



# Tax-Reporting Repealed from health care law

Congress and the White House passed a repeal to a tax-reporting requirement contained in last year’s health-care law that was widely criticized for being too burdensome, the first significant change to the law and one of the few bipartisan acts of Congress so far this year.

House Administration Chairman Dan Lungren, R-CA, held a news conference on H.R.4, the Small Business Paperwork Mandate Elimination Act of 2011.



The tax-reporting measure would have required businesses to file 1099 forms with the Internal Revenue Service showing payments of \$600 or more to vendors. The goal was to reduce tax evasion, but businesses said it would have added to the time and cost of tax preparation.

Republicans and Democrats agreed that repealing the tax-reporting requirement was a good idea, but had differed over how to compensate for it. The approved repeal would make up for taxes lost to vendor evasion by requiring low- and middle-income Americans who receive a tax credit for buying their own health insurance to repay the credit if their income winds up being too high. The repayment obligation would show up as a tax charge during the tax filing season.

“How would most middle-class families deal with a tax bill of \$10,000 or more just because their income may have increased \$1 above the eligibility limits during the year they got accepted?” said Sen. Bob Menendez (N.J.), who tried and failed to repeal the mechanism for dealing with the cost of the repeal.

The National Taxpayers Union, a group that focuses on cutting taxes, has estimated that the repeal would cost \$19.7 billion. The group estimated that the losses would be offset by taking back \$19.9 billion in overpayments.

# School leaders offer thanks for donation of salad bars



Fruits and vegetables from salad bars in New Orleans schools will help children learn healthier eating habits at home, according to an administrator whose students benefit from donated salad bars.

Andrea Thomas-Reynolds, chief executive officer of Algiers Charter Schools Association, was one of several New Orleans school officials thanking the United Fresh Produce Association May 3 for the donation of 33 salad bars to local schools.

“We are so grateful and we really appreciate your willingness and excitement to work with us,” Thomas Reynolds said at a news conference on the donations during United Fresh 2011.

The donation, which will provide 80,000 children in New Orleans with fresh fruits and vegetables, was possible through industry donations to the United Fresh Foundation’s Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools initiative. The event on the show floor brought representatives of the schools and 26 donor companies together.

The National Watermelon Association, one of the 26 New Orleans donors, provided a salad bar to Joseph S. Clark High School in New Orleans.

The salad bars will help to increase children’s consumption of fruits and vegetables by creating good choices and habits in their learning years. The three students that attended the press conference were excited about fixing their plates and enjoying the salads. By the way ..... all three of them enjoyed the watermelon, which has become a primary request amongst students in New Orleans.

# FDA seeks input on GAPs, HACCP

The Food and Drug Administration is seeking industry input about preventive controls and best practices in relation to food safety as it prepares to draft guidance documents.

The May 23 comment request in the Federal Register stated comments would be accepted through August 22nd. Comments can be submitted online at <http://tinyurl.com/FDA-GAP-comments>, or via traditional mail to: Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305), FDA, 5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061, Rockville, Md. 20852.

The comment request comes after FDA deputy commissioner Michael Taylor told members of the Produce Traceability Initiative Leadership Council that the agency would take its lead on traceability from the produce industry.

Teri Miller, produce category manager for Salisbury, N.C.-based Food Lion LLC and a member of the PTI’s Implementation Working Group, said she takes the FDA at its word because of its response to industry comments filed about the Bioterrorism Act and country of origin labeling.

“I’ve seen the FDA truly consider and address those comments that were reasonable and legitimate. If the industry, doesn’t submit comments, then we all risk regulations that are burdensome and may not provide the benefit intended,” Miller said May 24.

The Food Safety Modernization Act required the FDA to issue guidance regarding hazard analysis and preventive controls. In its request for comments the agency stated it plans to “leverage, where appropriate, the best practices for hazards and controls identified by the food and feed industries for specific types of food and specific methods to manufacture, process, pack, and hold food.”

# In This Issue:

Gov’t recommends Half-Plate of Fruits & Vegetables ..... Page 5

Washington Public Policy Conference open to members ..... Page 6

Budget issues taking their toll on Agriculture ..... Page 21

Immigration issues cause labor shortages and concerns .....Page 37

E-Verify bills become top priority in Washington ..... Page 38



New Orleans students help themselves to fresh produce from a salad bar at United Fresh 2011.





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National Watermelon Association, Inc.  
5129 South Lakeland Drive Suite 1 • Lakeland, Florida 33813  
(863) 619-7575 office • (863) 619-7577 fax  
www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com

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Subscription rates: USA and Canada, no charge to NWA member. All others, U.S. subscriptions, \$30.00 per year (U.S. Dollars); Canadian Subscriptions, \$40.00 per year (U.S. Dollars); Other foreign subscriptions, \$50.00 per year (U.S. Dollars).

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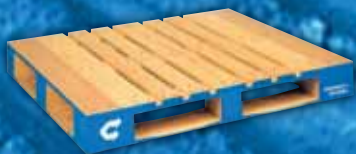
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# Plate icon is a home run, industry says



### Balancing Calories

Enjoy your food, but eat less.  
Avoid oversized portions.

### Foods to Increase

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.  
Make at least half your grains whole grains.  
Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.

### Foods to Reduce

Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals and choose the foods with lower numbers.  
Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

With enthusiastic backing from the fresh produce industry, the U.S. Department of Agriculture wants MyPlate to become the plate for Americans.

Unveiling a color-coded plate that illustrates half a plate devoted to fruits and vegetables, the USDA’s Tom Vilsack, first lady Michelle Obama and Surgeon General Regina Benjamin unveiled America’s new food icon June 2.

At a press conferece, Tom Stenzel, president of the Washington, D.C.-based United Fresh Produce Association, said the fresh produce industry fully backs MyPlate.

“The MyPlate graphic is stunningly simple,” he said. “It creates a visual that all of us and our children can look at for every meal.” Stenzel said he has been asked if the produce industry can provide the fruits and vegetables to fill half of America’s plate. “I do want to tell you we can, and we are looking forward to that opportunity.”

The USDA said <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> will be the web resource for consumers, nutrition educators and others looking for more information about the icon. Vilsack said the MyPyramid image, in use some variation since the early 1990s, was too complex to serve as a quick and easy guide for busy American families. Over the past two years, he said the USDA and other agencies have been working on creating a powerful yet simple to understand message for Americans to show what foods are need in what proportions for a healthy diet.

“MyPlate is an uncomplicated symbol to help remind people to think about their food choices in order to lead healthier lifestyles,” Vilsack said. Obama said the nation needs a simple way to convey nutritional information that makes sense at the dinner table and school cafeteria. “We needed something useful and something simple, and that’s why I like MyPlate so much,” she said. She said parents can’t be relied on to measure out servings and portions, and MyPlate is the solution.

“As long as they’re half full of fruits and vegetables, and paired with lean proteins, whole grains and low-fat dairy, we’re golden,” she said.

Obama said the new icon won’t end the epidemic of childhood obesity alone, but she called it an “enormous step in the right direction.”

“It shows that all of us are willing to act on behalf of our nation’s health, and are willing to step when it comes to our kids,” she said. Industry reaction was uniformly positive.

“We applaud USDA and everyone in this industry that helped to make this a reality,” Bryan Silberman, president of the Newark, Del.-based Produce Marketing Association, said in a statement. Elizabeth Pivonka, president of the Hockessin, Del.-based Produce for Bitterer Health Foundation, said in a news release that making half of what you eat fruits and vegetables has been one of the supporting messages

## “Safe Fruits and Veggies” Campaign In Full Swing

The Alliance for Food and Farming outlined the current status of its “Safe Fruits and Veggies” campaign. The campaign is designed to clear up misconceptions over pesticide residue media reports (such as the Environmental Working Group’s “Dirty Dozen” list) by providing science-based information on the health benefits of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables.

More than that, though, the campaign is driven by the need for the produce industry to speak up in one unified voice to counter these “erroneous claims”, a point driven home by PMA CEO Bryan Silberman, who asked the following question: “How did we go from being stewards of the land to becoming a target to those intent on demonizing us?”

Although the Safe Fruit and Veggies campaign is a fairly recent development, it has already demonstrated positive results. Following the release of last year’s “Dirty Dozen” list, the Alliance commissioned an expert panel report that reviewed the science on the potential health effects of pesticide residues. The report concluded that, among other things, the list was misleading because it “was based only upon exposure data while remaining silent about available information on the assessment of the toxicity of pesticides presented in the diet.” Following the release of the report, the EWG acknowledged that people should not stop eating fruit and veggies, since the benefits outweigh the risks. They also acknowledged that shoppers’ guides like the Dirty Dozen list are not always based on risk.

Several key points and issues were addressed during the hour-long presentation:

- The primary component of the Safe Fruits and Veggies campaign is its website, [www.safefruitsandveggies.com](http://www.safefruitsandveggies.com). The first thing a visitor will notice is that both conventional and organic produce are treated as equals. As the site indicates, “The best thing you and your family could do is eat both.”
- The Alliance is comprised of approximately 50 farm group members, and all funding comes from voluntary donations. One important item to note is that while there are some chemical companies who are members of the Alliance, funding from them is prohibited.
- The primary messaging of the site is that the mere presence of residue does not mean produce is harmful; the benefits of a diet rich in produce outweigh the risks; and the healthiest people are those who eat the most produce. “We have the tools to drive these messages home,” says Ed Beckman.
- While the Alliance members are bringing science-based information to the table, they face an uphill battle in the emotional ties that stories about pesticide residues can create. The pesticide issue is a favorite among reporters, even if it’s not based on fact, because it’s so emotional.
- A key feature of the website is a Pesticide Residue Calculator, which shows how much of a given fruit or vegetable someone has to eat to show any sort of side effects.
- We need to enter a dialogue which has been dominated by activist groups. Most stories are one-sided, but we are seeing headway. We need help inserting our messaging into reporting, and we need multiple responses, not just one joint letter.
- Silberman closed the presentation by arguing

of the foundation’s Fruit & Veggies — More Matters campaign.

Pivonka said after the event that she is pleased the USDA is planning to emphasize the message of “make half your plate fruits and vegetables” from September through December this year. While the industry hoped for the plate icon after the 2005 Dietary Guidelines, Pivonka said it is more than welcome now.

“This isn’t a magic bullet, but it sure is a big big step in the right direction.”She said the icon will be used by the government for consumer education in nutrition assistance programs, at schools and other venues.

“Everybody relies on this icon,” she said. “I really do think they hit the nail on the head this time.”

that “This is about your livelihood, and your sense of what is right and just.” He said the best thing a grower or an association can do is link their websites to [safefruitsandveggies.com](http://safefruitsandveggies.com), and help respond to media stories using the tools available on the site. “Tell your story. Help take back our message.”

The Alliance for Food and Farming is a non-profit organization compromised of approximately 50 agriculture associations, commodity groups, and individual growers/ shippers who represent farms of all sizes and includes conventional and organic production. The Alliance works to provide a voice for farmers to communicate their commitment to food safety and care for the land.

## Senators Submit Bill to Eliminate Redundant EPA Pesticide Regulation

13 Senators introduced a bill to prevent duplicative federal regulation of pesticides by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA has proposed new, separate regulation of pesticide use on top of longstanding regulations already prescribed by law. The new legislation, sponsored by Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Pat Roberts (R-Kansas), would exempt pesticides already regulated by law from being subject to redundant EPA permits.

“I find it astonishing that an agency under fire for being either ignorant about agriculture or downright anti-agriculture is pursuing regulations that clearly duplicate existing ones,” Se. Mike Johanns (NEB) said. “Redundant regulations amount to little more than additional costs, red tape, and roadblocks. The President has promised to eliminate duplicative regulations, yet is allowing this rogue agency to create even more. The Roberts legislation is a reasonable solution to maintaining proper pesticide use while also protecting our farmers and ranchers from EPA overreach.”

Background:

- Pesticides are already subject to regulations prescribed by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).
- In January 2009, the Sixth Circuit Court ruled that EPA cannot exempt pesticides already compliant with one set of federal safety regulations (in this case, FIFRA) from additional permitting requirements under the Clean Water Act.
- More than 25 Senate and House members supported an amicus brief urging the Supreme Court to review the Sixth Circuit Court’s decision.
- The Obama Administration, in its own brief, then took the opposite position and urged the Supreme Court to let the ruling stand.
- As a result, EPA in June 2010 released a general draft permit to subject pesticide applicators for the first time to duplicative requirements under the Clean Water Act, marking a distinct shift in how pesticides are regulated.
- This regulation not only impacts American farmers and ranchers, but local communities with routine public health activities such as mosquito and other pest control.
- The House of Representatives passed similar legislation, H.R. 872, with broad bipartisan support by a vote of 292 to 130, including 57 Democrats.





There has never been a more important time to attend WPPC than 2011!

Every fall for a number of years, the National Watermelon Association has invited members to join us for three days of meetings, speeches and insights with Congress, the White House and other government agencies in Washington, D.C. through the most powerful public policy conference of the year, the United Fresh Produce Association’s Washington Public Policy Conference (WPPC).



This year in particular holds a number of high priorities that will affect the produce industry, and will affect your business (whether it is already or will eventually), and hopefully that thought will encourage you to join us and participate this fall. The NWA typically has the single largest turnout of any trade association, and we expect the same again this year. With immigration issues (e-verify, I-9 audits, H-2A contracts unfulfilled), the new food safety law (and a lack of funding for it), the upcoming produce food safety rule, issues with EPA, the 2012 elections, and much more - - - all of these issues will make this year’s WPPC vital to our industry’s future (and success).

Leading the way at WPPC will be the new Chairman of United Fresh, our good friend Reggie Griffin (Vice President of Produce and Floral Procurement - The Kroger Company). When Reggie recently accepted his new duties as the first retailer Chairman of United in 20 years, he said:

“There are three things that keep me awake at night. 1. There is a real possibility that the anti-immigrant mood of the country might drive away the workforce that we need to actually harvest fresh fruits & vegetables. 2. The rising regulatory costs and burdens that threaten to drain the profitability out of your business and my business. 3. There is a revolution, or tsunami, coming in food safety regulation that is likely to change our industry forever.”

Other points that he mentioned include ..... Who will pick/pack/ship our crops in the future? How will that effect jobs and the price of produce? How will we deal with food safety? What about recalls with no evidence of people getting sick at all? What does scientific testing in parts-per-million (PPM) and parts-per-trillion (PPT) mean? Will we be able to keep our title in the farm bill in tact, or lose due to budget issues? What about issues with EPA? Energy costs? Transportation? Regulatory burdens? Our federal government is in the middle of it all!

