choice Melon Growers, Siegers Seed Co., APE., Pallet King, International Paper, Multicorr, Silver Sponsors-AgGeorgia Farm Credit ACA, Triangle Chemical Co., Nunheims USA, Inc., Abbott & Cobb., Blanchard Equipment Co., Dixon Farm Supply. Inc./Dixon Gin Company, Seminis Vegetable Seed, Bronze Sponsors-Smurfit Stone Container and Highland Fresh Technologies. GWA also greatly appreciates the Queen Scholarship Sponsors: Arthur Ben Morris, Bank of Dooly, Multicorr, South GA Banking Co., and Sue Childers. The Association would like to thank all load donors and buyers. We appreciate all the contestant sponsors: Craig Mathis, Hobbs Produce, First Choice Melon Growers, Tucker Farms/Ricky and Clay Tucker, Melon One, Darren and tammy Deal and Ricky Jackson/Crisp Melons. Our exhibitors included: Agrimar Corp, Atlantic Pallet Exchange, BB Hobbs, Bradco Trasportation, C. H. Robinson Worldwide, CHEP USA, Food Safety Fundamentals, Georgia Pacific, Highland Fresh Technologies, Pal-King Pallets, Smurfit-Stone Container, Temple Inland, Triangle Chemical, Virtual One and YottaMark. Thank you for your support!

We are excited to report our 2010 Queen tour has already begun. Feb 5 Whitney made her first of many appearances on WSST in Cordele, GA. Feb 8-9 Whitney attended the Cordele Chamber of Commerce Annual Fish Fry at the Atlanta Capitol followed by legislative visits. March 5-6 we were sponsored by Leger and Son at the Southeas Produce Council Meeting in Tampa, FL. March 12-14 Whitney was sponsored by Adam Lytch with L & M Produce to the North Carolina Watermelon Convention in Wilmington, NC. March 16 Whitney promoted our “Breakfast a GO-GO” recipe at the AGAwareness Kick-Off in Atlanta at the Georgia Freight Depot followed by more legislative visits at the Atlanta Capitol. This event consisted Gov. Sonny Perdue, The Dean Brothers, members of GA Legislature, 4-H Young Farmers, and FFA. Approximately 800 people attended this event. We have several new promotions coming up this year and are looking forward to our next two trips to St. Augustine Florida for the Florida Watermelon Convention and Los Vegas for the NWPB Training Seminar that will be held during the United Fresh Produce Show. Our queen tour is going to be extremely busy throughout the year of 2010. GWA is working with a Specialty Crop Grant, given by the GA Department of Agriculture. We have 22 in-store promos, 5 Welcome Centers and 10 Media Appearances we must attend. If anyone is interested in using our Georgia Watermelon Queen Whitney Conner to promote Georgia Watermelons, please contact us and we will gladly help you promote our industry. It is hard to believe another watermelon season is here! We are ready to promote our Georgia Watermelon!

Sincerely,
Julie Akins
Georgia Watermelon Association
Promotion Coordinator
770.842.3309
akinsjulie1@windstream.net



2010 Georgia Watermelon Queen Miss Whitney Conner.



Mr. and Mrs. Brent Jackson spending a little time with Whitney after the NC banquet.



Whitney with Vivian Scott at Cordele Fish Fry in Atlanta.



Three beauties representing our industry well!



Whitney with Michael Parkerson and Tray Joiner with the GA Dept of Agriculture.



Our 2010 Queen Whitney is ready for a busy watermelon season.



Our Queens always get interviewed at the Cordele Fish Fry at the Freight Depot.



Whitney working the watermelon booth to all the 4-H, FFA and GA Legislature during Ag Day.



GWA is extremely proud of our 2009 Queen Lindsey Mann for bringing home first runner up from NWA Convention in Dallas.



Whitney and our Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue during Ag Day.



Whitney practicing up on her seed spit techniques during the NC Watermelon Convention.



Representative Buddy Hardin and Whitney in Atlanta.



Whitney had a blast representing Georgia while in North Carolina.



Our very own Ken Lewis visits the booth during Ag Day in Atlanta.



Thank you Adam Lytch for sponsoring us to NC.



One of Whitney's many visits to our Atlanta Capitol.



