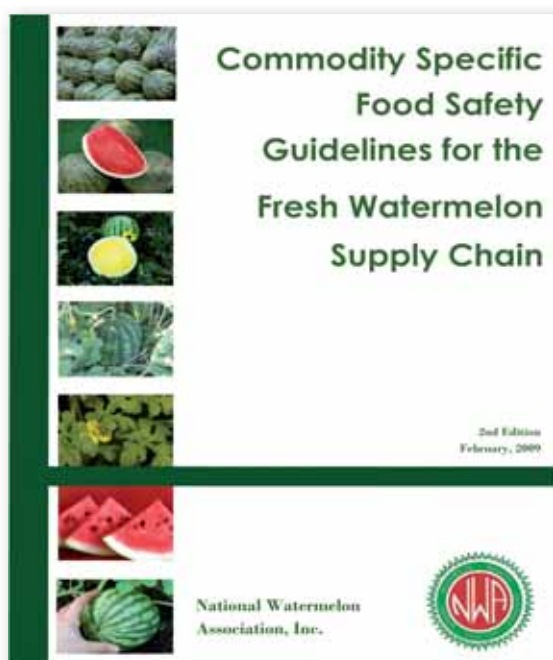




Food Safety – Where Do We Go From Here?



Now that the NWA has developed a comprehensive food safety and traceability program for the industry, you may be asking, “what do I do with it?”

The voluntary program focuses on all aspects of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for the farm and Good Handling Practices (GHPs) for packing & shipping facilities. It is published on the NWA's website for your review, and your use.

SAFETY continued on page 4

National Watermelon Month Promotions Gearing Up

This coming July will be another busy month of celebration and promotions for our federally-designated National Watermelon Month. Many promotions are being planned to promote watermelon to consumers.

The Illiana Chapter will hold the third year of promotions with The Kroger Company in the Indianapolis area, culminating with the huge race promotion at the Nationwide Series race in nearby Clermont, Indiana.

PROMOTIONS continued on page 4



DHS Secretary Urged to Cooperate with Business on Immigration



The business community has asked the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to begin working with the employer community and other interested parties in finding a reasonable and humane solution to the issues surrounding worksite enforcement of immigration law. Homeland Secretary Napolitano is being urged to reject the Bush administration's last minute attempts to

SECRETARY continued on page 4

Sixth Circuit Court Ruling Impedes Agricultural Sprays

Recently, a federal appeals court overturned an EPA rule on spraying of pesticides on waterways and nearby fields. The previous ruling protected farmers and applicators as long as they applied pesticides in compliance with the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). The court ruling, in the case of the National Cotton Council vs. the EPA, finds that agricultural pesticides are considered a “pollutant,” and thereby subject to the Clean Water Act (CWA). This means that potentially thousands of farmers would need to obtain CWA permits to make important pesticide applications.

In a petition for a rehearing on the decision, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has sent Lisa Jackson, EPA's administrator, an urgent letter on the far-reaching impact the court ruling could have on American agriculture. “The Sixth Circuit's decision encumbers the American farmers' and the agencies' (USDA) ability to do business, while reaping little or no environmental benefit in exchange. Subjecting FIFRA-compliant pesticides to

additional regulatory regime of the CWA is duplicative and will not help protect the environment. FIFRA mandates that the EPA approve and issue a registration for a pesticide product only after the EPA has determined the product will not cause ‘unreasonable adverse effects on the environment.’ The pesticide registration and re-registration process under FIFRA considers the effects of pesticides on both human health and aquatic resources. If the EPA has concluded that a pesticide satisfies FIFRA and will not have an ‘unreasonable adverse effect on the environment,’ then it is reasonable to exclude the application of that pesticide from permitting requirements of the CWA.

“In short, I am concerned that the court's decision will compromise American farmers' and USDA agencies' ability to respond efficiently and effectively to emergency threats, while providing little or no additional environmental protection in return.”

Stay posted to the NWA web site for future developments.