He concluded his comments to say, “Politics is something that most people don’t like to play or engage in. Unfortunately with the need for migrant labor, food safety regulations, energy, EPA and so much more, we must. Politics is NOT a spectator sport. We all have to play, and play hard!”

United Fresh has responded to their new Chairman by broadening the conference this year to offer much more than ever before. The schedule this year is more compact and is:

**Monday, October 3, 2011**  
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. United Fresh New Member & 1st Time WPPC Attendee Welcome

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Advocacy & Grassroots Seminar  
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Welcome Reception  
**Tuesday, October 4, 2011**  
8:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Opening Breakfast & General Session  
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Market Segment Breakout Sessions  
11:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Luncheon & General Session  
1:15 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. March on Capitol Hill - Congressional Hill Visits  
5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Fresh Festival on Capitol Hill  
7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. United FreshPAC Reception & Dinner (Separate Ticket)

**Wednesday, October 5, 2011**  
7:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Breakfast & General Session  
10:00 a.m. - Noon Education Briefings and Tours USDA, EPA or FDA Town Hall meetings  
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. WPPC Closing Luncheon



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The industry’s most prominent and influential executives attend WPPC for strategic, face-to-face dialogue with lawmakers and staff at key congressional offices. Join produce colleagues for top-level meetings with Obama Administration officials to deliver your company’s messages on food safety, labor, nutrition and other critical issues. Enjoy the annual Fresh Festival on Capitol Hill, one of Washington’s most celebrated and flavorful events, and find business solutions at United’s Management Resource Center.

Registration is open now to reserve your place at the Produce Industry’s Most Powerful Public Policy Event.



If you are interested in participating with us in Washington, there are two things that you need to do (and soon):

1. Call the Washington Hyatt to make your room reservation. Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill  
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Phone: 202-737-1234  
Book your room under the United Fresh WPPB block to get the discounted housing rate of \$289! Every year the room block sells out. Make the call today!
2. Contact the NWA office to register for WPPC. The NWA has negotiated a special rate of \$250 per person for WPPC (compared to \$695/members and \$1,045/non-members). We will make the convention registration for you, and send an invoice later.

So, the question is ‘will you consider joining us’? This year is more critical than most. You can help us by participating and helping yourself, while coming away with a new knowledge of what Washington is like today. Join us. You will gain an appreciation for our federal government, and become part of our team that is working toward creating solutions of the large issues of today. Thanks.



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## Heart-shaped watermelons in Japan

A store in Fukuoka, Japan is selling heart-shaped watermelons.

The unusual fruit is the invention of Hiroichi Kimura, a farmer from Kumamoto, and his wife. The couple said they had tried for three years to create the perfectly heart-shaped fruit, which they say symbolizes their passion for farming and their affection for each other. They are being sold for a price 15,750 yen (\$160) each.



## USDA's cut of ag labor reports upsets employers

Cutting agricultural labor surveys/reports will save about \$1.96 million or 0.008% of the \$23.9 billion that President Barack Obama proposed for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in his fiscal year 2012 budget.



That savings, calculated with information from the USDA's Office of Budget and Program Analysis, is worth far less than the value of the data, according to some employers.

Frank Gasperini, executive vice president of the National Council of Agricultural Employers sent a letter to Agricultural Secretary Tom Vilsack expressing concerns about the cut's potential impact on the H-2A program.

"The agricultural wage statistics ... are among the many important, useful, and irreplaceable data-points used throughout agriculture that are not available from any other source," Gasperini wrote.

Officials with USDA have not announced how H-2A wage rates will be figured without the data from the National Agricultural Statistics Service, said Matthew Herrick, a USDA public affairs officer.

"USDA faces real and tough choices as a result of significant budget cuts," Herrick said. "NASS will continue to work within the existing budget to provide timely, accurate and useful data in service to agriculture."

Craig Regelbrugge, co-chair of the Agricultural Coalition for Immigration Reform, echoed Gasperini's concerns, but said the produce industry likely will not have problems regarding the wage calculations until 2012 because the rates are set early each year.

Regelbrugge said his greatest fear is that the USDA will use Department of Labor Occupational Employment Statistics (OES), which he said do not include "actual data" from growers. He said the H-2A wage system hasn't been tremendously popular, but at least with the NASS surveys everyone knew the calculations were based on reliable

## U.S. Loses Nearly One-Third Of Honey Bees

It was a brutal winter once again for U.S. honey bee colonies, as for the fifth year in a row, about one-third of the colonies were lost.

According to the results released in the annual survey conducted by USDA and the Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA), total losses from managed honey bee colonies nationwide were 30% for the 2010-2011 winter. This result is similar to total losses reported in similar surveys done in the four previous years: 34% for the 2009-2010 winter, 29% for 2008-2009, 36% for 2007-2008, and 32% for 2006-2007.

"The lack of increase in losses is marginally encouraging in the sense that the problem does not appear to be getting worse for honey bees and beekeepers," said Jeff Pettis, an entomologist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), who helped conduct the study. "But continued losses of this size put tremendous pressure on the economic sustainability of commercial beekeeping."

The survey, from October 2010 to April 2011, was led by Pettis and by AIA past presidents. Beekeepers reported that, on average, they felt losses of 13% would be economically acceptable, but 61% of responding beekeepers reported having losses greater than the economically acceptable level. Average colony loss for an individual beekeeper's operation was 38.4%. This compares to an average loss of 42.2% for individual beekeepers' operations in 2009 and 2010.

Average loss by operation represents the percentage of loss in each operation added together and divided by the number of beekeeping operations that responded to the survey. This number is affected more by small beekeeping operations, which may only have 10 or fewer colonies, so a loss of just five colonies in a 10-colony operation would represent a 50% loss. Total losses were calculated as all colonies reported lost in the survey divided by the total number of bee colonies reported in the survey. This number is affected more by larger operations, which might have 10,000 or more colonies, so a loss of five colonies in a 10,000-colony operation would equal only a 0.05% loss.

Among surveyed beekeepers who lost any colonies, 31% reported losing at least some of their colonies without finding dead bee bodies — one of the symptoms that defines Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Since this was an interview-based survey, it was not possible to differentiate between verifiable cases of CCD and colonies lost as the result of other causes that share the "absence of dead bees" as a symptom. The cause of CCD is still unknown.

The beekeepers who reported colony losses with no dead bee bodies present also reported higher average colony losses (61%), compared to beekeepers who lost colonies but did not report the absence of dead bees (34% in losses).

A total of 5,572 beekeepers, who manage more than 15% of the country's estimated 2.68 million colonies, responded to the survey. A complete analysis of the survey data will be published later this year.

Gasperini said he, too, fears that the Labor Department will rely on OES information to calculate H-2A wages.

"... absence of the valid NASS survey data will even further weaken the H-2A program," Gasperini's letter stated. "Without the NASS survey results, DOL will be forced to formulate new rules for determining the (wage rates) for H-2A."

Gasperini is not without hope, however. "The USDA is pretty responsive to stakeholders," he said. "If they get 50 or 60 well thought out letters — not just mad rants — it will probably make a difference."

Herrick said NASS will continue to publish several key reports, including monthly crop productions, agricultural prices, crop progress and acreage reports and other livestock related reports.

## House bill cuts WIC, AG & FDA program funds

Alarming nutrition advocates and raising worries in the farm lobby, the House has finished its work on the fiscal year 2012 agricultural appropriations bill, approving the package by a vote of 217 to 203.



The bill, approved June 16, provides \$125 billion to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and related agencies, \$7 billion less than President Obama requested. The bill cuts \$2.7 billion in discretionary spending from last year and \$5 billion less than the White House requested.

Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., slammed the bill, "The Women, Infant and Children (WIC) program, which provides nutrition assistance for low-income pregnant women, mothers, and their young children, has been gutted by over \$650 million and other nutrition programs for seniors and those in need are woefully underfunded," DeLauro said in a statement.

She also said funding for the Food and Drug Administration was cut by more than \$280 million, which she said will put families at risk.

Rep. Collin Peterson, D-Minn., ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee, also voted against the legislation, which he said made disproportionate cuts to farm bill programs, conservation and nutrition funding.

The National WIC Association, Washington, D.C., said in an e-mail the House 2012 appropriations bill is woefully inadequate and will cut 13% in WIC food resources and 10% from nutrition services.

"Quite simply WIC will be underfunded by at least \$782 million off of NWA's recommendation of \$6.83 billion and by at least \$686 million off of the Fiscal Year 2011 funding level," the statement from the association said.

Between 200,000 and 350,000 mothers and children will be denied WIC benefits, according to the group. The Senate is expected to mark up its agriculture appropriations bill in September. After that, differences between the two bills will be settled in conference committee.

Among amendments approved by the full House, members voted to prohibit the use of funds to provide payments to the Brazil Cotton Institute (\$147 million). That could create trade friction with Brazil, which was set to receive payments as part of a trade settlement to compensate Brazil for illegal U.S. cotton subsidies. A rekindling of a trade conflict may cause Brazil to slap retaliatory tariffs on U.S. fruit exports, because Brazil was prepared to do last year before the settlement was announced.

The House's 2012 draft budget for FDA discretionary funding was \$2.17 billion, down \$284 million from fiscal year 2011. That is very untimely considering that FDA needs new funding to do what the new food safety law requires them to do.

The House also approved an amendment that prohibits its funds from being used for the USDA "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" initiative. That program, promoted heavily by deputy secretary of agriculture Kathleen Merrigan emphasized what she called the "need for a fundamental and critical reconnection between producers and consumers."

The USDA's budget summary and Annual Performance Plan states that the 2012 budget also includes full funding for the third year of the 2012 Census of Agriculture's five-year cycle.

The 2012 budget for NASS has a \$3.4 million increase to "improve the data quality of the County Estimates program which is used within the department to administer crop insurance programs, ... as well as crop revenue support programs, emergency assistance payments and the Conservation Reserve Program."





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# National Report

Whitney hit the ground running following the NWA convention. This has been a busy and productive time for her. She is enjoying each and every promotion, and doing a fantastic job for you! I noticed photos from the IWA convention were missing in last report, to be included in this one, back to longer report next printing.

**Florida Watermelon Association Sponsors Whitney**

FWA sponsored Whitney and I to their fun-filled convention in Orlando in March. The theme was 50's and no one outshined the FWA President Billy Smith! Everyone looked great and had a fun time! Great auction! Congratulations to Miss Katelyn Kelley on being selected Florida Watermelon, and a busy time she has had! Special thanks to all at FWA for your sponsorship and your support!

**Nunhems International Watermelon Conference & Queen Training**

We were excited to be a part of the International Watermelon Conference held in Miami Beach, Florida hosted by Nunhems. The event was two fold for us; it was also in conjunction with our annual NWPB training. We enjoyed being part of the conference and attending their events, and able to have our training in such a beautiful setting! Thank You Nunhems for your part in our sponsorship and for including us at your conference! Special thanks to NWPB for the great training session and helpful presentations!

**NWPB Sponsors CPMA in Montreal**

Whitney was sponsored to the Canadian Produce Marketing convention held in April in Montreal Quebec Canada. We were excited to be included in the NWPB team's booth. We joined Gordon Hunt, Stephanie Simek, and Juliemar Rosado, and Cece Krumrine in Montreal. It was a great show with informative meetings. Thanks NWPB for having us!

**Delta Fresh & Browning & Sons, Sponsor Bentonville Race for the Cure**

We were sponsored to Bentonville, Arkansas for their annual Race for the Cure to benefit breast cancer awareness, by Delta Fresh, Leslie and Chris Bloebaum and Browning and Sons! What a successful event! C H Robinson's Molly Tabron coordinates the event and does a fantastic job! Chef Joe Poon was on hand to amaze the attendees. We certainly served up lots of watermelon slices to the crowds. It was an awesome event to benefit breast cancer awareness, and we appreciate being a part of the race!

**CHEP Pallet; International Paper; Temple-Inland; Abbott & Cobb; Syngenta & HarvestMark; Sponsor United Convention New Orleans**

Special thanks to each of you for helping sponsor Whitney to United Fresh Fruit & Vegetable convention. We attended the opening party, what a beautiful setting. NWA was well represented with Executive Director, Bob Morrissey and wife Betsy as well as our chairman of the NWA Board, Brent Harrison. Betsy joined us as we visited the exhibits during the show. We attended the Harvest Mark party and can say a good time was had by all. Varney Prejean of Temple-Inland treated us to a great dinner. Thanks Varney! We appreciate all the support of our sponsors for making it possible to attend this year's show!

**Melon 1 Sponsors Race for the Cure-Minneapolis, Minnesota**

Mother's Day we were in Minneapolis, Minnesota for a fantastic Race for the Cure. The race is held at the Mall of America, and what a turn out it was! Fantastic! We were joined by Texas Coordinator, Wanda Letson and her Queen Veronica, as well Jimmy and Brenda Henderson and their four children. Jimmy even ran the race! Our own Chef Joe Poon also joined us! Molly Tabron of CH Robinson was responsible for the set up....and an outstanding job she did! Special thanks to John Lapide and the entire Melon 1 team for Sponsoring us!

**Borders Melons East; Global; Wolf Island; Sunny Fresh: Sponsor Taste of Pinellas**

We were sponsored to St. Petersburg, Florida for a three day event benefiting the All Children's Hospital in St Petersburg, FL. We joined Debra Harrison, FWA coordinator, and Queen Katelyn Kelley for this busy and worthwhile event. The IWA Queen Sabra Boyd and SC Queen Holly Whatley also joined us. We cut and served melons provided by Melon 1 to the gigantic crowds attending. The girls rode in a parade with a horse and carriage, and visited the All Children's Hospital. Thanks Nowell Borders, Al Wroten, Jim Barfield and Kelly Marinaro for sponsoring us to The Taste of Pinellas!

More to share next time!  
Best of the Season to you!