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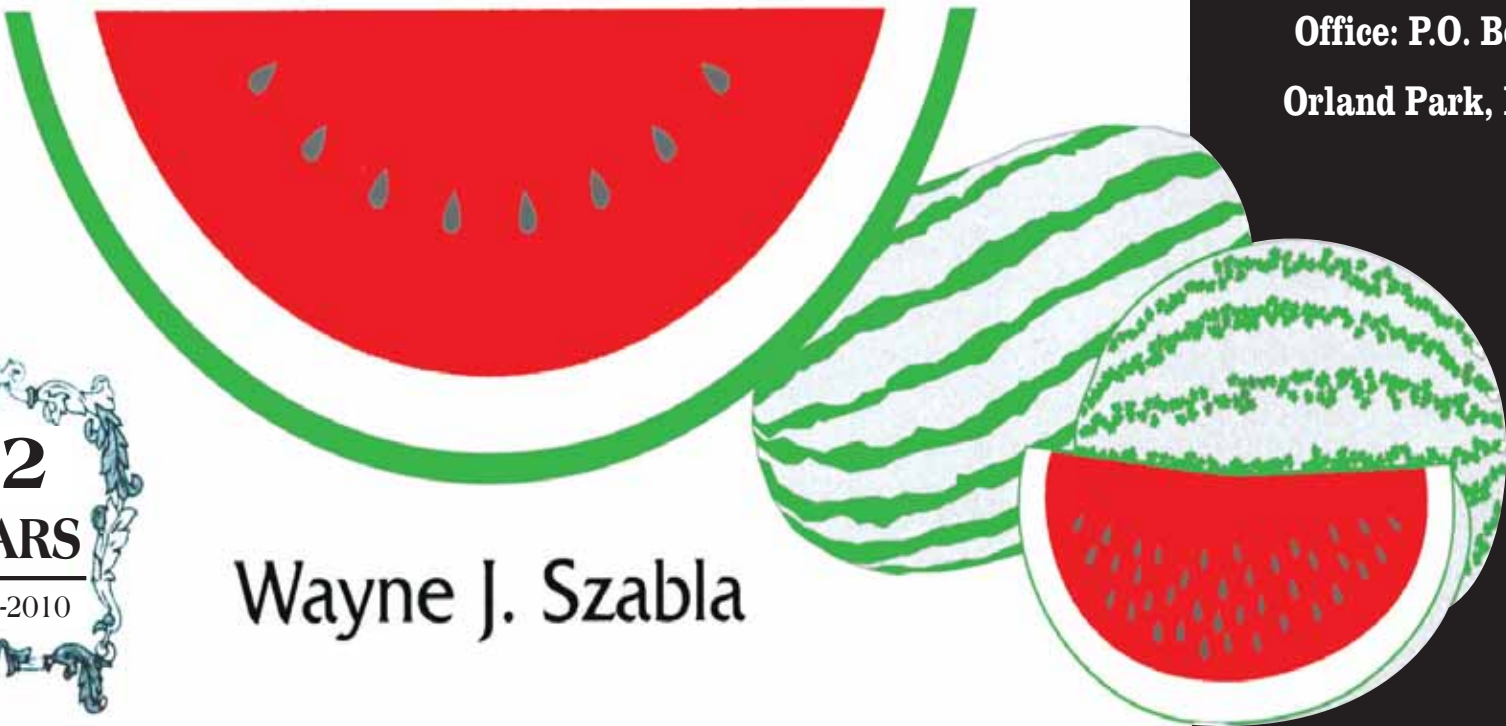


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Illiana Report

Spring has sprung here in Indiana! Let’s ALL grow some super watermelons and make this the year of the sweet, juicy, American WATERMELON!

Johnna wrapped up her year with a trip to the Georgia convention. Many thanks to Anita Field for driving us down to Cordele. We had a great time. Johnna thanks the Illiana Association for her watermelon pendant. It will be a wonderful keepsake of a memorable year. The Knox County Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Bandwagon was hosted by IWA in January and Johnna presented her speech to the members. Weather short-changed two promotions. Melon Acres sponsored us to the AG Hort Congress in Indianapolis. Unfortunately Johnna couldn’t get there due to freezing fog. We also planned to attend the Mar-Del convention, but as we all know the blizzard hit!

Next up, Dallas Texas National Convention; did they score a touchdown! Thanks to the NWA and the Texas Association for hosting a championship level convention. From the Stadium, to the tailgate, and on to the banquet it was pro bowl all the way. Illiana Watermelon Association proudly accepted the marketing award for their Kroger 200 Race promotion. Thank You to NWA, NWPB, and all of the other state associations who have sent their queens and coordinators to help with this promotion. We couldn’t do it without you all!

Three short weeks later we landed at Casino Aztar in Evansville IN for the Illiana Watermelon Association 21st annual convention. IWA was honored to host National Queen Jessica for her first promotion and also welcomed new NWA president and first lady Brent and Susan Harrison to Indiana. As Johnna prepared to give up her crown she received an out-going scholarship provided by Keith Carter of Kemper CPA. Johnna also thanks Norman Lamb Produce for her Queen Tour video.

2010 Illiana Watermelon Queen is Sylvia Crowder of Cayuga Indiana. Sylvia is the daughter of Thomas and Karen Crowder. She attends North Vermillion High School and plans to attend Indiana University to become a dentist. Sylvia receives a \$1000 scholarship from International Paper and Multicorr. She also receives a wardrobe allowance provided by JRT, Inc., Rick McDougal and Rex Johnson of JRT, Inc., Nunhems U.S.A., Freyco Produce, McKinley Custom Spreading, Inc., and Kenworthy’s. The queen seed spit award was sponsored by Abbott & Cobb and won by Sylvia.

Chelsea Sullivan of Oakland City Indiana is the 1st runner-up and receives a \$500 scholarship from International Paper and Multicorr. 2nd runner-up is Katilyn McClure of Owensville Indiana. Katilyn receives \$200 from by John Nowaskie Melons. Miss Jubilee is Virginia Westfall and her award is provided by Double T.

2010 Illiana Watermelon Association Board of Directors:
Chairman of the Board- Brad Toney
President- Carrie Smith
1st Vice-President- Brad Johnston
2nd Vice-President- Mike Horrall
Promotions Coordinator- Beth Frey



2010 Illiana Queen Sylvia and her court



NWA president Brent Harrison and National Queen Jessica are all smiles.



Illiana gals get ready to corral the watermelon auction!



Johnna with IWA board members Anita Field and Rich Novak in Georgia.



Let's all cheer for watermelon!



Queen Sylvia with Josh Moore of First Choice Melons and Mike Horrall of Melon Acres.



Thank You Susan Soeder and Multicorr for helping sponsor our scholarships.

What a beautiful group of young ladies.



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Mark Arney
Executive Director



NWPB Welcomes New President

Josh Bailey recently passed the gavel on to the new NWPB President Chandler Mack at the NWPB board meeting held in Dallas, Texas. Josh will now assume the active role of past president. Congratulations and welcome to Chandler!