Coming Events



United Fresh Produce Association – Washington
Public Policy Conference – September 9-11, 2009



PMA Fresh Summit
– Anaheim, CA –
October 3-5, 2009

2010 National Convention –
Fairmont Hotel,
Dallas, TX –
February 17-20, 2010



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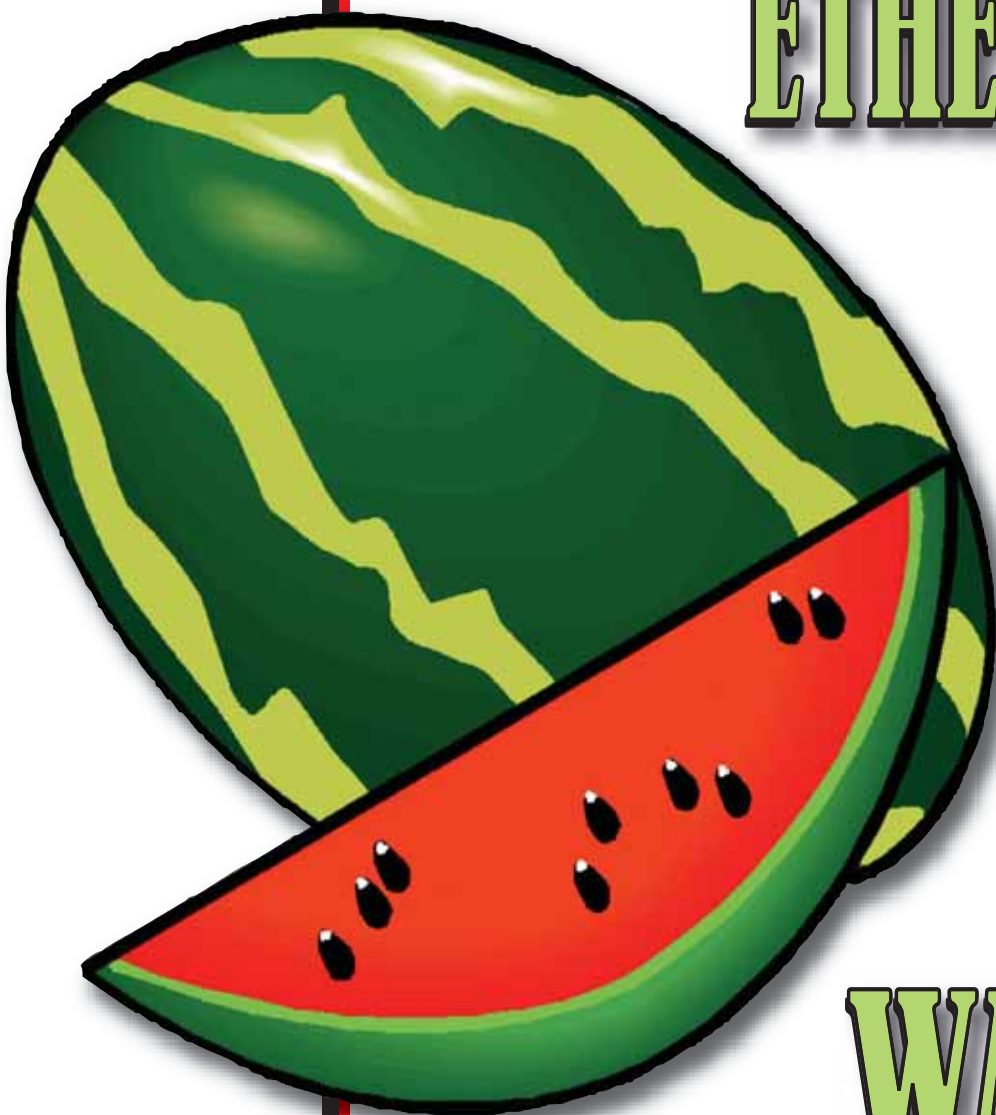
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NWA Convention 2009 RECAP

Outstanding Service Award

This award is presented to the person who has shown amazing service to the NWA. Our association has benefited from this person’s service for over 30 years. Among his talents is the ability to roust successful load auctions every year. Congratulations to ARNOLD MACK.



Chapter Membership Award

This award goes to the National Watermelon Association Chapter that has the most growth within the year. We are proud to announce that this award, with a 23% increase, goes to our ILLIANA CHAPTER. Congratulations



NWA Crowns a New Queen

It was a beautiful convention and the Queen candidates brightened things up. They were all wonderful. We would like to congratulate our 2009 NWA Queen – Maggie Bailey.



Maggie hales from Vincennes, Indiana and was the Illiana Watermelon Queen for the past year. We are excited to have her on board! Good Luck Maggie!!

Marketing Award

Put almost 5,000 watermelons in one place and what do you get? The 2009 NWA Marketing Award! Congratulations to VanGronigen & Sons & Walmart on a creative promotion!