Eleanor T. Bullock                      229-273-8638  
eleanor@websign.net                229-322-9933 cell





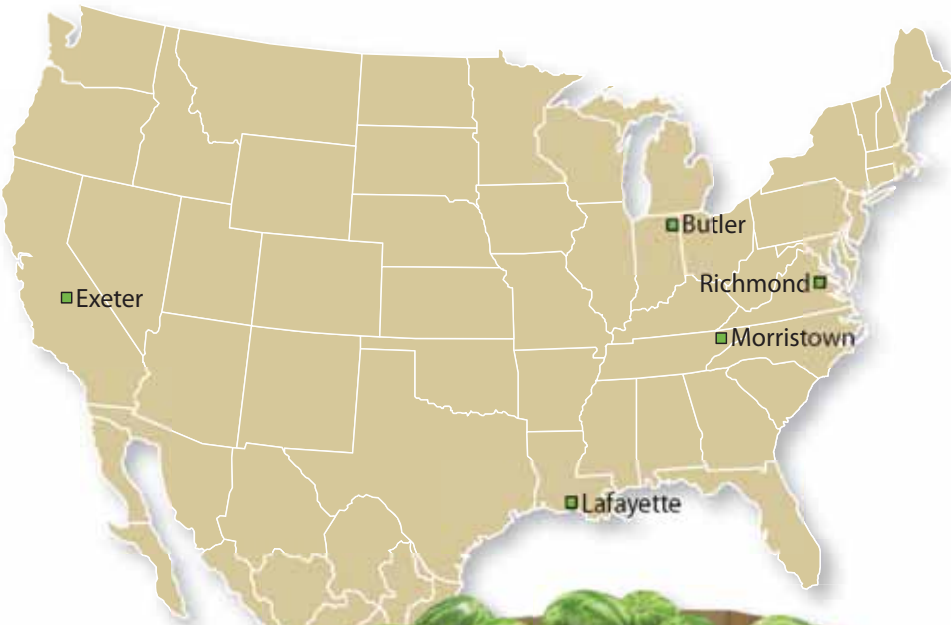
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# National Pictures



NWA President Jim Schmidt and Whitney congratulate Sabra Boyd 2011 Illiana Queen



CPMA in Montreal!



Whitney Thanks the CHEP Pallet Team for sponsoring!



Whitney visits with IWA President Carrie Smith during their convention



Race for the Cure, Bentonville, Arkansas!



Thank You Harvest Mark!



Whitney with FWA President Billy Smith and wife Corliss, 50's FWA Convention...Looking Good!



Thanks Chris Bloebaum and Delta Fresh for sponsoring!



CH Robinson hosted the 2 Races for the Cure! Thanks!



Congratulations Katelyn Kelley!



Whitney visits with Tom Stenzel, President and CEO of United Fresh Fruit & Vegetable in New Orleans



Race Ready in Minneapolis!  
Thanks Melon 1 and Molly Tabron!



Thanks NWPB!



Whitney thanks Abbott & Cobb for helping Sponsor!



Race for the Cure team in Minneapolis!



Whitney Thanks Pepe Gomez and Nunhems in Miami!



Enjoys a visit with Sponsor, Temple-Inland



Thank You Mr. Benny and Mark of Borders Melons East



CPMA Reception in Montreal!



Thanks to the HarvestMark Team!



Taste of Pinellas Team serving up those melons!



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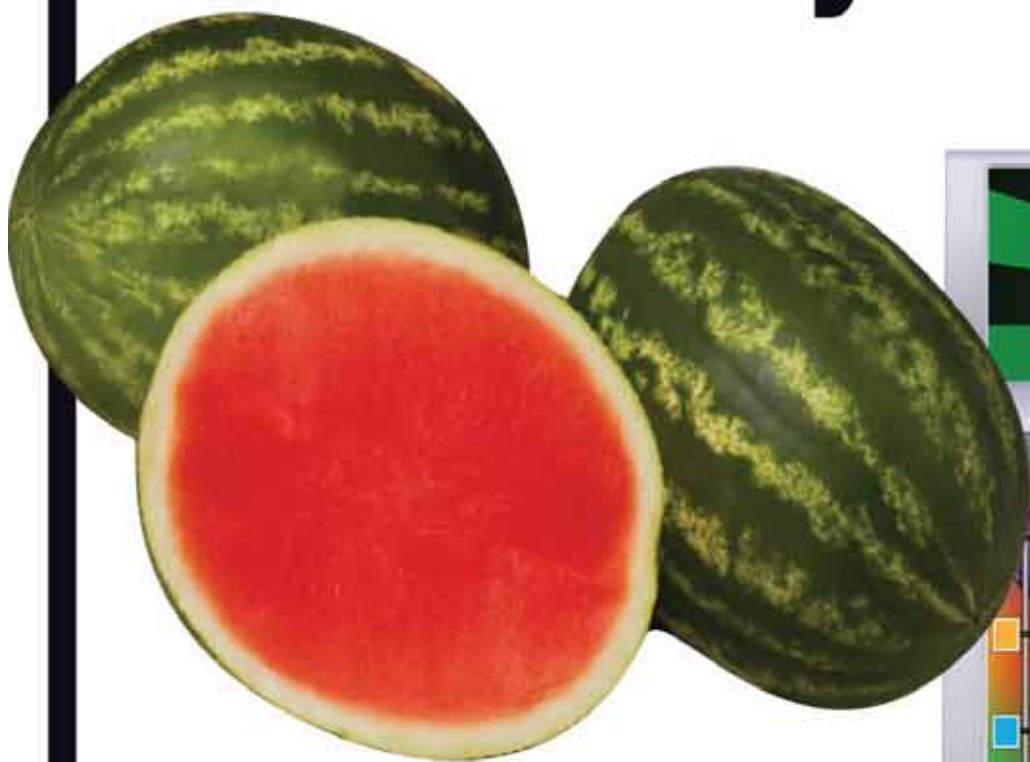
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Usage	FRESH/ FRESH PROCESS
Fruit Shape	Blocky
Seed Size	Small-Medium
Approximate Days To Maturity	88
Fruit Rind Description	Modern style, dark green, crimson rind pattern
Fruit Weight Range (US - LBS)	15-18
Pip Size	Small-Medium
Fruit Flesh Description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

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# Alabama Report

How in the world did summer creep up on us like this? It's been a whirlwind of fantastic promotions for the Alabama Watermelon Queen so far and I want to take a moment to say thank you to all of our sponsors, supporters, association members for helping ensure this watermelon season will be a huge success. Since the Spring Vineline, Queen Anne-Marie has been very busy. Ending March with a fantastic experience at the Florida Watermelon Convention in Orlando, Florida, Anne-Marie truly enjoyed the 1950's Friday Festivities all decked out in her poodle skirt. We would like to wish a special congratulations to the new Florida Watermelon Queen, Katelyn. We would also like to thank Mr. Billy & Mrs. Corliss Smith for putting on such a fun convention!

Next up was Queen Training in Miami, Florida. A big thank you goes to Nunhem's and the International Watermelon Convention group, and also to the great team at NWPB. It was a phenomenal weekend, filled with great scenery, great training, and our watermelon family – It couldn't have been better! Anne-Marie is ready for any promotion that comes her way and that is all due to the great training from Stephanie with NWPB, Mrs. Brenda Mack, and Carmine Gallo!

The Newberry Festival was our next stop, where Anne-Marie joined the FWA Queen Katelyn in the parade, queen's luncheon, and festival activities. Congratulations to the newly crowned Newberry Watermelon Queen, Jenna Garrett!! We are so proud of you! Thank you to Mr. Billy & Mrs. Corliss and Mr. Jeff & Mrs. Bobbie Jo Garrett for your hospitality during the weekend!

We quickly moved on to our Florida Farm Tour, visiting Lewis & Taylor Farms, Mobley Plants, Valdosta Plant Company, Billy Smith Watermelons, First Choice Melons, Mack Farms & McMelon, Inc., and Sakata. She was able to see every stage of the process – from first seedling to the greenhouse stage, in the fields to the packing houses, and eventually in the stores. Thank you to each and every one of you for taking the time to teach Anne-Marie the ins and outs of the watermelon business!

The Chiefland Watermelon Festival quickly followed, and I would give thanks to the Queens & Coordinators who joined Anne-Marie and myself - Newberry Queen Jenna & Mrs. Lisa; FWA Queen Katelyn & Mrs. Debra; NWA Queen Whitney & Mrs. Eleanor; and last but not least, past FWA & NWA Queen Jessica. I would also like to thank Mr. Rantz Smith for providing the Queens the lodge at the beautiful Gilchrist Club!

Queen Anne-Marie also spent a day with a few Georgia farmers giving her some in-the-field experience. Thank you to Dean Tucker Farms and Moore Farms for allowing us to visit your facilities and to Darren Deal and Jerry Moore for showing us around! Anne-Marie wrapped up the weekend with a Piggly Wiggly store in Sneads, Florida – thank you to Mr. Kevin McDaniels for allowing us to pass out melons in your store! We were also able to stop by and see Bill Gable and Todd Shelley Farms, and we appreciate ya'll taking the time to show us around!

Again, I would like to take a moment to say THANK YOU to our supporters and sponsors so far this year, specifically to Billy, Corliss, & Rantz Smith; Jeff & Bobbie Jo Garrett; Jay Jones; Jim Mastropietro; Arnold & Chandler Mack; Josh Moore; Dave Genecco; Dean Tucker; Tom Daughtry; and Rosie Elliotte. Thank you for helping us reach thousands of consumers each season! Now, keep your eyes open for Anne-Marie over the next few months! We look forward to seeing our watermelon family and spreading the good word.

See you next time!  
Ali Rauch  
AWA Promotions Coordinator  
ali.rauch@gmail.com 217-317-0553



Mrs. Brenda Mack, Queen Anne-Marie & Coordinator Ali Rauch take a moment for a picture at the FWA Convention in Orlando.



Mr. Arnold & Chandler Mack give Queen Anne-Marie the grand tour while visiting McMelon, Inc.



Mr. Richard Wojack and Queen Anne-Marie at the International Watermelon Convention & Queen Training Session in Miami.



Mr. Billy & Mrs. Corliss Smith welcome Queen Anne-Marie with open arms at their facilities in Trenton – Thank you both!



Our beautiful Alabama Watermelon Queen Anne-Marie preparing for the Newberry Festival Parade.



Queen Anne-Marie with the Sakata Team at the Research Center in Fort Myers.



Queen Anne-Marie at Lewis & Taylor Farms, pictured here with Bill Brim and Neal Kicklighter. Thank you for showing us around!



Queens Anne-Marie and Jenna with the Tucker Farms gang in Sumner, GA.



Joey Faison takes a break from his busy day to show Queen Anne-Marie around at Mobley Plant Company.



Queen Anne-Marie visiting with Moore Farms.



While visiting Billy Smith Watermelons, Queen Anne-Marie got a traceability lesson from Mr. Paul Teague with Borders Melons. Thank you!



Queen Anne-Marie with Darren Deal of Seigers Seeds – Thank you for the tour!!



Mr. Tom Daughtry & Queen Anne-Marie stop and smile while touring the greenhouses at Valdosta Plant Company.



Queen Anne-Marie passing out red and yellow meat watermelons at McDaniels Food Store in Sneads.



Mr. Josh Moore with First Choice Melons stops for a moment to show Queen Anne-Marie the packing process.



Queen Anne-Marie with Todd Shelley at his packing facilities.



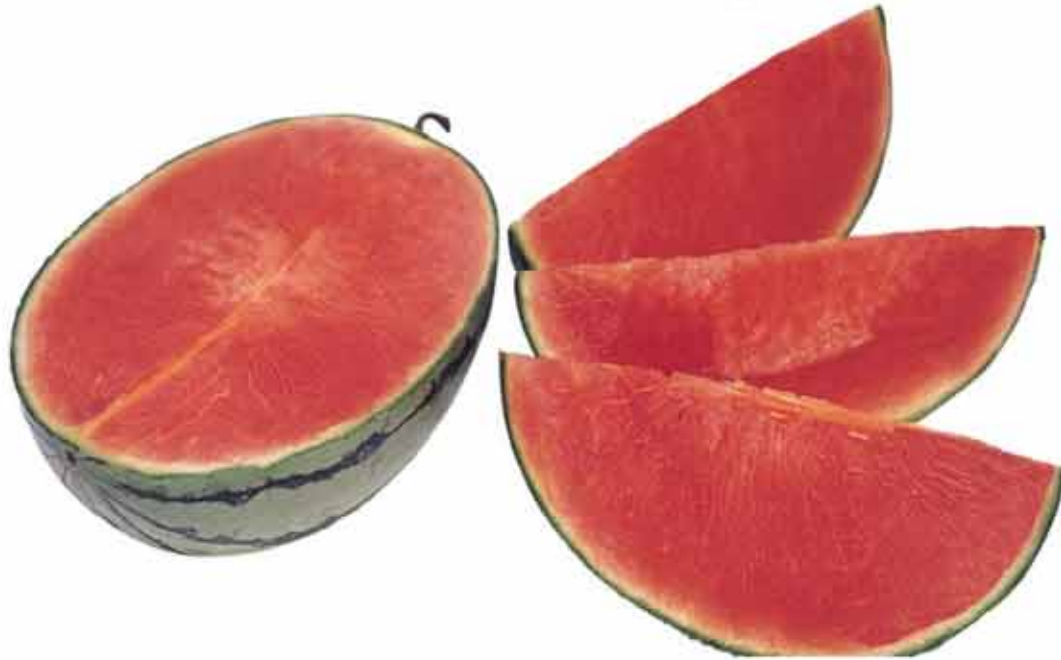
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# Florida Report

## Watermelon Greetings from the Sunshine State of Florida

The Florida Watermelon Association held its 43rd Annual Florida Watermelon Convention on March 25-27, 2011 at the Renaissance Orlando SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida. This year the convention was dedicated to all the Past Presidents for all their hard work over the years. Special thanks go out to our president, Mr. Billy Smith and his wife Corliss, for a wonderful convention “Rock’n in the 50’s”.

After an exciting weekend of competition, Saturday evening’s banquet ended with the crowning of Miss Katelyn Kelley, daughter of Kevin and Anna Kelley, of Branford, Florida. Katelyn attends the University of Florida where she is majoring in Telecommunications. Laura Johnson of Tampa, Florida also received the Miss Jubilee award which was voted on by all of the contestants. Amanda Mercer of Arcadia, Florida was chosen as the first runner-up and Jenna Garrett of Branford, Florida as the second.

Watermelon time is here in the Sunshine State. Katelyn and I have had several busy months, traveling all over Florida promoting our favorite product... WATERMELONS! In the past few months, Katelyn and I have visited watermelon fields, packing houses, plant houses, groceries stores, festivals, All Children’s Hospitals, TV appearances, state capitol, and educating our young kids about nutrition of watermelons in elementary schools throughout the state. We appreciate everyone that has helped us in all these promotions from donating watermelons, chaperoning, to showing Katelyn about the watermelon industry. Please be sure and check out the next issue for more pictures of the farm tours in Florida. Until Next Time!