Josh Bailey pictured with Chandler Mack

IR4 CLC Meeting

Mark Arney and Berry Tanner (representing NWA) attended the IR-4 CLC meeting in Washington, DC in early March.

Leonard Giannessi of the Crop Protection Research Institute presented on the “Value of Insecticides in US Crops” which was a 3-year endorsed study involving 22 crop commodity organizations. It was revealed that 50 crops are major users of insecticides. Total production in the US is 267 million acres and seventeen percent (17%), or 45 million acres, are treated with with at least one application of a conventional insecticide. It was estimated that for every \$1 invested in the cost of applying insecticides, the farmer receives a \$19 return per.

Of additional note from the presentation:

- Fruit and vegetable crops represent 7 million acres of which 80-99% are treated with insecticides
- Field crops represent 260 million acres of which only 10-20% are treated with insecticides

Presently, insecticides are the first line of defense against invasive insects. Olive fruit fly is the most serious insect pest of olives and 100% of acres are treated. Soybean



Mark Arney and CLC Chairman Rocky Lundy

Aphid became a serious pest of soybean in year 2000 and over 14% of 11 million acres of soybeans receive an insecticide application targeting the pest.

In the US, \$1.2 billion is spent on insecticides, the big need states are Washington, California, Florida and Georgia. A need does exist for specialty crop models. A study is underway at the University of Florida for specialty crops that focuses on fumigants and seed treatments.

Following the presentation, the CLC business meeting

Southeast Produce Council holds “Southern Exposure” Conference

The NWPB recently exhibited at the Southeast Produce Council’s Southern Exposure retail and foodservice conference. More than 1,300 attended the March 4-6 exposition at the Tampa Convention Center. This was the first time that the NWPB had a booth at this well attended conference.

A number of watermelon handlers also had booths at the convention and all were pleased with the turn out. NWPB staff met numerous representatives from several national and retail chains during the one day event.

Lorelei DiSogra, vice president of nutrition and health for Washington, D.C.-based United Fresh Produce Association, spoke at the group’s educational session. Her presentation was on the Women, Infants and

Children (WIC) nutrition program. Recipients of the program can now use their vouchers to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

NWPB staff had been at the forefront of this program when it was in its pilot phase. In one of the largest WIC areas, South Central Los Angeles, in the WIC Project watermelon ranked 12th out of the 20 top fruits & vegetables purchased by WIC recipients. In just this area alone sales of watermelons were projected to grow to \$7 million. Watermelon sales are expected to expand throughout the country as the program takes hold in other states.



NWPB Executive Director Mark Arney (right) is shown in front of the NWPB booth. On the left is Trey Miller, whose family is heavily involved in the watermelon business and Trey helps the NWPB out on special projects. Also pictured is Florida Watermelon Queen Maddie Kelley.

Ohio Woman Is Youngest to Cross the Atlantic Alone

By Mara Gray, contributing writer to AOL News

(March 15) -- The Atlantic Ocean is no match for Katie Spotz. The 22-year-old woman became the youngest person to make the trip across the Atlantic alone in a rowboat. After 70 days at sea, hundreds of well-wishers welcomed Spotz into the port of Georgetown, Guyana Sunday as she completed her 2,817 mile journey from Dakar, Senegal.

“The hardest part was just the solo part,” Spotz told The Associated Press.

For over two months, she rowed alone amid high waves, beating sun, and very little fresh food. But for the Mentor, Ohio native, “endurance challenges” are a way of life. In 2008, Spotz became the first person to swim the entire length of the 325-mile Allegheny River. She has also biked across the country and ran 150 miles across the Mojave and Colorado deserts alone.

Spotz’s trans-Atlantic row raised over \$70,000 for the Blue Planet Run Foundation, which works to provide safe drinking water around the world. Her coach, Sam Williams, said Spotz was more interested helping the foundation’s cause than she was in breaking records.

“The records are just a bonus for Katie. Rowing the Atlantic and raising funds for clean water are the things she really cares about,” Williams told the AP.

But there’s a reason so few rowers dare to make the trip across the Atlantic. According to The New York Times, Spotz rowed between 8 and 10 hours a day, and said rough waves made it difficult to sleep. “Sleeping

began. The CLC chairperson, Rocky Lundy, was reappointed for 2 more years. We were then joined by the IR-4 Executive Director, Jerry Baron.

Jerry Baron spoke on International Harmonization, pointing out that US and Canada are trading partners and that IR-4 at Food Use Workshop sets many priorities with Canada. Efforts to aid International Harmonization is a new IR-4 initiative to help US farmers compete in offshore markets.

IR-4 is currently funded at \$16.18 million and a need exists for \$20 million. The biggest need is the USDA ARS area which needs new analytical equipment for all three laboratories. Newly emerging invasive insect,



Katie relishes a slice of watermelon upon her arrival in Guyana



was a real problem,” Spotz told The Times. “It took a toll to put out that much physical effort on very little rest.”

About a week ago, Spotz had nearly made landfall when she encountered such rough seas that she was forced to row 400 miles to the northeast of her original destination of Cayenne, French Guiana, to Georgetown.

On the second-to-last day of the trip, her GPS tracker caught on fire. At one point, she encountered 20-foot waves. “I was worried the boat might capsize,” she said. Spotz ate freeze-dried meals, munched on small plants she grew on board, and, according to the AP, dug into a watermelon as soon as she hit the shore in Guyana.

You can read the rest of the story at Katie’s website, www.RowForWatermelon.com or the AOL Online News story at www.AOLnews.com keyword ‘katie spotz’.



disease, and weed species controls are being developed through IR-4’s network of State University and USDA ARS facilities.