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

We were very excited to honor our lifetime achievement members at the convention. These members have had 30 or more years of service on our Executive Council.



- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Percy Bunch | Hugh Lightsey |
| A.R. Chapman | Wallace Luffman |
| R.A. Cockrell | Arnold Mack |
| Gordon Etheridge | Gerald Mann |
| Gerald Funderburk | Joe Marino |
| Donald Hales | Howard Sorrells |
| Raymond Land | William Toadvine |
| H.R. Lawson | Clyde Ware |
| Buddy Leger | Mary Beth Welby |

The NWA is a better organization because of their dedication, passion, commitment and insight! Thank you from the bottom of our heart!

SECRETARY continued on page 4

dictate how the new administration should do work-site enforcement. Specifically, the Bush administration’s efforts to redirect the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Federal Acquisition Regulations Council (FAR Council) from their core missions, and to turn them instead into immigration enforcement agencies. There are strong legal arguments that the final rules on SSA’s “no-match” letters are illegal and, thus, they were challenged in court. The business community sees this as an opportunity to move forward with DHS to create positive solutions in the realm of employment verification rather than more misguided policies.

The best means to move away from economically disrupting immigration raids is to give employers the proper tools and authority to screen workers for work authorization status before they are hired. If Congress and the Administration are unwilling to give employers that authority, any new system, which continues to require the employee’s work authorization to be verified after hiring, needs to be efficient, fast, workable, and reliable under real life conditions.

Young Ag Spokesperson Award / Scholarship



It is exciting to see up and coming individuals that have a passion for our business. We are proud to give young individuals the ability to sharpen their speech skills while exploring the topics important to them. We are excited to present the 2009 scholarship to: EMILY FREY

It All Starts With You

Thank you for being so generous with your load donations to our auction. You are the backbone of the NWA budget and we thank you for that!

- Al Harrison Company
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Bob Rawlins Farms
Borders Melon East
Borders Melon Company
Browning & Sons
Cactus Melon
Celli Brothers
CH Robinson
Coosaw Farms
Dan King
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Frey Produce
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George Perry & Sons
Georgia Watermelon Association
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Global Produce
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Indian Hills Produce
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Jaybird Farms
Joe Simmons
John Livacich Produce
Kirschenman Produce
L&M Companies, Inc.
Leger & Son
Mack Farms / McMelon, Inc.
Mar-Del Watermelon Association
Melon Acres
Melon One / C&L Packing
Midwest Marketing
Mouzin Brothers
Natures Choice
North Carolina Watermelon Association
Perennial Produce
Phil Turner
Premier Melon Company
Sandia Depot

The current I-9 system for checking work authorization is not perfect, but it is fast and has led to a workforce that is authorized to a high degree. Business, labor, and civil rights groups worked with the past administration and the 110th Congress in trying to find a solution to address the issue of unauthorized workers. Furthermore, employment verification is only one aspect of our broken immigration system. Permanent reform of our employment verification laws should occur in conjunction with comprehensive immigration reform.

When the 110th Congress failed to act, the past Administration attempted to circumvent the proper legislative process with these regulations. The government estimated that the rules would cause massive layoffs of U.S. citizens and employment-authorized workers as well as billions of dollars in social costs. Nonetheless, the past Administration pressed on with these regulations.

The business community will continue to urge DHS to reject the misguided regulations and to have government officials come back to the negotiating table with other interested parties to find a solution that would not negatively affect our economy.

SAFETY continued on page 4

To better utilize the program, let us suggest three steps for you to follow:

1. Print off a copy of either the farm or the packing self-audit, and conduct your own audit of your operation. This self-audit will show you what areas of the food safety program are applicable to your operation, and also tell you where you are at currently with the suggested guidelines.
2. Take care of any corrective areas that you found through the self-audit to prepare your operation for an audit and your on-going food safety procedures.
3. Take ONLY those sections of the program that apply to your operation, and put them into your own Standard Operating Procedures manual (SOPs). Please be aware that not everything in the watermelon program will fit your operation. The NWA program is ‘generic’ and comprehensive in scope, and will not apply to any one operation.

Our recommendation to you is to contact the NWA office to get the program sent to you in Microsoft WORD. Then, you can cut-and-paste whatever sections do apply to your operation, and formulate your own SOP manual & food safety program. Some minor modifications may be needed following this exercise, but once completed you will be well on your way.

We are here to help as much as we can. Please let us know how we can support your efforts.