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

I would like to start off by thanking each of you for allowing me to become part of such an amazing watermelon family. The Florida Watermelon Association has welcomed me with open arms and I am very blessed to represent such wonderful people as the FWA Queen. I am very excited about my year to come and cannot wait to meet each one of you individually.

For those of you who have not met me, I will tell you a little about myself. I am originally from Branford, Florida where my family owns a small farm. After graduating from Branford High School in 2008, I began my education at the University of Florida. I am currently majoring in Telecommunications. After my undergraduate I plan to attend law school. My long term goal is to become a news reporter or news anchor.

If there are any promotions or events you would like me to attend please do not hesitate to call Mrs. Debra Harrison. We enjoy staying busy and love keeping Florida Watermelons in the consumers’ minds.  
2011 Florida Watermelon Queen

Katelyn B. Kelley



Our 2011 Watermelon Court, Amanda Mercer 1st runner-up, 2011 Florida Watermelon Queen Katelyn Kelley, Jenna Garrett 2nd runner-up.



Our dearest “Has Beens”, Bonnie, Heather, Karen Ann, Erin, Courtney, Kelly, Kaley, Jessica, Shelley, and the newest addition, Katelyn.



We would like to welcome the Kelley family to the Florida Watermelon Association.



Newly Crowned Katelyn Kelley with our President Billy Smith and his wife Corliss.



Our 2011 Florida Watermelon Queen Contestant



Ms. Cheryl Hicks receiving this year’s June Smith Award.



Florida Watermelon Day at the State Capitol with Sarah Primm and Sterling Tyler with “Fresh from Florida” serving slices of watermelons on a hot day.



Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam and Katelyn at the State Capitol



Mr. Tom Daughtrey of Valdosta Plant Company shows Queen Katelyn how the watermelon plants are grown.



FWQ Katelyn visiting with the Land Family and Jeff Garrett in Branford.



It’s always a pleasure to visit with Bob Gibson and his son.



“Wow” what a feast thanks Rhantz for cooking for us!



Queen Katelyn at Community Christian School in Port Charlotte, Florida



A day in the field learning about watermelons with Phil Turner Jr. and his son Brad.



What a pleasure it was to get to visit with all the Chastain’s at JDI Farms.



Queen Katelyn along with NWQ Whitney, SCWQ Holly, IWQ Sabra visiting this little girl at the All Children’s Hospital in Tampa, Florida.



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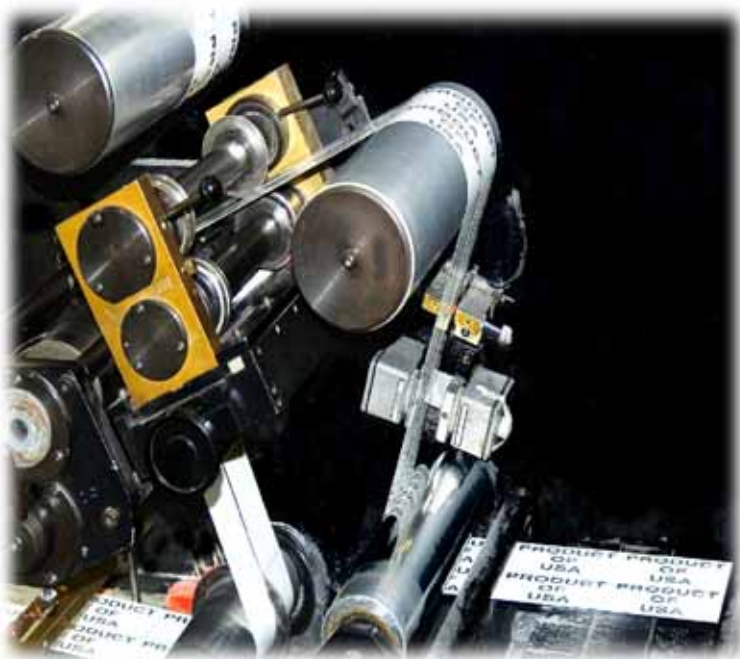
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# Georgia Report

Hello from Georgia!

Our season has begun, and our Queen Jenna Saxon is working hard to promote Georgia Watermelon and our Georgia Watermelon Association. We begin in March at a Harvey's Grand opening in Hahira. Harvey's supports local famers in Georgia, and have been a great supporter of our Georgia watermelons. We enjoy working closely with Harvey's through in-store promotions.

We attended our Annual Cordele Fish Fry in Atlanta, GA at The Freight Depot. This is a grand event that The Cordele Chamber of Commerce hosts for our Georgia Legislators at the beginning of session every year to show Cordele's appreciation to our Georgia representatives. This is an event that is looked forward to year after year. Fried catfish, grits and a lot of laughter is guaranteed at this event. Cordele is known as the Watermelon capitol of the world, and The Cordele Chamber does a great job supporting Georgia watermelon.

Our next promotion in the month of March was the Ag-Awareness Kick-Off Celebration in Atlanta at The Freight Depot. The Georgia Watermelon Association and Queen Jenna handed out watermelon at our booth to locals and 4H students. Several of Georgia's commodities display their products for the public to sample. The Taste of the South is also held during this event promoting Georgia Grown. Miss Jenna enjoyed talking to the 4H students about the healthy benefits of watermelon. This day held a special importance to Jenna since she has been involved in 4H her entire life.

From Atlanta Queen Jenna headed to Orlando, Florida to the Florida Watermelon Convention. This was Jenna's first out of state convention, and she couldn't have been welcomed to a warmer watermelon family than the FWA. Thank you to everyone that treated Jenna so special.

We joined Harvey's again in Grey, Georgia for an in-store promotion helping Harvey's with a charity supporting Grey's local schools. For every customer that joined Harvey's Rewards program, they each were able to select a local school that received a dollar for every new Rewards Customer. Jenna enjoyed helping Harvey's support the local school system of Grey.

In April we were off to Miami, Florida to join all the state queens, coordianators and NWPB staff. Again, NWPB blew us away with watermelon knowl-edge. NWPB hosts an annual education weekend for the new state queens to learn everything about our product needed for their upcoming year. We discuss everything from TV etiquettes, to proper dress code, to handling the public with the proper answers on watermelons. This education is greatly appreciated by the state queens, and put to use throughout their year of promoting watermelon.

In May Miss Jenna attended the Sutherland's Food Show at The Georgia State Famers' Market in Forrest Park, Georgia. The Sutherland family distributes food to local school cafeterias, nursing homes, hospitals, to name a few. Each year the Sutherland family hosts an appreciation food show and our Georgia Queen is always in the spot light to help with the daily activities.

We want to thank Leger and Son for sponsoring us to the Annual Piggly Wiggly Show in Birmingham, Alabama. This particular show is filled with excitement from Piggly Wiggly employees and distributors. We enjoy having Chef Poon join us. If you know Chef Poon, you know excitement is in the air. The Leger and Son booth is a favorite at this show because of our watermelon queen and Chef Poon. Watermelon are at the top of everyone's minds while they are at this show. We appreciate Joel Inman for his kind hospitality. Leger and Son are loyal supporters to our queen and we appreciate being invited to the Piggly Wiggly show annually.

Our first visit in June was with Darren Deal and Siegers Seed at the Field Trial that was held in Tifton, Georgia. Miss Jenna enjoyed her education in the fields with Siegers. The knowledge she has learned will be carried with her throughout the year while explaining "how a seedless became a seedless" or "how do you pick a good watermelon"? We appreciate being included in this field trial and all the support from our board member Darren Deal and Siegers Seed Company.

We are looking forward to many more promotions throughout this season. If you would like to sponsor Miss Jenna Saxon to an event to promote your watermelons, please let me know. She is eager to work as hard as she can supporting Georgia watermelon!

Sincerely,

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



Miss Jenna enjoying time with state representatives and our Mr. Buddy Leger at the Georgia Captiol.



Miss Jenna working the Georgia Watemelon Association's booth at the Ag Awareness Day at The Freight Depot in Atlanta, GA.



Miss Jenna and Michael Purvis at a Harvey's In-store promotion in Grey, GA.



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# Jump with Jill Update!

The Eat More Watermelon tour has been taking childhood obesity by storm, serving as a kid-appropriate solution for kicking off wellness initiatives, reinforcing classroom learning and supporting a healthier cafeteria menu. Elementary students from Illinois to Wisconsin to Pennsylvania to California and Florida have been thrilled to host Jill’s live rock ‘n roll concert about nutrition. Instead of just removing unhealthy food celebrations like pizza parties and donut days, Jill helps craft messages and experiences around healthy living so healthy food doesn’t seem like punishment. She makes eating breakfast, drinking water and trying new vegetables cool! Jill and her brother Mark recently were featured on Pittsburgh’s KDKA television station promoting a Watermelon Day in the Knoch School District. The tour is really moving! You should hear how the kids scream for watermelon!



Jump with Jill is “the bomb” at one of her live shows!



L to R: Jump with Jill, NWPB’s Stephanie Simek & Juliemar Rosado, & Jump with Jill’s DJ T



Jump with Jill and Mark live on KDKA Pittsburgh Watermelon Day Fiesta at Hoffman Media

# Watermelon Day Fiesta at Hoffman Media

Recently, the NWPB hosted an editorial and educational Watermelon Day Seminar at Hoffman Media Publishing House in Birmingham, Alabama. Hoffman Media publishes titles such as Cooking with Paula Deen, Sandra Lee Semi-Homemade, Taste of the South, Southern Lady and many more. Our Watermelon Day consisted of an introduction to watermelon session by Stephanie Simek, NWPB director of PR and Social Media, followed by a riveting presentation by our nutritionist and health consultant Elizabeth Somer. We next featured photography, food styling, and inspiration from a watermelon with Visual Cuisines. Susan Bourgoign and Miki Knowles have been working with the NWPB for over 10 years with photography and carving creations. By this time, we all moved over to the Hoffman test kitchens, where Chef Blanca Aldaco walked us through six delicious watermelon courses. We mingled and nibbled through the tasting lunch and gave many impromptu tutorials and interviews. Our full day of watermelon fun was met with tremendous excitement and enthusiasm. And while we understand that magazine titles work months to a year out, we will be sure to see lots of watermelon coverage next season throughout these magazines. In fact, the editor of Taste of the South said that “this has been the best received and most attended editorial session” at Hoffman ever! What a compliment!



All attendees received a watermelon-themed gift bag



NWPB’s Stephanie Simek kicks off the Watermelon Fiesta!



Miki Knowles of Visual Cuisines made this carving live!



Stephanie Simek introduces Chef Blanca Aldaco in the test kitchen.

# A Taste of Pinellas

NWPB was on-hand to assist the Florida Watermelon Association (FWA) at the annual Taste of Pinellas food and music festival held on the waterfront in St. Petersburg, FL on May 20-22nd. National, state, and regional watermelon queens were also in attendance handing out six bins worth of watermelon provided by Melon 1. The queens also participated in the parade as well as visited the All Children’s Hospital. FWA was also featured on a healthystate.org video clip that featured “healthier options” available at the festival. The event had over 45,000 people in attendance this year.



Illiana Watermelon Queen Sabra Boyd and National Watermelon Queen Whitney Conner

# Freedom Weekend Aloft

NWPB staffer Juliemar Rosado assisted The South Carolina Watermelon Association at the Freedom Weekend Aloft festival on May 27-29th held at the Heritage Park in Simpsonville, SC. This marks the 30th year the hot air balloon festival has been held. Chef Joe Poon and his carvings were featured on the local morning news along with The South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland-Delaware, Florida, and National Watermelon Queens (pictured above left). The queens and Chef Joe were a huge success at the festival, carving pieces for the children and handing out free slices of watermelon provided by Melon 1 all weekend long at the festival. It truly was another great event for watermelon!



The Queens and Chef Joe Poon on the Channel 4 morning news.



National, State, and Regional Watermelon Queens at the Festival



NWPB staffer Juliemar Rosado and Chef Joe Poon



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# 2012 Ag appropriations bill a mixed bag

There is both good news and bad news for fresh produce in the U.S. House agricultural appropriations bill.

The House Appropriations Committee did not touch funding for Specialty Crop Block Grants and the Specialty Crop Research Initiative in the fiscal year 2012 agriculture appropriations bill. However, hundreds of millions of dollars were cut from nutrition programs and the committee asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture to revisit its January proposal to double the amount of fruits and vegetables and raise other nutrition standards for school meals.

The committee also removed funding for the \$3 million Microbiological Data Program. That program has attracted occasional controversy since it debuted in 2004, with industry leaders questioning the intent of the program and calling it a duplication of FDA testing.

The fiscal year 2012 agriculture appropriations bill has been considered by the House, and the Senate may forward its 2012 appropriations bill later this summer. It will be several months before the final 2012 budget is determined.

With a 13.4% reduction overall, the fact that for the most of the specialty crop provisions were left untouched is a good sign.

For nutrition, there are policy issues and also spending reductions related to the Women Infants and Children (WIC) program. The bill provided \$5.9 billion for the WIC program for fiscal year 2012, down from \$6.73 billion funded in fiscal year 2011.

In its report on the bill, the committee said the USDA school meal rule’s “overly aggressive implementation schedule and unrealistic demands on changes in nutrient content” will lead to what it called burdensome implementation costs of \$7 billion over five years. The committee said it is asking the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to issue a new proposed rule for school nutrition standards that would not require an increase in the cost of providing school meals.

The bill leaves some cuts to the agencies to determine. If this goes into law, AMS needs to cut \$9 million from its budget, and ARS (and other USDA departments) will have to create the balance of the cuts.

# Join the Specialty Crop Caucus

A new caucus is assembling in the U.S. House, led by one of the champions of the specialty crop title in the 2008 Farm Bill, Rep. Dennis Cardoza (CA). I enjoy hearing Mr. Cardoza tell the story of his grandfather who grew watermelons and fed them to the troops before they left for the Korean War in the 50s. There will be more to come on this subject in the coming months, and a request for you to write to your House legislator, asking them to sign on to this caucus. The next farm bill will be a tough battle to fight, given the budget constraints that Washington is dealing with. With the leadership from Dennis and Doc we will have some success.

From: The Honorable Dennis A. Cardoza

Date: 5/26/2011

Dear Colleague:  
As proud representatives of growers and processors of

# Next Farm Bill Should Not Be The Same Old Song And Dance

Charles Kuperus, former New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture, recently shared his thoughts on one of the most vital needs that must be addressed in the next Farm Bill. His commentary follows:

“If political pundits continue to frame another Farm Bill debate by focusing only on farm subsidies, we will miss a golden opportunity to discuss broader farm policy. One issue that must not be lost in the deliberation is the way our country supports new farmers.