FOODEX Japan



FOODEX JAPAN is held annually, welcoming 2,400+ exhibitors from 60+ countries & regions and drawing 85,000+ visitors over the 4-day show period. With over 30 years serving as Japan’s top trade food and beverage show, FOODEX JAPAN is renowned as an established and rewarding event.

The event is a platform for exhibitors and visiting buyers to meet and interact, offering key opportunities for dynamic discussions and business possibilities to enter Asian and global markets. The beginning of March welcomed the 35th International Food and Beverage Exhibition, and the National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) was proud to be a first time exhibitor in the USA Pavilion. FOODEX is Asia’s largest food trade show. NWPB was joined by the only current exporter of US watermelon to Japan, Van Groningen & Sons.

The four-day event included meetings with retailers, brokers and food processors, as well as a visit to Ambassador John Roos’s residence for a welcoming reception. We are very excited about the high level of interest in US fresh watermelon, and are looking forward to sending over product samples to the biggest retail chains this spring and summer.

NWPB Staffers were joined by Yamano & Associates representative Tonia David, as well as YY World Inc.’s Yuji Yamaguchi.



Marketing Director Gordon Hunt, Dan Van Groningen and Yuji Yamaguchi from YY World Inc. at the share NWPB booth

ABC De Frutas Y Verduras

by Elia Gonzalez, Grupo PM S. A. de C. V.

Mexicans’ eating habits have changed. Currently they are interested in eating properly and including fruits and vegetables in their daily diet, considering the relevant role of their nutritional characteristics. However, this marked trend from consumers demanding healthy and quality food seems opposed to the phenomenon of the shrinkage of these natural products during the stage known as post-harvest handling. Despite the oversupply of produce, there is a great amount of waste after harvest; the rates for developing countries are estimated between 15 and 50%, according to FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), and Mexico is not an exception to this fact. The reasons for produce shrinkage may be found in the lack of appropriate use of conservation techniques during the handling of fruits and vegetables in the reception, storage, transportation, and display areas.

Some of the factors affecting the quality and shelf life of produce are: Lack of control on their ripening process on which quality, shelf life, spoilage, and business success depend; physical damage caused by poor handling of packages; poor temperature control at any stage of the cold-chain; inadequate storage disregarding product compatibility -such as ethylene sensitivity and production rate; production and absorption of aromas due to temperature and relative humidity.

Spoilage caused by poor handling of food not only worsens the hunger issue, but it also has an impact on poor quality of produce, and on their cost. In short, the waste of food that is not fit for consumption damages all of the actors in the distribution system, from the grower, through retail chains and markets, to the final consumer.

It is a proven fact that training is a tool that enables companies to adapt to new circumstances. For workers, training is an opportunity to acquire new skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will improve their competencies for successful performance in their jobs. In this regards, training the people who are responsible for handling produce is imperative to improve produce preservation and handling.



In Mexico, the educational level of the people involved in the commercialization and distribution of these products is estimated as follows: Two-thirds of the personnel have completed grade and junior-high school; one-third is youngsters between ages 16 and 24, therefore they are not specialized in produce handling and consequently, require training in order to be able to perform effectively.

ABC de Frutas y Verduras (ABCs for Fruits and Vegetables) is a comprehensive training program based on manuals from multiple associations and on specialized reference material, conceived to fill this gap sharing expertise and knowledge in this program aiming to support the wholesale and retail sectors in Mexico. This is a self-taught program, available to the training and human resources areas, and for existing and newly recruited personnel, and it offers multiple advantages.

The benefits this tool provides to the distribution system are many:

- It is a permanent source of information on fruits and vegetables;
- It provides a training option for recently recruited personnel;
- People can be trained anywhere with internet access;
- It is an incentive for the personnel, as they will receive proper accreditation after program completion;
- Last, but not least, it contributes to the improvement on produce handling. For staff members, this program represents a self-learning and self-evaluation media, where they will learn on fruits and vegetables at their own pace and rhythm; it is also a source of information on these subjects; in the end they will obtain an accreditation diploma and, most important, they have a direct participation in improving the handling process of fresh produce.

Source: ABC de Frutas y Verduras



Tonia David with a Daruma doll, which in Japan is seen as a symbol of perseverance and good luck, making them a popular gift of encouragement.



Group dinner with Yamano & Associates.

Dear FOODEX USA Pavilion visitor:

On behalf of the United States Government, it is a great pleasure to welcome you to the USA Pavilion at FOODEX 2010. As we prepare to showcase our products at Asia's largest food trade show, I would like to express our deep appreciation for the excellent food and agricultural markets we enjoy in Japan and in the rest of Asia.

2010 is a special year for us. The United States and Japan have perhaps the closest agricultural relationship in the world. My agricultural colleagues at the U.S. Embassy have created an exciting series of events over the next several months called Partners in Agriculture, which celebrates the spirit of this close relationship. FOODEX Japan has also played an important role in this partnership for more than 30 years. Because our close association with FOODEX, we are kicking off our Partners in Agriculture celebration at the show.

As a world leader in agriculture and Japan's largest supplier of food and agricultural imports, we are pleased to feature an exceptional array of innovative, safe, and healthy products at the USA Pavilion. We hope you find the show rewarding and enjoyable. Please be sure to visit our pavilion, where our exhibitors and staff look forward to greeting you and assisting your business.