PROMOTIONS continued on page 4

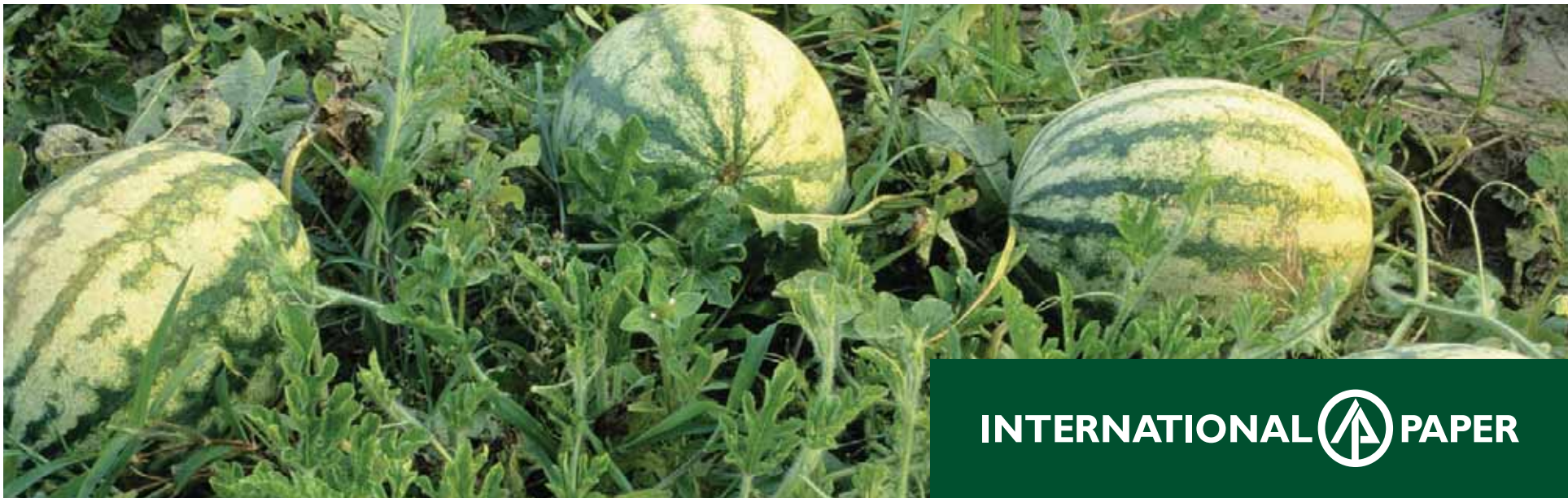
The NWA, NWPB and Sweet Mama Produce are working with The Wumblers to partner with two Six Flags Amusement Parks on July 4th weekend in a huge consumer event. The Wumblers are also in talks with ESPN to film the seed spit contests at both multi-day park events, with the winners to appear on the David Letterman Show for a show-down seed spitting contest with Dave on his late night program.

The NWA and NWPB are working together to create a display contest, with one winner from each chapter, and all nine (9) winners to compete for a national award.

We are sure that there are many more plans in the works that we have not heard about yet. Please let us know what they are, or if you do not know, ask yourself, “what is your company or chapter going to do to promote watermelon and celebrate the designation in 2009?”

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
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RECAP continued on page 6



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RECAP continued from page 6

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You helped make our convention a huge success:

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- Odiorne Insurance Agency
- Harris Moran Seed Company
- Highland Fresh Technologies
- IFCO Systems
- International Paper
- Longview Fibre Paper & Packaging, Inc.
- Nunhems USA
- Seminis Vegetable Seed
- Siegers Seed
- Smurfit/Stone Container
- South Carolina WMA
- Sunbelt Seeds
- Sundia Corporation
- Sunny Fresh
- Syngenta Seed
- Temple-Inland
- Texas WMA
- YottaMark
- Zeraim Gedera

Our exhibitors were awesome!

Faced, this year, with a difficult layout, our exhibitors did an outstanding job and certainly helped our industry with their knowledge and expertise.