The last Census of Agriculture by USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service highlighted the increase of the average age of the American farmer from 52 years old in 1987 to 57.1 years old in 2007. Even more troubling is the number of agricultural operators 75 years or older grew by 20% and operators 25 or younger decreased by 30%. The alarming trend of more farmers getting older and less young people choosing farming as a vocation needs to change.

A key indicator for the success of any industry is how it attracts young people. This is particularly important in agriculture where such a great responsibility is entrusted to a relatively small group of people.

To put this issue in perspective, there are only 3,337,450 farmers and ranchers, in a country of more than 300 million people, managing more than 900 million acres of land. Another way to look at this is that 1% of the U.S. population is the caretaker of 39% of America’s landscape.

If the agricultural industry is to continue to meet the needs of a growing world population, we must focus our attention on the people managing it. A new approach is needed to inspire young people and give them optimism for agriculture’s future. It must place an emphasis on improving the educational system that trains these entrepreneurs.

Fortunately, there is something to build on; every state has a significant high school agricultural education system staffed by passionate teachers. But, challenges remain as agricultural education programs are often seen as an attachment and not a central part of the school’s academic focus. Frankly, some of these programs are often mischaracterized as ‘the old vocational-agriculture program whose students don’t go to college.’

This portrayal of these dynamic programs could not be further from the truth. If everyone could witness what happens in schools we would see the contagious enthusiasm a teacher has on his students when instructing them about the ecosystem of a nearby coastal bay and forest, or the pride of a student whose research project won top honors at the state and national levels and got her an invitation to visit the President.

Yet, an update is needed. Thanks to some visionaries who proposed a more vigorous curriculum and 10 states who boldly endorsed the concept by contributing \$1 million, this transformational task is well underway. Now in its second year of

fresh fruits and vegetables, we invite you to become a member of the House Specialty Crop Caucus.

The United States is known for growing high quality, safe fruits and vegetables that are enjoyed both domestically and far beyond our borders. The specialty crops industry supports tens of thousands of jobs nationwide and helps sustain the economies of rural communities from Maine and Florida to California and Washington state.

However, growers of specialty crops also face a multitude of unique challenges. Many agriculture, business, trade, and labor policies impact their ability to meet the worldwide demands for top-quality

# NWA Members – Let others know about your Association

Would you like to let others know that you are a proud member of the National Watermelon Association? We can help.

We have a small inventory of NWA license plates available to our members at a very reasonable price. You can display them on the front of your car or truck (or farm tractor) and let people know that this is your organization.

The license plates are made of a sturdy, flexible plastic compound that can withstand the outdoor elements (but maybe not with a bull or cow if you decide to heard them to another pen or field with your front bumper).

They are available to you for \$7.00 each (includes postage). Please contact the NWA office at (863) 619-7575 or email at [nwa@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:nwa@tampabay.rr.com) to place your order.



implementation, Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE), is available in 90 schools and taught by 100 teachers in 18 states.

The development of this curriculum is a work in progress, with three courses already being taught, and ultimately the full curriculum of eight courses is scheduled to be available by 2018. This vigorous curriculum provides students with a level of learning that meets National Academic and Agricultural Standards. Raising the rigor of agricultural science education programs creates a more seamless transition between high school and college.

Why is this so important? Today’s agriculture is a complex ever-changing business which requires a well-equipped people to manage it. A well-educated student makes a better farmer. Congress can help by authorizing funding that fast-tracks CASE curriculum development to quickly give the nation’s agriculture educators this important tool to instruct a new generation of farmers and agriculturalists.

Agricultural education improvements coupled with stronger mentoring and apprentice programs will significantly enhance the environment that welcomes young people to an industry that needs them. This effort will also instill confidence in potential lending partners when they consider investing in new operators. For young people to be attracted to the agricultural industry there must be the potential for profit, promise of growth, and satisfaction of contributing to the well-being of humanity.

If U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Chair Frank Lucas said ‘everything will be on the table’ when the farm bill debate begins, then now is the time to give agricultural education greater prominence in this legislation.”

Charles Kuperus, a Sussex Borough farmer, served as NJ’s Secretary of Agriculture from 2001-2008

U.S. produce. With the 112th Congress underway, key policy initiatives are currently being considered that affect fruit and vegetable growers, processors, and distributors across the country.

Please join us on the Specialty Crop Caucus as we share information, develop policy strategies for efforts impacting the fruit and vegetable industry, and coordinate our efforts to represent our constituents and members of the produce industry. Contact Kate Woods (Rep. Doc Hastings 225-5816) or Callie Varner (Rep. Dennis Cardoza 225-6131) for additional information.

Sincerely,  
Doc Hastings and Dennis Cardoza





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



See event photos and conference highlights at **[www.internationalwatermelon.com](http://www.internationalwatermelon.com)**.

For more information on Nunhems watermelon varieties, please contact your local sales specialist, call Nunhems Customer Service at **(800) 733-9505**, or visit **[www.nunhemsusa.com](http://www.nunhemsusa.com)**.







# A Crackdown on Employing Illegal Workers

Obama administration officials are sharpening their crackdown on the hiring of illegal immigrants by focusing increasingly tough criminal charges on employers while moving away from criminal arrests of the workers themselves.

After months of criticism from Republicans who said President Obama was relaxing immigration enforcement in workplaces, the scope of the administration’s strategy has become clear as long-running investigations of employers have culminated in indictments, convictions, exponentially increased fines and jail sentences. While conducting fewer headline-making factory raids, the immigration authorities have greatly expanded the number of businesses facing scrutiny and the cases where employers face severe sanctions.

In a break with Bush-era policies, the number of criminal cases against unauthorized immigrant workers has dropped sharply over the last two years.

Among the employers who have felt the impact of the administration’s tactics are two owners of Mexican restaurants in the Chuy’s Mesquite Broiler chain, which are popular for their laid-back Margaritaville mood and their broiled mahi tacos. On April 20, immigration agents descended on 14 Chuy’s restaurants in coordinated raids in Arizona and California, detaining kitchen workers and carrying away boxes of payroll books and other evidence.

But at the arraignment days later in federal court here, no immigrant workers stood before the judge. The only criminal defendants were the owners, Mark Evenson and his son Christopher, and an accountant who worked with them, Diane Ingrid Strehlow. If the Evensons are convicted on all charges against them of tax fraud and harboring illegal workers, they each could face more than 80 years in jail.

Of 42 illegal immigrants caught in the Chuy’s sweep, only one was charged with a crime, and it was not related to the raid. Thirteen workers were processed for immigration violations — which are civil offenses — and detained or deported. The others remained in this country as witnesses or to seek legal status through the immigration courts.

Under President George W. Bush, immigration agents frequently conducted high-profile factory raids, leading away scores of unauthorized workers in handcuffs, often to face jail time for document fraud or identity theft before being deported.

The Chuy’s prosecution contrasted with the application by state and county authorities of a law that Arizona adopted in 2007 to punish employers who hire illegal immigrants; the measure was upheld by the Supreme Court on Thursday. Despite the political furor over that law, only a handful of cases have been brought against employers under its terms, which provide mainly for civil penalties. But state authorities have continued to bring criminal cases against illegal immigrant workers, leading to their deportations.

Administration officials say that their audits and investigations of employers have laid the groundwork for a system that would dissuade companies from hiring illegal immigrants. “We have steadily increased our efforts to investigate and prosecute employers who violate the law on a serious and grand scale,” said John Morton, the director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, also known as ICE. The next step, administration officials said, is to open a pathway that would allow millions of illegal immigrants in the country to live and work here legally.

Republicans, pointing to the decline in arrests of unauthorized workers, say the administration is failing to remove those immigrants from the work force just when Americans are grappling with high rates of unemployment.

Last year, according to government figures, the enforcement agency started 2,746 workplace investigations in addition to the audits, more than double the number in 2008, the last full year of the Bush administration. Fines totaling about \$43 million, also a record, were levied on companies in immigration cases.

Department of Homeland Security officials, speaking anonymously in order to discuss internal policy, said immigration officers were no longer authorized to carry out workplace raids unless they cooperated with federal prosecutors to prepare criminal cases against the employers. Last year, 119 employers were convicted.

Dennis K. Burke, the United States attorney for Arizona, who led the Chuy’s prosecutions, called them a “game changer” for the state. During a lengthy inquiry, investigators, including undercover operatives, discovered that the Evensons were keeping two sets of books: one for waiters and cashiers, Mr. Burke said, and another for Mexican kitchen workers. According to the indictment, a customer complained to Mark Evenson that he was employing illegal immigrants. “I need to hide you in the kitchen,” Mr. Evenson is said to have told one Hispanic employee he knew to be undocumented.

Mr. Burke said prosecutors saw that they could accuse the Evensons under the severe penalties of the tax code — “the hammer,” as he put it. Charged with evading more than \$400,000 in taxes on wages for some 360



360 unauthorized immigrant workers, the Evensons together face more than \$10 million in fines if convicted on all counts. They have pleaded not guilty, and their lawyers declined to comment, saying they awaited evidence from prosecutors.

Unusually, even immigration lawyers who represented Chuy’s workers spoke favorably of the federal handling of the case.

The severe charges against the Evensons registered broadly with Arizona executives, business leaders here in Tucson said. But they said the case was mainly a cautionary lesson for managers who knowingly hire unauthorized immigrants.

“If companies are paying workers under the table,” said Glenn Hamer, president of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, “we encourage the federal government to throw the book at them.”

## Using A Labor Contractor

Today, more growers are using farm labor contractors. It makes sense, because it’s a lot easier to leave the many headaches surrounding employment, such as workers compensation, to someone else. Your relationship with your contractor is important enough that it should really be considered a partnership, and you should carefully weigh how the partnership will impact your company.

In today’s economy it’s imperative to look beyond just work performance by the employees of the farm labor contractor. A grower deals with issues such as food safety and compliance to assure crop safety and safety of the workforce. The following list contains brief explanations of what growers should do or confirm before using farm labor contractors. (Note: Not all states require contractors, as California does.) This list is intended as a guide; you should become familiar with what is required in your state.

- Always have a written contract with your labor contractor.

- Verify that the labor contractor has a valid state license. Also, ensure that the contractor has a valid federal registration, with a proper driving and transportation endorsement. If the contractor is recruiting or housing workers, the company must have endorsements for those activities. Keep copies of both the federal and state licensees and endorsements for four years following termination of the contract.

- Verify that the labor contractor has workers compensation insurance. Obtain and keep a copy of the insurance certificate (verify that transportation from field-to-field is covered under the policy).

- Require the labor contractor use only registered people to hire employees for the contracted services. The contractor must be prohibited from using subcontractors without the consent of the grower. No subcontracting should be permitted unless the grower is given documentation demonstrating the subcontractor’s compliance with all laws applicable to farm labor contractors.

- Require the contractor to provide copies of all personnel documentation on each employee recruited and employed for the company.

- Verify that the labor contract is not employing minors. While employing minors is allowed within certain restrictions, it is easier to avoid potential pitfalls by prohibiting minors entirely.

- It is a good rule of thumb to assume that the grower will be held ultimately accountable. This is particularly important when it comes to vehicles. Verify that the labor contractor has appropriate liability coverage for its vehicles, with the farm as an additional insured. Obtain and keep copies of the insurance certificate. In addition, make sure you require:

- That all labor vehicles, especially those designed to transport employees, are safe, and have the proper stickers displayed. Obtain and keep copies of the safety certifications. Be sure the contractor’s name and license number are posted on each vehicle.

- The labor contractor to provide proof that each of its vehicles is registered and the appropriate registration fees are paid.

Payroll records are obviously critical. However, just because you have hired a labor contractor doesn’t mean you’re off the hook. Remember, you may ultimately be held responsible, so you may want to require:

- The labor contractor to provide copies of all payroll records each payroll period and maintain them for four years. Failure to obtain and maintain records (for at least three years) is a violation for the grower. Also have the contractor provide copies of all season-end W-2s.

- The labor contractor to provide proof of notification to the Department of Labor of any address changes, and registration of employees performing labor contracting solely on the contractor’s behalf.

- An agreement by the farm labor contractor to defend and indemnify the grower.

- The contractor to provide proof of posting all required announcements and posters, as well as field compliance manuals or training documents.

- The labor contractor to provide proof of payment of all employment taxes.

Remember .... Just because your labor needs come from a provider does not take you off the hook of responsibility for the workers. Be careful, and have the information ready in case.



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Crunchy Red

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

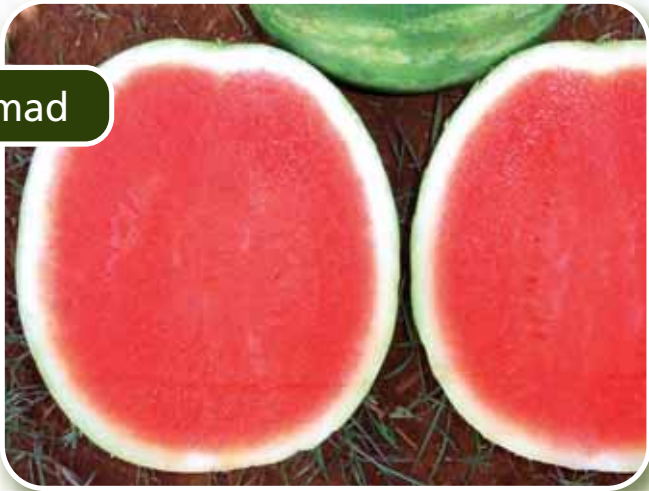


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Nomad features high Brix with red flesh color, medium green stripes, and good firmness. This watermelon delivers large size in the early season. It has vigorous vine, providing good fruit protection. It is well adapted to both cool and warm growing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

Nomad



Accomplish - HMX 8920

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

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# Illiana Report

Hello to everyone from all of us at the Illiana Watermelon Association!

Our queen Sabra Boyd is doing her best to spread the watermelon message. She, along with our 1st Runner-up Haeli Denton attended the Queen Training Seminar put on by the National Watermelon Promotion Board in Miami Florida in April. NWPB put together an informative and fun seminar. Media Trainer Carmine Gallo honed the ladies camera and interview skills. Training was held in conjunction with the International Watermelon Convention sponsored by Nunhem's. Nunhem's provided registrations for all of the queens and coordinators and paid for one night at the hotel for each queen team. Thank you so much, Nunhem's!