Sincerely,

John V. Roos
Ambassador
Embassy of the United States of America

FOODEX JAPAN 2010 アメリカパビリオンへご来場の皆様へ

アメリカ合衆国政府を代表いたしまして、FOODEX JAPAN 2010のアメリカパビリオンにお越しいただきまして心より感謝申し上げます。アジアで最大のトレードショーFOODEXでのアメリカ食品・飲料の展示の準備をしているところですが、この場をお借りいたしまして日本とアジア地域の優れた食品・農産物市場に対し深く敬意を表したいと思います。

2010年は私たちにとって特別な年です。アメリカと日本は農業においておそく世界で最も緊密な関係を築いてきました。アメリカ大使館の農務関係スタッフはこれから数ヶ月に亘って、「パートナーズ・イン・アグリカルチャー」(農業におけるパートナーシップ)と題し、この緊密な関係の精神を祝う一連の行事の開催を企画しています。FOODEX JAPAN もまた、30年以上にわたるこのパートナーシップにおいて重要な役割を果たしてきました。FOODEXとの深い関わりがあることから、今回のショーにおいて「パートナーズ・イン・アグリカルチャー」一連の行事の開催を宣言いたします。



Associate Director Stephanie Simek poses with traditionally costumed girls in the Akita prefecture while touring the Japanese halls with a delegation from the USA Pavilion.

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Manager - Thomas Wright

Mar-Del Report

As one chapter closes another one opens as we said thank you to our wonderful Queen, Jessica Haden and welcome our new Queen, Parris Travers. Queen, Jessica Haden has done such a fantastic job representing our association and the watermelon industry. All of us in the association are extremely proud of the job Jessica did at our National Convention in Dallas. We appreciate all her hard work and dedication throughout the year. We love you and welcome you into our Watermelon Queen Hall of Fame.

Queen, Jessica's farewell banquet and the crowning of our new queen was memorable. With attendees down in numbers and snow piling up outside we had a record breaking auction and tons of fun. As they say in show business – The show must go on! And we did!! A blizzard started on Friday and by Sunday we had 15 plus inches on the ground. A special thank you goes to all that made it to our convention despite the weather without all of you it would not have been possible. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the people that volunteered their time while at the convention to make it a success. We have such a unique and wonderful group of people that make our convention and our year of promoting our product successful and we thank each and every one of them for the love of our association and our product.

Also, we would like to thank Outgoing President, Doug Corey for his leadership. A special thank you goes to Candice Hales for stepping up and taking on the role as Coordinator last year. You have done a wonderful job and left some big shoes for me to fill.

Our Lifetime Achievement Award was given to Jeff Hastings. Jeff is a Past President and longtime supporter of our association and the industry. Also, we handed out two scholarship awards to well deserving recipients. One scholarship winner was Jonah Vincent the son of Raymond Vincent. The other recipient was Shelby Hurley the daughter of Steve and Tina Hurley.

With 6 beautiful and intelligent contestants the judges had a hard decision but in the end Miss Parris Travers was the judges pick. The 1st runner up was Haley Wyatt and 2nd runner up Kate Mahn. Congratulations to all the girls they did a wonderful job. Parris is the 19 year old daughter of Rodney and Donna Travers of Woolford, Md. She is attending Salisbury University studying Early Childhood Education. Her main goal would be to achieve her Masters and become a principal at the elementary level. We look forward to working with Parris and we know her poised and professional manner will make her a wonderful watermelon spokesperson. Our association welcomes her into our watermelon family!

As the promoting season begins we have several promotions lined up. In March we will look forward to seeing everyone at the Florida Convention. April we will be at the Dorchester YMCA Kids Health Day, Promotional Training and Delaware Ag Day. In May we will be attending the Kid Zone at the Dover Speedway and Frederick County Elementary Schools. We look forward to a wonderful year promoting our product with Queen, Parris!

We pray everyone will have a successful spring and a wonderful season!

Watermelon Wishes,

Dawn Collins
Promotions Coordinator



Thank you John and Alisa Lapide for dinner and the laughs.



Mar-Del giving love to Jessica. Job well done!



Queen Jessica with Board Member Travis Hastings and wife Kim.



Thank you John for all your support!



What a memorable convention at the Hyatt in Cambridge, Md. The snow did not stop us we had a successful convention.



Outgoing President, Doug Corey. Thank you for your leadership.



Six beautiful contestants. Jordan Callaway, Erica Springer, Paige Valley, Parris Travers, Kate Mahn and Haley Wyatt



All ready for a long afternoon carrying auction items and raising money.



Thank you Alabama Association for sending Alabama Queen, Melinda Gooch. She got to see her first snow and we loved having her.



Queen Jessica's mini fan club!



It has been a fun year with lots of work and laughs. Thank you to both of you for all your hard work!



Newly crowned, Parris Travers, 1st runner up Haley Wyatt and 2nd runner up Kate Mahn



Queen Jessica congratulating her successor.



Queen Parris thanking everyone for all her gifts!



2010 Mar-Del Queen Parris Travers



The Watermelon Queen Hall of Fame welcoming their new sister. Lani Kennedy (2004) Stephanie Abt (2007), Jessica Haden (2009) and Parris Travers (2010)