- A. Link, Inc.
- Abbott & Cobb
- Ag Works, Inc.
- Albany Pallet Exchange
- CHEP USA
- Clifton Seed Company
- DP Seeds, LLC
- Odiorne Insurance Agency
- Gowan Company
- Harris Moran Seed Company
- Highland Label
- Hurst Labeling Systems
- IFCO Systems
- iGPS
- International Paper
- JR Transportation, Inc.
- Koppert Biological Systems
- Label Technique
- Longview Fibre
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- Nunhems USA
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- Seminis Vegetable Seed
- Smurfit-Stone Container
- Southern Container Corp.
- Syngenta Seeds, Inc.
- Temple-Inland
- Trace Gaines, Inc.
- Yerecic Labels
- Yotta Mark

NEW NWA OFFICERS

With this years convention came changes in officers. Our new President is:

John Lapide

The rest of the team:

Brent Harrison
1st Vice President

Jim Schmidt
2nd Vice President

Nowell Borders
Chairman

The NWA, along with the officers will be working hard over the next year and beyond to improve the industry and meet your needs.





National Report

MAGGIE BAILEY WINS NATIONAL QUEEN TITLE

During the 95th Annual National convention of the National Watermelon Association, Illiana Watermelon Queen, Maggie Bailey, was crowned 2009 National Watermelon Queen! Maggie is the twenty-one year old daughter of Gina Bailey of Vincennes, Indiana. She is an Elementary Education major attending Indiana State University. Congratulations Maggie! An exciting year awaits you! Congratulations to Kaley Harper, Florida Watermelon Queen, on being selected first runner-up and to Christina Gallant, Mar-Del Watermelon Queen for winning second runner-up! We congratulate Marie Fletcher, Texas Queen on being selected “Miss Jubilee”! NWA joins me in thanking Brittanie for the excellent job she did serving as our 2008 National Queen. We wish you continued success and our blessings. Thanks for a job well done!

I congratulate each of our State Queens that competed for the title this year; you did your Association’s proud! Maggie would like to again thank those who contributed to her scholarship, and purchased items for her at the auction. She was overwhelmed with your generosity, thanks to all of you! Thanks to all that contributed to our record breaking auction, those that donated, and to those that purchased thank you again for your continued support!

Thanks to all of our tour sponsors for making 2008 a success, Maggie and I look forward to an even bigger 2009 Tour! Please let me know when we can help you promote our great product!

GEORGIA FRUIT & VEGETABLE SHOW

Brittanie was sponsored to Savannah Georgia to the Georgia Fruit and Vegetable show in January. We appreciate the sponsorship from Sunny Fresh, Kelly and Jean Marinaro, Borders Melons, Nowell Borders, and Myron Harrison, Temple- Inland. We were joined by Georgia Queen Hannah Jones and Julie Akins Daughtrey for the well attended show. We were welcomed by Mr. Charles Hall, Executive Director for Georgia Fruit & Vegetable. The girls were treated royally at the Temple- Inland booth. Mitch Mitchell and the Temple-Inland group hosed a delightful dinner party at Garibaldi’s. Thanks to all of our sponsors for making it possible to attend.

TEXAS WATERMELON CONVENTION

We were sponsored to South Padre Island for the annual Texas Watermelon Convention. President Ward Thomas and wife Sue had a delightful convention in South Padre Island. The President’s reception was fun, complete with Karaoke. I must say we have some very talented members in our Association! We enjoyed seeing all the great Texas members and their hospitality. We certainly appreciate all their support and for sponsoring us. Brittanie and I welcomed the opportunity to visit with Marie and Wanda! We congratulate Mollie Bennett on being selected the 2009 Texas Watermelon Queen!

GEORGIA WATERMELON CONVENTION

Thanks to the Georgia Watermelon Association for sponsoring her home, to the Georgia Watermelon Association’s convention at the Lake Blackshear Resort. We enjoyed dinner at the home of GWA President Mitch Mitchell and wife Janice. Thanks for the tour of your beautiful home and wonderful dinner. We all enjoyed the President’s reception, and visiting with the GWA group, Hannah and Julie! The auction was a huge success! Record-breaking! Congratulations to the newly crowned GWA Queen, Lindsey Mann, I’m sure a great year awaits you! Thanks to GWA for sponsoring us to your convention!

MAR-DEL WATERMELON CONVENTION

Brittanie and I were sponsored to the Mar-Del watermelon convention at the Hyatt in Cambridge, Maryland. What a great spot for their convention! It was so nice to visit the Mar-Del group. Brittanie appreciated to opportunity to get to know them better; she missed the promotion there last summer. President Doug Corey and his family had a wonderful convention! Thank You for your gracious hospitality! Mar-Del had a great auction and queen competition. Christina, Allison and Lani did a super job! Congratulations to the new Mar-Del Queen, I’m sure you are in for a fantastic year!