Queen Sabra started spring promotions with the Purdue University Extension Service "Day on the Farm" where she spoke with all the third grade classes in Knox County. All the children received stickers, coloring books, bookmarks, and a watermelon plant. Thank you, Rich Novak of International Paper for sponsoring Sabra. On May 10 Sabra joined Ed Ballenger on WAOV for a 30 minute radio interview. That same day she attended the Good Samaritan Hospital Employee Health Fair. Sabra passed out recipes and watermelon lemonade samples which were a big hit! Over 400 people attended.

The Illiana Watermelon Association was proud to support the Knox County Relay for Life. Watermelons were provided by Jim and Carrie Smith and were cut by Caito Foods. Queen Sabra passed out stickers, pens, coloring books and recipe books in the health fair area. Thank you to Brad Johnston of Multicorr for sponsoring Sabra.

Sabra joined the Florida Watermelon Association to help at the Taste of Pinellas on May 20-22. National Queen Whitney, South Carolina Queen Holly, Illiana Queen Sabra, and Florida Queen Katelyn served six bins of delicious watermelons provided by Melon1. The girls were showcased at the parade in a beautiful horse-drawn Cinderella coach.

The Spirit of Vincennes Rendezvous transported us back in time as IWA sold watermelon to the 15,000-20,000 attendees at the 2-day 18th century reenactment. Battles, music and other entertainment, pioneer crafts and food of all kinds make this the perfect way to spend Memorial weekend. Thanks to sponsor Caito Foods for cutting the watermelon.

Queen Sabra and the Knox County Watermelon princesses showcased watermelon in the Red Skelton "Paint the Town Red" parade. Thank you, Will McCormick of Bestway Trucking for transporting the ladies in the parade and thanks to Dennis Mouzin of Mouzin Brothers for providing the wagon.

As July starts we welcome National Watermelon Month. IWA will have a large display in the vestibule of the Knox County Public Library for the entire month.

Here at home we will be celebrating by handing out watermelon samples at the Kroger 200 Nationwide Series race on July 30 in Clermont IN near Indianapolis. We hope many of you join us there to promote our favorite fruit! We have several other events in the works for the 3 days leading up to the race. See Ya then!

If anyone would like to book Queen Sabra for a promotion please call or e-mail me at the information below. We would love to help you sell more watermelons!

Until next time,  
Beth Frey  
Promotions Coordinator  
Illiana Watermelon Association  
(812)886-5409 (812)890-0620  
loveshallmark@hotmail.com



On the beach in Miami



Handing out juicy watermelon wedges at Taste of Pinellas



Thanks Nunhem's for a terrific training venue!



Taste of Pinellas Parade--Beautiful ladies, beautiful carriage!



Sabra with a class of 3rd graders at Day on the Farm.



Sabra with melon eating contestants at Taste of Pinellas.



Thanks Rich Novak of International Paper.



Visiting the patients at the All Children's Hospital in St. Pete.



Sabra at the WAOV radio station



Spirit of Vincennes Rendezvous. Watermelon hits the spot on a hot day!



Sabra serving watermelon lemonade at the health fair.



Skelton "Paint the Town Red" Parade.



Relay for Life. Thanks Brad Johnston of Multicorr.



Thanks Will McCormick of Bestway Trucking



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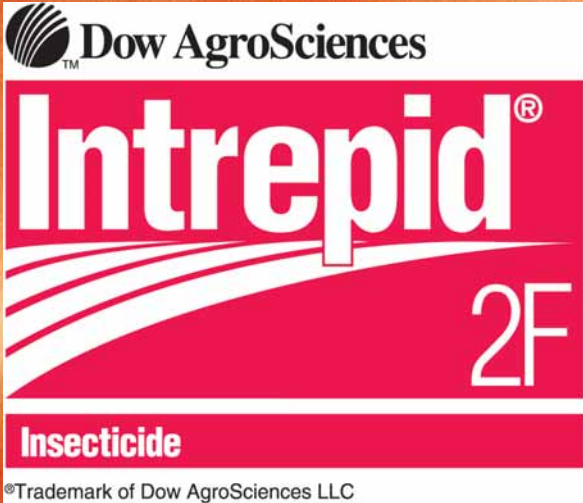
Totally unique class of chemistry controlling powdery mildew with up to 21-day interval.  
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Long-lasting control of leafroller, armyworms, loopers, rind worms and melonworms. Won't disrupt most populations of beneficials.  
Group 18



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

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



# Mar-Del Report

Greetings from the Mar-Del Association!

Since our last Vineline Queen Jordan has been busy promoting watermelon. We started with the Florida Convention in beautiful Orlando. We had a “Rockin” good time with all in attendance. Thank you Florida Association for all your hospitality. Shortly after returning we went to Miami for Queen training and the International Watermelon Conference. Such valuable training by Carmine Gallo, NWPB and Brenda Mack was gained by all the lovely Queens. Thank you NWPB for all the planning and organizing. Also, a special thank you to Nunhems USA for hosting several events while we were at the conference. It was a wonderful time! As soon as the plane landed we headed to Dewey Beach for an event called Comedy at the Beach. Jordan was the MC and introduced the headline act which featured the well know “smashing” comedian Gallagher. After this Gibson Produce sponsored us to go to New Haven, Connecticut to work a store opening at Stop and Shop. We had many customers and sold a lot of melons. Thank you Gibson Produce for sponsoring us! Next, we were asked to tour the Smurfit and Stone Plant in Baltimore, Md. A huge thank you goes to Gary Harned and all the employees at the plant, we learned so much. It was fascinating! Then we were off to University of Delaware for Ag Day. There were tons of people and watermelon smiles. Next we were asked to be part of Nemours Healthy Kids Day. Jordan spoke to 600 children about how healthy watermelon is and then she got them up and moving to the Watermelon Crawl. There was no crawling at our next stop – Dover Monster Mile Speedway. Two action packed days with tons of people. It rained the first day but Jordan still served watermelon in the rain and with a smile. After our exhausting days we were treated to lunch in Melvin Joseph’s skybox thanks to Tracy and Ken Adams. What a treat! Thank you Tracy and Ken! Thanks to Melon 1 who sponsored us to go to Greenville, South Carolina for Freedom Weekend Aloft. There we went to Shriners’ Children Hospital, worked BI-LO Stores and then Freedom Weekend Aloft Festival. Thank you Melon 1, South Carolina Assoc., and Ann Bryant for everything. It was a great promotional weekend. While we were in South Carolina Cherie Vincent took our 1st runner up Terra Tatman to Delmar High School for slices and a seed spit. Thank you Cherie, Terra, Raymond and Teresa Vincent.

Well our season is coming upon us soon so we have a lot planned for the summer. We wish you all well with your season. For more pictures go on [www.mardelwatermelon.org](http://www.mardelwatermelon.org) or be our friend on Facebook under Mar-Del Watermelon Association.

Watermelon Wishes,  
Dawn Collins  
Promotions Coordinator



4 lovely state Queens enjoying the sunshine @ the Florida Convention



At the University of Delaware Ag Day Queen Jordan met Watermelon Prince Andy.



Mar-Del Queen Jordan congratulating newly crowned Florida Queen Katelyn Kelley



Nemours Health & Prevention had Jordan speak to 600 children about the healthy aspects of watermelon and then she got them up and moving to the Watermelon Crawl.



Queen Training all the lovely state Queens putting their toes in the Miami sand



Even in the pouring rain Jordan still smiled and served watermelon @ the Dover Speedway Monster Mile.



Thank you to Nunhems USA for having us @ the International Watermelon Conference



What a busy 2 days at the Monster Mile Speedway – a great promotion!



Queen Jordan taking a break with Brenda Mack @ Queen Training. Jordan really appreciated her valuable training.



After the busy days we were treated to Melvin Joseph’s skybox on the finish line – thanks to Tracy and Ken Adams



Gibson Produce sponsored us to attend a store opening in New Haven, Connecticut. This is one of our many happy customers.



Thank you Melon 1 for sponsoring us to Greenville, South Carolina. While there we served and sold watermelon in Bi-Lo Stores.



Jordan was the Master of Ceremonies for Comedy at the Beach which featured Gallagher.



Morning interviews with the morning show in Greenville with the Queens and Chef Poon



Thank you to Gary Harned & Smurfit and Stone for having us at their plant in Baltimore. We really learned a lot!



What a great promotion – Freedom Weekend Aloft – thank you Melon 1 for sponsoring us !



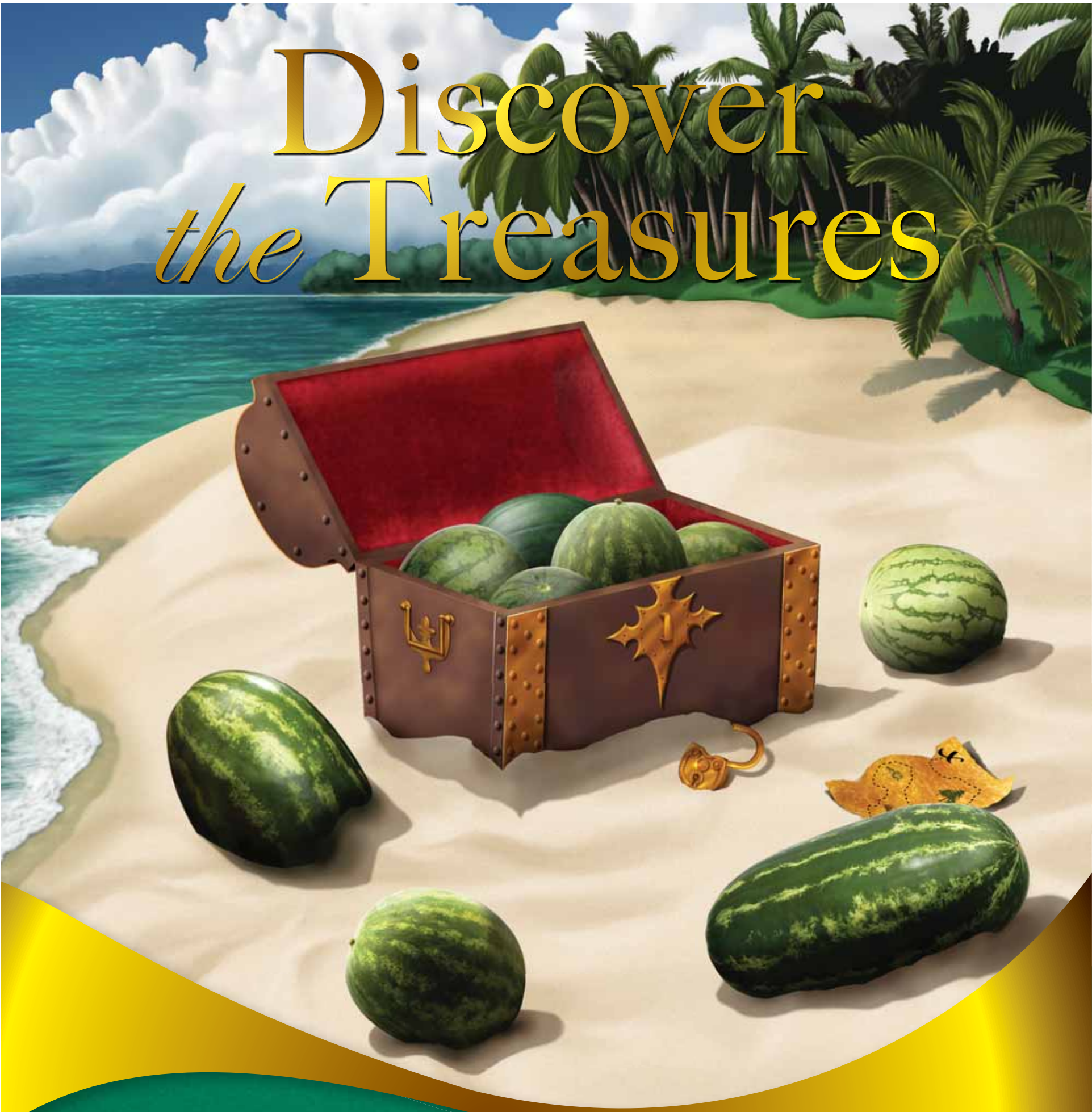
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# North Carolina Report

Greetings from the N.C. Association!

Queen Alycia and I have been very busy since we last communicated!! We have met some of the most wonderful people, and enjoyed beautiful places.

We started this Wonderful Watermelon Adventure in April in Miami at the beautiful Eden Roc Renaissance with Queen Training. The fact that our training fell within the dates of the International Watermelon Conference only made the trip even more memorable. Thanks to Nunhems and Bayer CropScience the queens met growers from all over the world and enjoyed an evening cruise and dinner on a yacht! Our Queen Alycia learned so much from the media and communications training with Carmine Gallo. Brenda Mack gave the queens good pointers in presenting themselves and their product in a most professional way.

The next waeeek, we found ourselves in Raleigh at the N.C. Agriculture Products Reception and Dinner. We were able to taste many of North Carolina's products and meet some of our special producers. Of course watermelon was on the menu!

A special thanks to Mrs. Francis Bunch for accompanying Queen Alycia to the I-95 Welcome center on May 12th, and to Mrs. Mona Taylor for her great help at the I-85 Welcome Center on May 13th. From the pictures and all reports, the promotions were fun and successful.

On May 27th, 28th, and 29th Queen Alycia and I were in Greenville, S.C. attending Freedom Week-end Aloft. We were graciously invited by S.C Coordinator Ann Bryant and Queen Holly to participate! The crowds were large, the balloons beautiful, the weather was HOT, and the watermelon was a welcome treat. Chef Poon and his carvings got plenty of attention, as well as a whole group of beautiful queens doing the Watermelon Crawl. Our booth always had a crowd!! This was a huge promotion! Queen Alycia and I learned a lot during our time there from some of the best!

On June 7th Queen Alycia, Nick Augostini, and I traveled to Midway Elementary School near Dunn, N.C. to promote healthy snacks and help the children stay hydrated during their field day to celebrate a successful school year. We so appreciate the invitation from Ag In the Classroom teacher Allison Clement. We served watermelon to about 500 children. They LOVED the watermelon, and Queen Alycia! A special thanks to Produce Manager Anthony Mathis and David McLamb of Food Lion #2595 for their help in getting melons for this event. They were delicious!!

On June 18th, Queen Alycia and I were promoting our wonderful watermelons at the National Hollerin' Contest in Spivey's Corner, N.C. There were people from as far away as Australia competing for the title. Needless to say, it was a very interesting day!! Mike and Melinda Page of M&M Produce saw to it that we had the juiciest and sweetest watermelons around!! A special thanks to M&M Produce!!

That brings us up-to-date on the N.C. watermelon happenings! Hope the season is especially sweet for all our growers!!