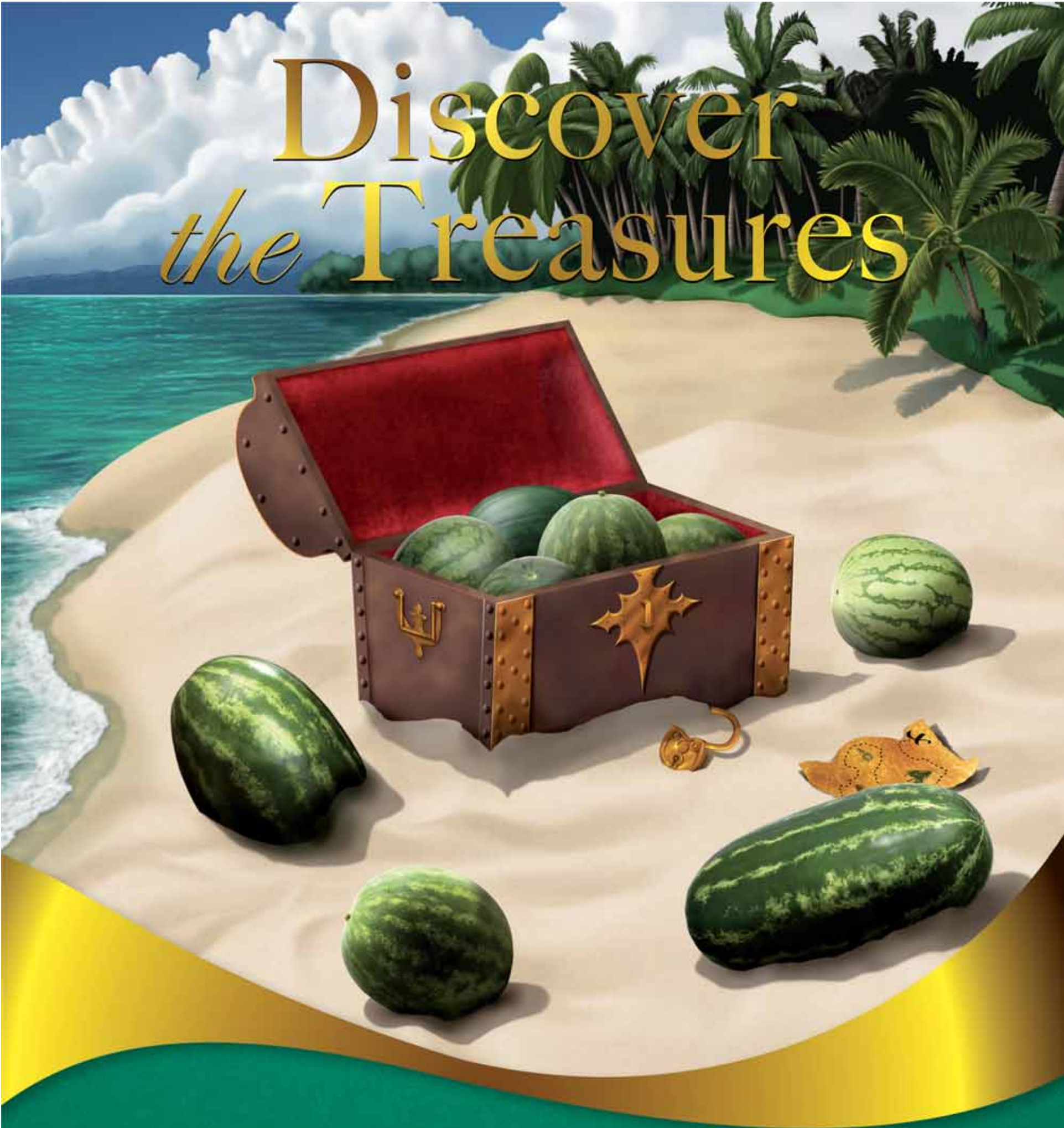


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North Carolina Report

Hello and Greetings from North Carolina!

I hope this update finds everyone well and rested from a very busy early spring! Queen Kensley has had a very busy and wonderful year. Before the National Convention, Queen Kensley traveled to the South Carolina Watermelon Convention to lend support to the outgoing Queen Summers, and meet the newly crowned Queen, Blair. Queen Kensley had a wonderful time and saw some fellow North Carolinians there! Congratulations to the new South Carolina Watermelon Queen!