ALABAMA WATERMELON CONVENTION

National Watermelon Queen Brittanie was sponsored to Biloxi, Ms for the annual Alabama watermelon convention. AWA President Terry Jones and wife Linda had a great convention at the beautiful Beau Rivage hotel and casino! Thank you so much for your gracious hospitality! Cindy Vaughn had a wonderful competition, with a terrific lineup of contestants. AWA Queen Samantha Dunn was a fabulous hostess! We were saddened to hear of the resignation of coordinator Cindy Vaughn but welcome her replacement Megan Flynn. Welcome Megan! We will miss Cindy as Coordinator, but she will still be with us! Special thanks to the Alabama watermelon Association for sponsoring us to your convention.

Thanks again to Brittanie for the great job as Queen! Maggie is excited about her year, and eager to really get busy with promotions! Her calendar is starting to fill, if you are interested in sponsoring, please give me a call or email from the numbers and address below! Best of the Season to All of You!

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



Brittanie Congratulates the Mar-Del Queen!



Chats with Will & Candice Hales (2006 National Queen)



Thank You Alabama Watermelon Association!



AWA President Terry Jones and Brittanie at the Seed-Spit



AWA President, Contestants, Queens Past and Present show off their auction gifts!



Brittanie and Kaley Congratulate the 2009 Alabama Queen!



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National Pictures



Brittanie, Contestants and Judges at National Convention



Brittanie Congratulates Maggie



Ken Mears presents Maggie a check for \$2000.00 on behalf of International Paper



Kelly and Jean present Maggie with a Waterford Vas and a Wardrobe check for \$250.00



Debbie and Brent Jackson present Maggie with a check for the Adam Jackson Memorial for \$500.00



A digital camera from Richard and Abbott and Cobb



Chris Bloebaum presents a check for \$500.00 for the Bob Bloebaum Memorial fund



Barry of Nunhems Seed presents Maggie with a new laptop



Greg Leger presents a check to Maggie for the Oren Childers Memorial Fund for \$500.00



Maggie with Second Runner-Up Christina, and First Runner-Up Kaley



Brittanie poses with Butch Brady and Craig Mathis of Syngenta, in Savannah



NWA's Bob Morrissey with Brittanie at the Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Show in Savannah



Brittanie and Julie pose with Wade and Mitch at the Temple-Inland booth in Savannah



Texas President, Ward Thomas visits with Brittanie at his Reception in South Padre, Island



Marie and Brittanie try to catch up in Texas!



Our outgoing President Nowell Borders' cute sons Kelton and Dalton pose with Brittanie



Congratulations Mollie Bennett!



"On the Air" at WSST



Brittanie enjoys Janice and Mitch's daughters in Cordele !



Brittanie and Hannah Congratulate Lindsey!



GWA President Mitch Mitchell with Brittanie during convention



Mar-Del President Doug Corey and family welcome Brittanie to Mar-Del



Christina welcomes the girls!



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Alabama Report

This year the Alabama convention was held in Biloxi, Mississippi at the Beau Rivage. The convention took place over Valentine’s Day weekend, lending the perfect theme as “I love watermelons”! The convention turned out to be a success! We had 5 beautiful and talented contestants for the queen pageant. The judges definitely had their work cut out for them. Second runner up to the 2009 Alabama Watermelon Queen is Miss Blair Franklin, from Monroeville, Alabama. First runner up to the queen is Miss Kimberly Henderson, from Enterprise, Alabama. Winner of Miss Jubilee and the 2009 Alabama Watermelon Queen is Miss Melinda Gooch, from Enterprise, Alabama. Melinda currently attends the University of Alabama where she is a sophomore in political science. She is a member of the University show choir, numerous honor societies and Chi Omega social sorority. Although Melinda is so involved at school, she is very motivated and excited to represent the Alabama Watermelon Association and promote our product! As the new promotions coordinator I am confident that we will have a great year together!



What fun Samantha had touring around San Padre Island during the TWA Convention!



Queen Samantha welcomes the 2009 TWA Queen



Hey Samantha, we love your sombrero! Aww-chee-waa-waa!



Here is our AWA Board Members and past AWA Queens having our “Last Supper” before our convention begins. What a blast was had by all in Biloxi this past Valentine’s Weekend.



Thank you Josh and Amanda Moore for not only sponsoring Melinda Gooch in our queen program but also having the honor of “King Buyer” at our AWA Convention!