Sue Jenkins Promotions Coordinator  
jenkinsbb@yahoo.com

From watermelon crawls, passing out stickers and watermelon information to visiting great farmers, my year as the North Carolina Watermelon Queen has started off with a bang. Thank you to the NC Watermelon Association for this amazing opportunity. I already have a greater appreciation and knowledge of American Agriculture and the wonderful watermelon commodity. My coordinator, Mrs. Sue Jenkins, and I have been burning rubber as we travel NC and the Southern Region on many great adventures, and we are ready for the many more planned. I am even more excited to become an Agriculture Teacher so that I can teach my students all about the watermelon commodity. I give a special thank you to Mr. Zeb James, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Page, Mr. Johnny McCullen, and so many other farmers and watermelon enthusiasts for investing much time into me and my year as the NC Queen. Now I'm off to do the Watermelon Crawl all across NC as I pray that everyone has the best season yet!

Respectfully,  
Alycia McLamb  
2011 NC Watermelon Queen



Queen Alycia hard at work at training in Miami.



Queen Alycia with Mr. Gordon Etheridge and his daughter Gloria Richardson at the Ag Products Dinner.



Queen Alycia at the N.C. Agriculture Products Reception and Dinner being given a ride in the huge shopping cart by G.W.



Queen Alycia with our N.C. Watermelon Association President, Joe Jones.



Queen Alycia with fellow state queens at the reception given during the International Watermelon Conference during training in Miami.



Queen Alycia and Senator Brent Jackson.



Gordon Hunt surrounded by a bevy of beauties at the reception.



Queen Alycia with Rufus Edminston, Secretary of State, Emeritus



Enjoying the beautiful Miami beach!



Queen enjoying some M&M Produce watermelons with friends at the Hollerin' Contest at Spivey's Corner.



Queen Alycia showing that she is watermelon all the way to her toes!



Queen Alycia with Nick Augostini, NCDA&CS Marketing Specialist, at Midway Elementary school.



Queen Alycia with Zeb James and Johnny McCullen.



Queen Alycia taking the stage at the Hollerin' contest in Spivey's Corner.



Queen Alycia with a sponsor for the N.C. Ag Products Dinner.



The Watermelon Chase contest at Spivey's Corner was a great way to cool off on a hot day!! The only thing better was eating watermelon.



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Days to Harvest		Planting Season	
85		SP, SUM, AU	

## SUGAR COAT



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

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

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

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# South Carolina Report

May started off with a visit to the State Capital and Taste of South Carolina on May 11th. Queen Holly visited with Commissioner Hugh Weathers, Martin Eubanks and our friends from W.P. Rawl and Sons, Inc. Brad Boozer cut melons for our senators, congressmen and representatives for a fun filled and informative day. Holly made many new friends and enjoyed the delicious food that was served by the numerous vendors in attendance.

On May 20th, we traveled to Wimauma, Florida and Melon1 where Hami Dicks and Alisa Lapide were kind enough to spend several hours with us out of their busy schedules. We toured some of the watermelon fields where Holly learned to “toss a melon” and also the packaging shed where Hami showed Holly the way that the melons were sized and packed for shipping.

After leaving Melon1, we traveled on to St. Petersburg, Florida where we met several other watermelon queens for a busy weekend at Taste of Pinellas. During the weekend, the girls also participated in a wonderful parade that benefited the All Childrens Hospital and also made a very special visit to the hospital where they were able to visit with many of the children as well as their parents. Many thanks to Debra Harrison for organizing this great event.

Holly and Brad Boozer cut melons for 7th graders at Blue Ridge Middle School on May 26th. A watermelon eating contest was the hit of the day with the principal taking home the prize.

The South Carolina Watermelon Association hosted an event in Greenville, South Carolina on May 27th-29th. Those in attendance were Dawn Collins and Queen Jordan Calloway from MarDel, Debra Harrison and Queen Katelyn Kelley from Florida, Sue Jenkins and Queen Alycia McLamb from North Carolina, Eleanor Bullock and National Queen, Whitney Conner, Bob and Betsy Morrissey, Chef Joseph Poon and Juliemar Rosado. On Friday May 27th, the girls visited Shriners Hospital for Children in the morning where they were able to tour and visit with some of the children. Later in the afternoon each of the queens worked an in-store promotion for Bi-Lo's. Saturday morning, May 28th, Chef Poon joined the girls for a 3 segment interview on WYFF News Channel 4. Chef Poon demonstrated his carving ability and South Carolina Queen Holly discussed the benefits of watermelon. The remainder of the day on Saturday and Sunday, May 28th were spent working Freedom Weekend Aloft with a total crowd attendance estimated at 150,000 for the 4 day event. Our thanks go out to all of those who attended and helped to make this promotion a huge success. We would also like to thank Melon1 for providing the delicious and super sweet melons.

With many more promotions lined up for the months ahead we are looking forward to a very busy and productive summer.

Have a great watermelon season!!!

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



Holly at Taste of South Carolina with Commissioner Hugh Weathers and Martin Eubanks.



Bob and Betsy Morrissey join Holly at the falls in downtown Greenville.



Hami Dicks takes Holly on a tour of a Melon1 field in Wimauma, FL.



Visiting and touring Shriners Hospital for Children in Greenville, SC.



Holly learns to toss a melon as Hami gives instructions.



The Queens enjoyed visiting with Adam at Shriners Hospital.



Watermelon Queens enjoy a coach ride in the All Children's Parade in St. Petersburg, FL.



Holly working an in-store promotion at Bi-Lo in Greenville, SC.



Touring and visiting with patients at All Children's Hospital.



Chef Joe Poon demonstrates his carving skills with the Queens on WYFF News 4.



This young lady enjoyed her visit with the Queens at All Children's Hospital.



Chef Poon shows Matthew Boozer how to carve a watermelon.



Working hard at the Taste of Pinellas Festival in St. Petersburg, FL.



Juliemar Rosado and Chef Poon enjoy the mass ascension of balloons at Freedom Weekend Aloft.



Memorial Weekend in downtown Greenville, SC.



Balloons taking flight at Freedom Weekend Aloft.



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# Texas Report

Greetings from the Texas Watermelon Association:

Our new 2011 Texas Watermelon Queen Veronica Kramer is excited about representing the Texas Watermelon Association promoting watermelons.

Veronica’s first trip as queen began when she attended the NWPB Training Class in Miami, Florida also in conjunction with the Seed conference also held in Miami, a great first experience for her and a beautiful place to be. Thanks again to everyone from the NWPB, a great host and we all learn so much about watermelons and how to successfully promote watermelons and also proper procedures working with the Media and the General Public.

Also thanks to Brenda Mack for her great advice for all the current queens, we appreciate you for all your help.

In April, Veronica attend a Food show in Kansas City Missouri, sponsored by Frontera Produce. We have so many great members in the Association, THANK YOU FRONTERA PRODUCE.

The first weekend in May we attended the Cancer Race for the Cure in Minneapolis, MN. We were also joined there by Jimmy Henderson and family and everyone took part helping serve watermelon to a constant crowd of people for over 5 hours. It is hard for me to call this a watermelon promotion, so I will just say serving watermelon for a great cause.

Next Veronica was off to McAllen, Texas to attend the Donna, Texas Watermelon Festival. Veronica was accompanied there by past queen Stephanie (Duda). Thank you Stephanie and your family for having Veronica in your home for the weekend. We had a double booking the same weekend of the watermelon festival in Donna. Mariana Perez 2010 Texas watermelon queen and I spent 2 days in Lubbock promoting watermelons at 4 different United Stores, sponsored there by the NWPB. Mariana was thrilled to promote watermelons again for the Association. Thank you NWPB for sponsoring this event.....

Queen Veronica promoted watermelons at Randall’s Stores in Houston, Texas, she was sponsored and accompanied there by Tony and Cheryl Anderson. Thank you Tony and Cheryl for filling in for me.

It looks like we will be real busy in July with watermelon promotions every weekend in July, with the exception of one, my grandson wedding...hmmm maybe I’ll serve watermelon at the rehearsal dinner.....just joking....

We have moved the location of our 2012 Convention to Austin, Texas, I will have more information on this next time.

Until Next Time....

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



Pattie and who?



Texas Queen Veronica enjoying Miami.



Miss Jean and could that be Elvis????



Brenda Mack and Karen Arney help out at the NWPB promotions in Miami Queen training, Thank you both so much...



Veronica, Eleanor, Whitney and Julie enjoy beach morning before show begins.



Dana Strong and his bride. Thank you.



A quick photo of all the queens at the beach.



Thanks again, Frontera Produce



The reception



Veronica says Thanks to Frontera Produce for sponsoring her to the Show in Kansas City, Missouri.



Everyone having a great time at the evening dinner party on the beach.



Enjoyed visiting with lots of folks at the seed show....



Thanks NWPB.....



three beautiful young ladies....



Julie and Brenda enjoying a visit.



The beautiful Henderson Trio in Minneapolis (the girls with their backs to us, for your info only not for news bulletin.



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# Western Report



The summer is here and watermelon season is back in full-effect. It’s the time of year that our beloved picnic treat is in high demand and we, the Western Watermelon Association, are working hard to get this juicy commodity into the hands of watermelon lovers everywhere!

As we dive into July, one of the busiest months of the summer, we also dive into National Watermelon month. The U.S. Senate passed a unanimous resolution in 2008 that declared July to be National Watermelon month. According to research and data that was collected, July is one of the largest harvest times for watermelons during our domestic season. Watermelons have become a staple in the Americana culture of the summer months with holidays and celebrations like the Fourth of July putting them in high demand. They have been ingrained in the hearts of Americans as a “summertime must-have” and can usually be found at picnics and other summer events across the United States. We are using this declared month as a key promotional point to get watermelons to our consumers.

Have you been to our website lately? Come take a look! In celebration of the hot summer months and watermelon’s highest consumption period, the Western Watermelon Association’s website is featuring delicious summer recipes which incorporate watermelon as well as fun and exciting watermelon trivia! Not only are watermelon delicious, good for you, and a great American tradition, but they are fun too and we are getting the word out! Plus, the website now has a link which features a slideshow of pictures where you can see our members of the Western Watermelon Association expanding their watermelon industry knowledge.

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

Don’t forget to enjoy your summer with a refreshing slice of juicy red watermelon. We will!



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# Ag industry faces labor woes in immigration debate

The agriculture industry fears a disaster is on the horizon if the one bit of new immigration policy that Congress seems to agree on becomes law.

A plan to require all American businesses to run their employees through E-Verify, a program that confirms each is legally entitled to work in the U.S., could wreak havoc on an industry where 80 percent of the field workers are illegal immigrants. So could the increased paperwork audits already under way by the Obama administration.

“We are headed toward a train wreck,” said Rep. Zoe Lofgren, a California Democrat whose district includes agriculture-rich areas. “The stepped up (workplace) enforcement has brought this to a head.”

Lofgren said farmers are worried that their work force is about to disappear. They say they want to hire legal workers and U.S. citizens, but that it’s nearly impossible, given the relatively low wages and back-breaking work.

Wages can range from minimum wage to more than \$20 an hour. But workers often are paid by the piece; the faster they work, they more they make. A steady income lasts only as long as the planting and harvesting seasons, which can be measured in weeks.

“Few citizens express interest, in large part because this is hard, tough work,” Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said. “Our broken immigration system offers little hope for producers to do the right thing.”

Arturo S. Rodriguez, president of United Farm Workers, said migrant farm workers do skilled work, requiring produce pickers to be exact and quick. While the best mushroom pickers can earn about \$35,000 to \$40,000 a year for piece work, there’s little chance for a good living and American workers don’t seem interested in farm jobs.

Last year Rodriguez’s group started the “Take Our Jobs” campaign to entice American workers to take the fields. He said of about 86,000 inquiries the group got about the offer, only 11 workers took jobs. “That really was thought up by farm workers trying to figure out what is it we needed to do to show that we are not trying to take away anyone’s job,” Rodriguez said.

Vilsack and the American Farm Bureau Federation in a recent conference call with reporters that the best and likely only hope to stave off an economic catastrophe for American farmers and consumers is comprehensive overhaul of immigration policy.

Without a broad overhaul in the works, industry officials have focused on improving the H-2A temporary agricultural workers visa program that’s aimed at allowing season workers to come and work on U.S. farms.

The program, however, is costly, time consuming and inefficient, according to Cathleen Enright of Western Growers Association. “It has never been a great program or easy to work with.”

There isn’t enough capacity in the system to process, interview and approve visa applications for the nearly 1 million seasonal workers who take to the fields every season. Farmers are required to pay for a worker’s transportation from their home country to the fields, provide housing and other benefits.

Even minor violations of the numerous rules and regulations that govern the H-2A program can lead to hefty fines. “It’s too expensive, it’s too litigious, it’s too bureaucratic,” said Lee Wicker, deputy director of the North Carolina Growers Association. “We need a program that farmers can use and have confidence in.”

# THE EMBASSY OF MEXICO, WASHINGTON DC

**Arturo Sarukhan**  
**Ambassador of Mexico**

We often hear that we should practice what we preach. As of late, this aphorism has been frequently cited in the debate surrounding immigration. For this reason, Mexico has been working to close the gap between what we demand for our citizens abroad, and what we offer to all those who arrive in Mexico, regardless of whether our country is their final destination, or if they are simply in transit. I am very glad to report, therefore, that a few weeks ago, President Felipe Calderón signed Mexico’s new Migration Law into effect. This constitutes a major and positive paradigm shift in our legal system, one that increases the congruence between our domestic framework and our long-standing principle of defending Mexican migrant rights abroad, regardless of their immigration status.

This new law privileges migrant protection above all other things. It establishes humanitarian considerations and preservation of the family unit as the prime criteria for temporary entry into or permanent residence in Mexico. This legal framework institutionalizes and improves special protection mechanisms that we already have in place for vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied minors, women, indigenous people, teenagers, the elderly, victims, and asylum seekers. It explicitly states that the human rights of migrants must be guaranteed regardless of their origin, nationality, gender, ethnicity, age or immigration status. Furthermore, it enhances their legal protection by guaranteeing that regardless of their legal status, immigrants in Mexico will have access to healthcare, education, and justice services. The new law also establishes measures to protect rights that immigrants may have acquired during their stay in Mexico, and it bolsters access to due process for foreign nationals, particularly those who end up being subject to detention, deportation, and repatriation processes.