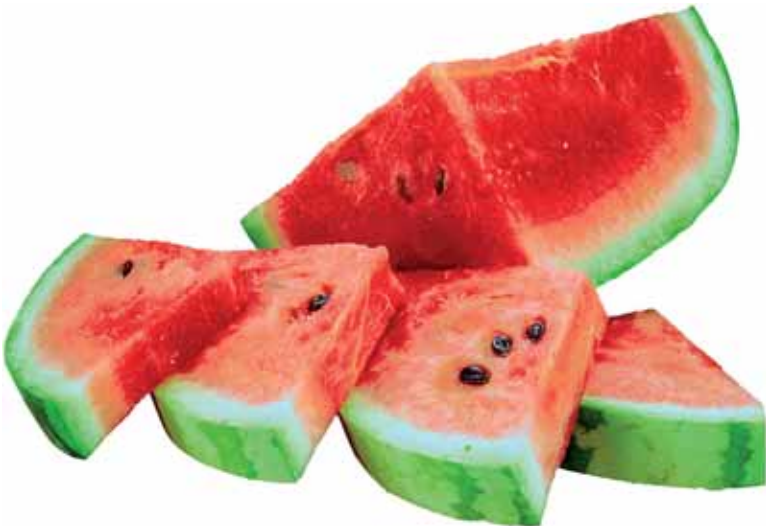
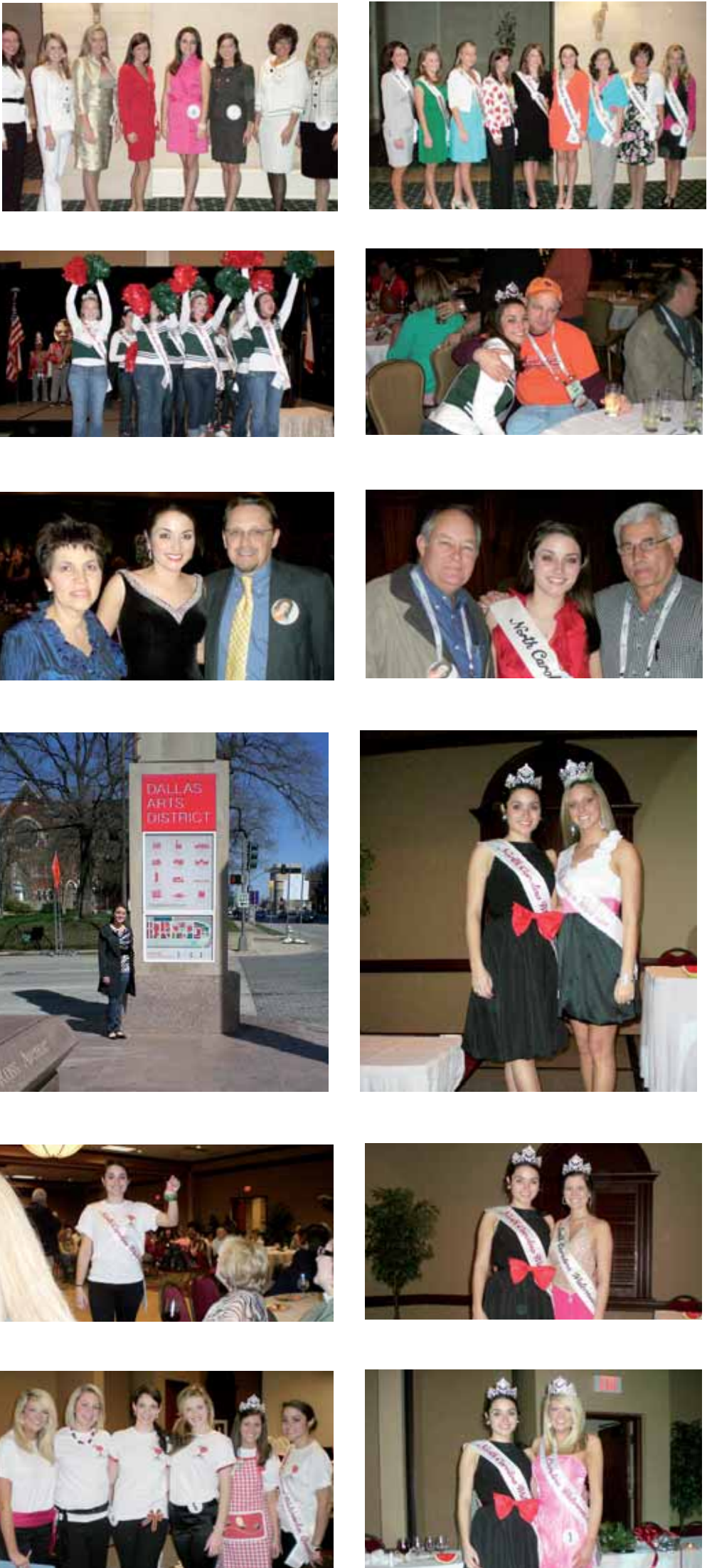
Next stop was the National Convention. Queen Kensley made North Carolina proud. She was beautiful and elegant in all phases of competition. She enjoyed herself and enjoyed being with the other Queens! Queen Kensley also took some time to see some of the sights in Dallas, Texas, as well as visit with her family who had traveled to se her compete. The entire North Carolina Watermelon Association wishes newly crowned National Queen Jessica good luck!

The last stop for Queen Kensley was the North Carolina Watermelon Convention. There Queen Kensley helped to crown her successor-Madelyn Varner.

Queen Madelyn will soon be off to a quick start! Media training is just around the corner and she along with 1st runner up, Leslie Revelle will attend the event!

See you all soon!

Susan Mills
Promotions Coordinator
North Carolina Watermelon Association
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South Carolina Report

Greetings from SC,

Our 38th annual SC Watermelon Association Convention was a huge success! We had record attendance and a very profitable auction. As always the queen contest was the highlight of the weekend. This year the judges had the tough job of selecting our new queen from a group of 10 beautiful, qualified girls from all over the state. Second-Runner Up this year was Courtney Helms of Pelzer and First-Runner Up was Shelley Whipple of Greenville. Blair Boozer of West Columbia was selected as the 2010 SC Watermelon Queen. She is the 22-year-old daughter of Woody and Sandy Boozer and is a 2009 graduate of the University of South Carolina. She was sponsored by Lonnie Beach of Interstate Packers. Blair has an agricultural background and will be a great asset to our association. She was thrilled to be given this new job title and could not wait to get started!!

Blair began her year by attending the Georgia Watermelon Association Convention in Cordele, GA. She was thrilled to meet many of the other queens and past queens who were there. Even though the weekend was rainy and cold everyone had a blast at the auction and banquet. We would like to thank the GWA for their hospitality!

We had a wonderful time in Dallas for the National Watermelon Association Convention. Thank you to the NWA for a job well done! Congratulations to the new NWA Queen Jessica Southerland. We look forward to working with you this year! We would also like to thank our 2009 SCWQ Summers Slaton for the wonderful job she did representing us not only in Dallas, but all year long. We love you Summers and wish you the very best!

Coming up for Blair will be the Florida Watermelon Convention and the Queen training in Las Vegas. Our schedule is filling up fast so please contact me with any event you would like to have our queen attend.

Until next time,
Julie Murdock
SCWA Promotions Coordinator
Jewels412@charter.net



Mark Williams and wife Lynn were excited to receive the item they purchased at the SCWA Auction.



Gerald Funderburk is such a wonderful supporter of the SCWA.



Two of our queen contestants pose with Scotty Sandifer.



Billy Jenkins proudly shows off his purchase at the SCWA Auction.



Queen Blair poses with Bradley O'Neal.



Thank you Connie Garvey for all you do to make the SCWA Convention a success.