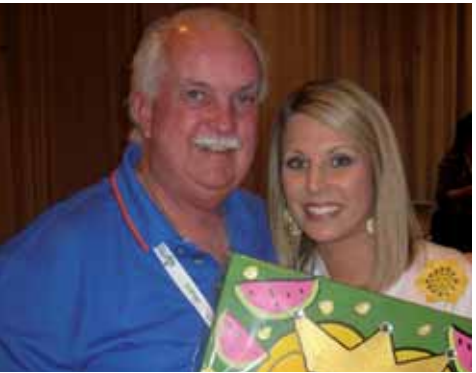
Look at the shape of Kelly Marinaro, Billy Smith and Terry Jones after our AWA Auction! What a sight to behold with all of our pretty young ladies!



Congratulations Brittanie on your marriage. We had fun at your shower during Nationals. Best of luck in pursuit of attaining your goals.



All our Queens had a fantastic time “flapping” during the President’s Reception at the NWA Convention in Charleston, SC.



Billy Smith could not figure out whom is cuter...the actual Queen Samantha or her lifelike painting?!



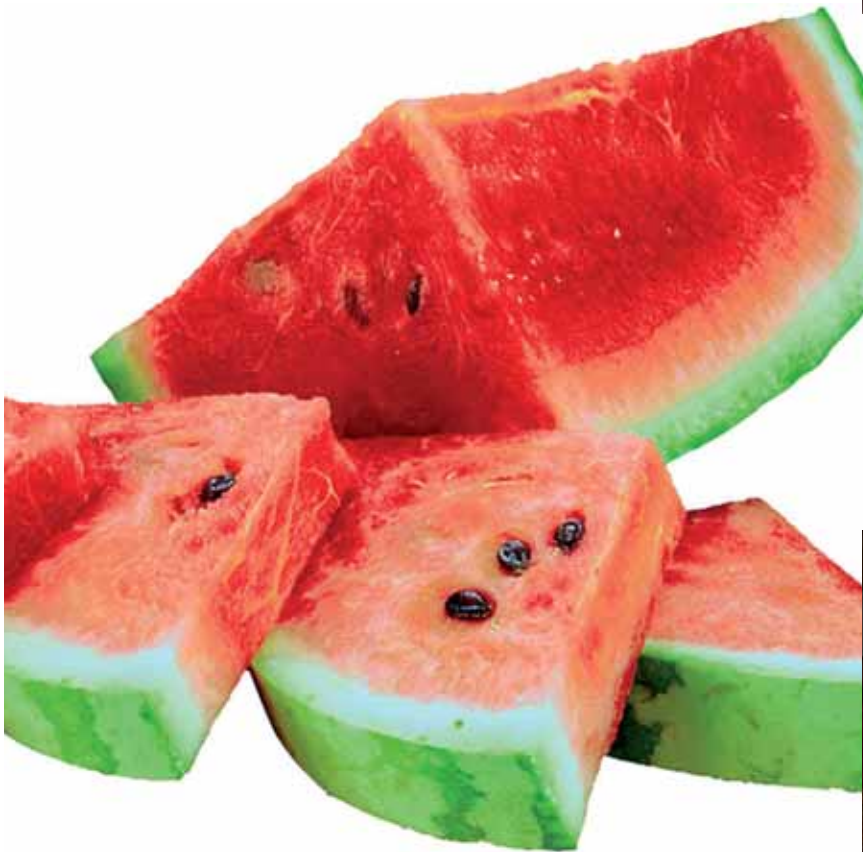
What an awesome year Queen Samantha and Terry Jones had together working for the AWA! Mr. Terry, thank you for your two years of service as our AWA President.



The Mar-Del Watermelon Convention would not be the huge success it is without the support of growers like Travis Hastings. Thank you, Travis, for making Samantha feel welcomed at your convention.



Congratulations Jessica Haden for being chosen as the 2009 Mar-Del Watermelon Queen. We are sure you will experience an unforgettable year!