Moreover, the law modernizes Mexico’s security controls and the management of our immigration services. Greater communication, and better and faster data sharing with national security and law enforcement agencies, enhance our real-time response capacity and effectiveness, and increases the security of migrants. The law also takes into account the reality of trans-border labor markets in southern Mexico, and establishes a quota system for safe and orderly employment of Central American temporary guest workers, based on the specific skills of applicants. A clearer and more transparent immigration classification scheme, shorter timeframes for the resolution of applications, and hi-tech immigration cards and documents further facilitate Mexico’s oversight of immigration.

To make sure that the enforcement of immigration regulations is carried out by officers with adequate training, appropriate authority, and knowledge of migration issues, the new legal framework clearly establishes that only Federal agents are allowed to inquire the status of immigrants. In stark contrast to recent immigration-related legislation promoted at the local and state levels in some parts of the United States, Mexico’s new law reaffirms the outright supremacy of Federal law with regard to immigration issues.

It is important to highlight that this law was unanimously approved by the Mexican Congress, and enjoys widespread support and consensus among Mexican political parties and NGO’s, having been drafted in close consultation with civil society organizations and human rights groups. This broad endorsement

About the only hope for success for any immigration-related legislation, some say, is a bill that would make it mandatory for American employers to use the government’s E-Verify program to ensure their workers are legal. Both sides of Capitol Hill now have such bills to consider.

Agriculture officials say there needs to be some exception for farm workers. “It needs to take into account the unique aspects of agriculture,” Vilsack said.

# Supreme Court Upholds E-Verify Law

In a 5-3 decision, the Supreme Court upheld an Arizona law requiring employers to use the federal E-Verify system to check the legal status of newly hired employees. The law also permits Arizona to revoke business licenses of employers that knowingly hire illegal immigrants.

Following the Supreme Court’s decision, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Lamar Smith (TX) released the statement below.

“I am pleased the Supreme Court has ruled in favor of the Arizona E-Verify law and their right to revoke business licenses for employers that knowingly hire illegal immigrants. Not only is this law constitutional, it is common-sense. American jobs should be preserved for Americans and legal workers.

“E-Verify provides American employers who want to do the right thing with a straightforward tool to do so. Although the program is currently voluntary, over 250,000 American employers willingly use E-Verify and an average of 1,300 new businesses sign up each week. Because this program is so successful and well-liked by employers, I will introduce legislation soon to expand E-Verify and make it mandatory across the United States.

“Today there are seven million individuals working in the United States illegally. E-Verify will help turn off the jobs magnet that encourages illegal immigration.”

Specifically, the Social Security numbers and alien identification numbers of new hires are checked against Social Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security records in order to weed out fraudulent numbers and help ensure that new hires are genuinely eligible to work. The program quickly confirms 99.5 percent of work-eligible employees.

stems from the fact that the Mexican Government, as well as all sectors of society, understand the urgency of creating a comprehensive, commonsense immigration framework. The product of this inclusive process actually sets a new bar in the region for respecting and protecting the human and civil rights of migrants. Likewise, it harmonizes Mexican domestic law with our own obligations and responsibilities under international treaties and regulations.

When I arrived in Washington as Ambassador in 2007, I stated in an editorial board interview with one of this city’s newspapers that Mexico could not preach to the North what it failed to do to the South. Mexico’s new Migration Law takes into account the most pressing demands that we face today, as well as the need to create safe, humane, legal, and orderly immigration flows. The new law will ultimately adapt our institutions and fieldwork to the evolving face of migration, and to the realities and challenges of our country, a country that has become one of origin, transit, and destination for many migrants. Mexico is conscious of the positive impact that migrants have in the host country’s economy, and that well-managed migration flows can have a more positive contribution to regional competitiveness and prosperity. Mexico has demonstrated once again that it is ready to do its part in the migration arena and that it is fully committed, both internally and regionally, to promoting and implementing laws and policies that are based on principles of shared responsibility.

# House Votes to Cut Food Safety Funding

The recently passed Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) could hit some roadblocks, as Congress voted to cut millions of dollars from FDA’s budget, including funds intended to implement the new food safety law. The White House is opposing the cuts, which also include a \$35 million cut from USDA’s food safety and inspection service. Rep. Jack Kingston (GA), who chairs the House subcommittee that wrote the agriculture appropriations bill, said the food safety cutbacks are justified because the food supply is “99.99% safe.”

An Associated Press story said that Republican proponents of the legislation used it as an opportunity to express dissatisfaction with a number of other White house policies, including the first lady’s healthy eating initiatives like the Let’s Move campaign. The agriculture appropriations bill passed by a vote of 217 to 203.





# Ag Responds to Launch of E-Verify Debate

On June 15, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration Policy and Enforcement held a hearing on a bill that would require all U.S. employers to use the federal electronic program for verifying the work eligibility of employees. Leaders in American agriculture joined in a mid-day press conference to sound the alarm: if Congress makes mandatory use of the E-Verify program, crops will rot, farms will fail, much U.S. farm production and many farm-dependent U.S. jobs will simply leave the country.

“We are for secure borders, a legal workforce, employer sanctions and an E-Verify system if we have a workable farm labor program that takes into account workers that are already here,” said Tom Nassif, president and CEO of Western Growers. “We readily admit that 70 to 80 percent of workers in the fresh produce industry are improperly documented. Under the currently proposed E-Verify system, our industry would be decimated. As much farming leaves the U.S., for every farm worker job that goes, an additional two to three U.S. jobs in other industries will go with it. America could lose its domestic supply of fresh produce and accelerate the flight of farming to Mexico and beyond,” he added.

Monte Lake, an attorney and long-time advisor on farm labor policy, described the fact that there is no working safety net to ensure a legal labor force. “If E-Verify excludes a substantial part of the agricultural workforce, there is no way to replace its workforce. The current “safety-net” —the so-called H-2A temporary and seasonal agricultural worker program—is irreparably torn. E-Verify must be accompanied by a program that works and that farmers can use,” Lake said.

Mike Stuart, president of the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association, described the worsening situation developing across the border in Georgia, where the legislature recently passed, and the governor signed, a state immigration bill that includes E-Verify. “Migrant farm workers who would normally head north to harvest onions and vegetables in Georgia aren’t going,” said Stuart. “Labor shortages of 30 to 50% are resulting in rotting crops, and they are desperately grasping for solutions,” Stuart said, adding that Florida agriculture, which has been a pillar of the economy there, is even more vulnerable.

“If they move E-Verify without true solutions for the agricultural sector, it is clear that Congress -- in the name of saving U.S. jobs -- will actually destroy U.S. jobs,” added Craig Regelbrugge, co-chairman of the Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform.

# Senator Wants to Hold Employers Accountable for Hiring Illegal Workers

Senate Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Chuck Grassley introduced legislation to make the E-Verify program permanent. The bill would also require that all employers use the E-Verify program within one year of enactment of the legislation. The bill also makes several needed improvements to the program.

“E-Verify has already proven effective in combating the hiring of illegal aliens. It’s a simple tool for employers who want to comply with the law in a digital age when sophisticated, fraudulent documents are just the stroke of a computer key away,” Grassley said. “This legislation allows us to hold employers accountable while giving them the tools needed to abide by the law in their hiring practices.”

The E-verify program was first authorized in 1996 with only five states allowed to participate. The program was reauthorized in 2001, expanded in 2003, and reauthorized again in 2008. E-verify is currently used by 269,913 em-

# Chairman Smith Introduces Legal Workforce Act



House Judiciary Committee Chairman Lamar Smith (TX) introduced the Legal Workforce Act (H.R. 2164), a bill that could open up millions of jobs for unemployed Americans and legal immigrants. The legislation improves the E-Verify system and makes it mandatory for all U.S. employers.

“With unemployment at 9%, jobs are scarce. Despite record unemployment, seven million people work in the U.S. illegally. These jobs should go to legal workers.”

“E-Verify is a successful program to help ensure that jobs are reserved for citizens and legal workers. The ‘E’ in E-Verify could just as well stand for ‘easy’ and ‘effective.’ It takes just a few minutes to use and easily confirms 99.5% percent of work-eligible employees. There is no other legislation that can be enacted that will create more jobs for American workers.” Outside evaluations have found that the vast majority of employers using E-Verify believe it to be an effective and reliable tool for checking the legal status of their employees.

In 2008, the House passed a stand-alone five-year extension of E-verify by a vote of 407-2. And in 2009, the Senate passed a permanent E-Verify extension by voice vote.

Original cosponsors include Reps. Brian Bilbray (R-Calif.), Ken Calvert (R-Calif.), John Carter (R-Texas), Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah), Trent Franks (R-Ariz.), Jack Kingston (R-Ga.), Gary Miller (R-Calif.), Sue Myrick

# Illegal Immigration Crackdown Could Cost Growers

Immigration reform and stricter enforcement of current immigration laws could significantly boost labor costs for California’s \$20 billion fresh fruit, nut, and vegetable crops, according to a recent study by agricultural economists at University of California-Davis and USDA.

Such action would likely have a snowball effect, prompting growers to adjust by increasing mechanization and introducing harvesting aids to boost laborers’ productivity, they predict. Imports may also rise. “California’s produce industry depends on a constant influx of new, foreign-born laborers, and more than half of those are unauthorized laborers, primarily from Mexico,” says Phillip Martin, a professor of agricultural and resource economics and one of the nation’s leading authorities on agricultural labor.

Martin’s study, conducted with USDA’s Economic Research Service, was supported by USDA and the

employers. Since the system was created, improvements have been made to significantly decrease error rates including an appeal process, a self check option for people to make sure their information is correct, and a photo-tool capability to improve the ability of employers to determine if the employee and the photo match.

Here are the provisions of the Senator’s bill.

- Makes permanent the E-Verify program that was created in 1996.
- Makes E-Verify mandatory for all employers within one year of date of enactment
- Clarifies that federal contractors and the Federal Government (executive and legislative branches) must use it, and allows the Secretary to require “critical employers” to use it immediately.
- Increases penalties for employers who don’t use the system or illegally hire undocumented workers.
- Reduces the liability that employers face if they participate in E-Verify when it involves the wrongful termination of an individual.
- Allows employers to use E-Verify before a person is hired, if the applicant consents.
- Requires employers to check the status of existing

(R-N.C.), Ed Royce (R-Calif.), Jim Sensenbrenner (R-Wisc.), and Immigration Subcommittee Chairman Elton Gallegly (R-Calif.).

Below is a summary of some of the major components in H.R. 2164.

- Repeals I-9 System: Repeals the current paper-based I-9 system and replaces it with a completely electronic work eligibility check.
- Gradual Phase-In: Phases-in mandatory E-Verify participation for new hires in six month increments beginning on the date of enactment. Within six months of enactment, businesses having more than 10,000 employees are required to use E-Verify. Within 12 months after enactment, businesses having 500 to 9,999 employees are required to use E-Verify. Within 18 months after enactment, businesses having 20 to 499 employees must use E-Verify. And within 24 months after enactment, businesses having 1 to 19 employees must use E-Verify.
- Agriculture: Requires that employees performing “agricultural labor or services” are only subject to an E-Verify check within 36 months of the date of enactment. Under the bill, an individual engaged in seasonal agricultural employment is not considered a new hire if the individual starts work with an employer for whom they have previously worked.
- Federal Preemption: Preempts state laws mandating E-Verify use for employment eligibility purposes but retains the ability of states and localities to condition business licenses on the requirement that the employer use E-Verify in good faith under the federal law.
- Safe Harbor: Grants employers safe harbor from prosecution if they use the E-Verify program in good faith, and through no fault of theirs, receive an incorrect eligibility confirmation.

Regardless of any e-verify mandate (bill), the lone solution to agriculture’s labor needs resides in a guest worker program that works.

University of California Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics.

“The cost of hiring these laborers will likely rise as the U.S. government ramps up enforcement of immigration laws by installing more physical barriers along the U.S.-Mexico border and requiring more audits of workers’ I-9 employment verification forms,” Martin says.

He notes that such audits often cause workers to quit their jobs rather than clear up discrepancies in their documents. As a result, some farm employers already are making plans to hire higher-paid, legal guestworkers, who must be provided with government-approved housing. Martin projects that immigration reform could result in the legalization of currently unauthorized farmworkers, again encouraging farm employers to turn to the higher paid guestworkers to tend and harvest their crops.

If labor costs do rise, Martin suggests that three major adjustments could occur: mechanization to reduce the need for hand labor, the introduction of more harvesting aids to increase the efficiency of laborers, and an increase in produce imports if rising costs make U.S. produce less competitive.

- employees within 3 years.
  - Requires employers to re-verify a person’s status if their employment authorization is due to expire.
  - Requires employers to terminate the employment of those found unauthorized to work due to a check through E-Verify.
  - Helps ensure that the Social Security Administration catches multiple use of Social Security numbers by requiring them to develop algorithms to detect anomalies.
  - Amends the criminal code to make clear that defendants who possess or otherwise use identity information not their own without lawful authority and in the commission of another felony is still punishable for aggravated identity fraud, regardless of the defendant’s “knowledge” of the victim.
  - Establishes a demonstration project in a rural area or area without internet capabilities to assist small businesses in complying with the participation requirement.
  - Provides an offset to pay for any upgrades or expenses required by the legislation using unobligated funds from various departments.
- Now we wait and see what occurs on both sides of Capitol Hill this year and possibly next year also. Rep Lamar Smith’s bill is similar, yet different to the Grassley bill. It will make the debate interesting.



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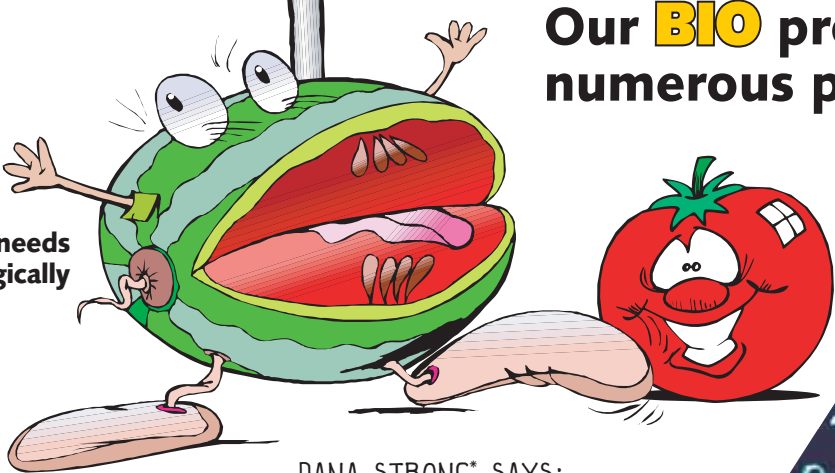
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