Stevie Still enjoys talking with two of the queen contestants.



The 2010 SCWQ Blair Boozer with 1st runner up Shelly Whipple and 2nd runner up Courtney Helms.



Hami Dicks congratulates Blair.



Blair chats with Rusty Kinard about her upcoming year.



Hamilton Dicks and 2010 SCWQ Blair Boozer.



The SC has-beens with Queen Blair.



Blair thanks Josh Moore for her beautiful necklace.



Blair congratulates the new Georgia Watermelon Queen.



Summers thanks Louise O'Neal for her gift at the NWA Auction.



Thank you Summers for all of your hard work!



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Texas Report

Another year behing us and a new watermelon season in front of us, hopefully it will be bountiful for each of you.

I would like to say THANK YOU to the NWA for the service award, I was so honored and completely blown away by it, speechless you might say and that does not happen to me often.

I love and respect each and everyone of you. Agreat big Thank You to our past Texas Queen Mollie Bennett...She has been a terrific watermelon queen, Mollie was always eager for each and every promotions and never tired, of promoting the watermlons, beginning with a smile and eding each promotion with a smile. Thank you Miss Mollie...for a great year of watermelon promotions.

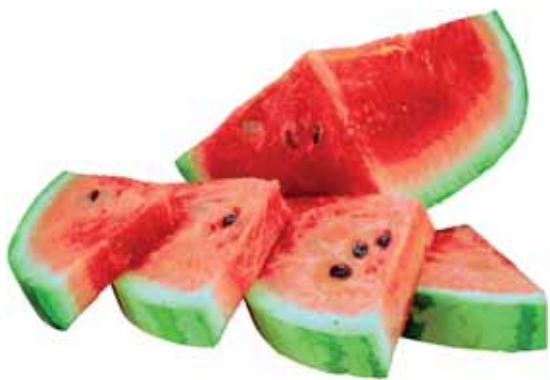
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW 2010 TEXAS WATERMELON QUEEN: MARIANA PEREX. QUEEN MARIANA ATTENDS SCHOOL AT Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas. Marians says that she is so excited to be the Texas Watermelon Queen because it is an opportunity like no other, working for the association will bring her the experience to be creative in situations where needed. Mariana major is theatre and monor Horticulture. We sould also like to say thank you to the National Watermelon Promotion Board for helping us have a very successful year last year promoting watermelons all over Texas and in Mexico.

Thank to Marcia Adler and the NWPB Staff for setting up so many watermelon promotions for Texas. We are looking forward to another year of great promotions.

AND WOW, the Texas Deparatment of Agriculture, Commissioner Todd Staples, Richard De Los Santos, State Marketing Coordinator for Horticulture, Produce, and Forestry deserves much gratitude from the Texas Watermelon Association. We appreciate and thank them so much...We are proud to use the GO TEXAS LOGO...

Thanks to the NWA for a great aconvention in Dallas, we all enjoyed it so much, and to Bob it seems like you have raised the scale for the NWA CONVENION, so we all are already looking forward to 2011 in San Diego...

Wanda Letson
texaswatermelons.com
melonred@sbcglobal.net



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Ward and Richard enjoy NWA Meeting.



Thanks to NWA Queen Magie and Bill Wilson for luggage bought at auction and given to Queen M:ariana.



Mark Arney and Myron Harrison entertaing our group with song at the Texas convention.



James Wiggins at NWA with Maggie and Mollie.



Thnds so much to this group, each year at our annual convention they are always ready to help.



Anita enjoying the tour of the "DALLAS SET".



Jody and Darren Wiggins present the 2010 NWA Queen with new luggage bought for her at the auction.



Richard visiting with the Hendersons.



Thanks to our past queens for coming back to help at the convention.



NWA Executive in dunking booth at NWA convention



2010 Texas queen contestants



Past queen tiffany visits with all.



Thanks to Board Member Pau Teague for being our faithful auctioneer.



The Wiggins boys are always so nice and great to be around.



Tony Anderson welcomes NWA Maggie to texas.



Queen Mollie and our Texas Department of Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples.



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Western Report



Press Release

Western Watermelon Association's Annual Convention

Growers, packers and shippers of watermelons in the western United States and Mexico meet to discuss current issues.

Las Vegas, NV – January 16, 2010 – The Western Watermelon Association convened at the Paris Hotel in Las Vegas, NV on January 16, 2010. Growers, packers and shippers came from across the western United States and Mexico to discuss current issues in the watermelon industry.

The Western Watermelon Association saw a record attendance as the association continues to grow. "The WWA's (Western Watermelon Association) Annual Convention is always a great time and place to meet with other growers, packers and shippers of watermelons to see how we can benefit our industry as a whole," said Ryan Van Groningen, sales manager, Van Groningen & Sons. "Seed companies and packing supply representatives are also present to discuss innovative new varieties and packaging supplies that will be hitting the marketplace in the upcoming year."

The WWA's Annual Convention also included many informative speakers. Jeff Oberman, United Fresh Produce Association, spoke to the group about the current programs they have in place to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables. Richard Molinar, farm advisor for the University of California, spoke to the group about his research on mini personal size seedless watermelons.

Elliot Grant, Yottamark, spoke to the group about the new Produce Traceability Initiative. Gordon Hunt, National Watermelon Promotion Board, spoke to the group about the development of new markets to promote the consumption of watermelons in the United States and across the world. Bob Morrissey, National Watermelon Association, spoke to the group about the upcoming National Watermelon Association convention that will be held in Dallas, TX February 17 – 20, 2010.

To learn more about the Western Watermelon Association, please mail inquiries to P.O. Box 6695, Nogales, AZ 85628.



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