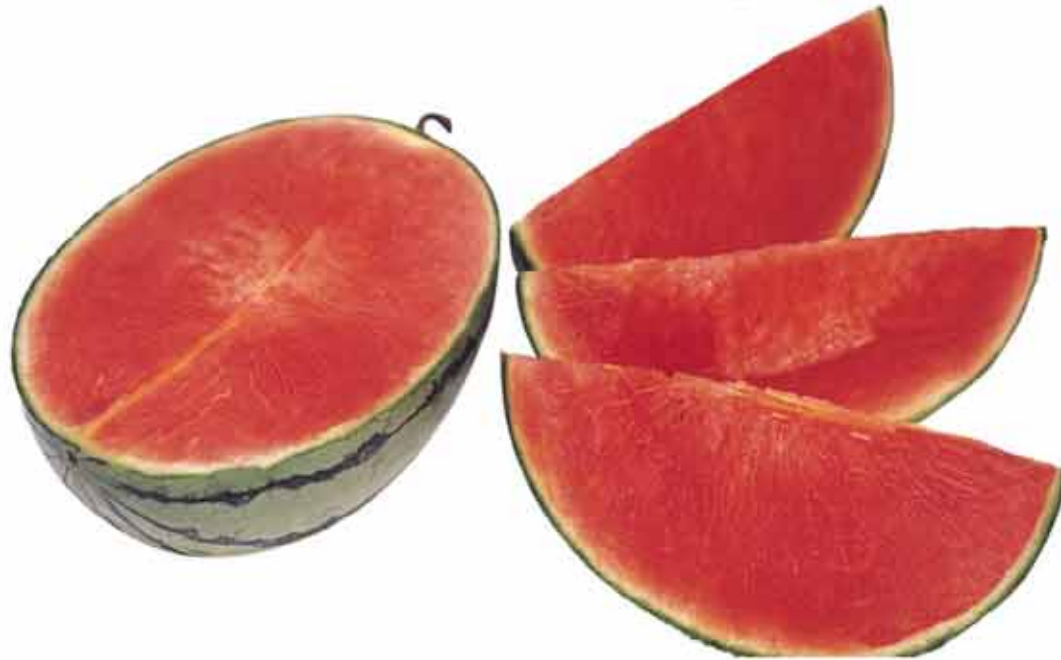


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Florida Report

Greetings from the Sunshine State of Florida

Our year started off right when we traveled to South Padre Island, Texas on Jan 16-18, for the Texas Watermelon Convention. A special thanks to all nineteen sponsors that made this possible. A big congratulation goes out to Mollie Bennett.

On Jan 31-Feb 1, Kaley and I traveled to the Georgia Watermelon Convention held in Cordele, Georgia sponsored by Melon 1 at the Lake Blackshear Resort. Thanks to the Georgia Watermelon Association for your hospitality and Mitch and Julie for a wonderful convention. Congratulations to Lindsey Mann for being selected as the new 2009 Georgia Watermelon Queen

February started off exciting when Kaley and I traveled to the Mar-Del Watermelon Convention held in Cambridge, Maryland at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Resort sponsored by Mack Farms, Melon 1, M.G. Ford, Gibson Produce and Watermelon Sales. Thanks to Harry Vaughn for a wonderful lunch looking out on the Bay. Congratulations to Jessica Haden as the newly crowned queen.

Our next stop was my town for the Alabama Watermelon Convention held in Biloxi, Mississippi which was sponsored by Nature Choice, Sunny fresh, International Paper, Browning and Sons, and Timco Worldwide. Thanks to the Alabama Watermelon Association for a wonderful convention. Congratulations to Melinda Gooch for being selected as the new Alabama Watermelon Queen and good luck Megan as you begin your new adventure as the Alabama Watermelon Promotions Coordinator.

As Kaley neared the end of her reign she traveled to the Florida State Fair for Watermelon Day on February 12.

Then it was off to Charleston, South Carolina for the National Watermelon Convention. Kaley represented Florida very well! We are all very proud of you! Kaley took home first runner-up title. We would like to thank everyone that helped us prepare for this from sewing her evening dress to borrowing shoes and jewelry. The Florida Watermelon Association is very proud of Kaley for the job that she has done.

March 3rd and 4th Kaley was in Fort Wayne, Indiana for the Nash Finch Show. Thanks to Carrie Smith for filling in as coordinator those two days. A special thanks to Kim Coker with the Department of Agriculture.

March 7th was a beautiful day in Tampa, Florida with the Southeast Produce Marketing Association. Queen Kaley was busy all day with our Florida Watermelon “Plinko” game. Everyone that attended the event enjoyed playing it. Thanks to Melon 1 for sponsoring Kaley and I.

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

* Please note my cellular number has changed

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

Debra Harrison
Florida Watermelon Promotions Coordinator
debrathreel@earthlink.net
Home: (863) 494-1163
* Cellular: (863) 633-8306



“Wow!” Look at these Bees.



The Georgia Watermelon Convention was a sight with this sign “Welcome to Cordele Georgia”.



Queen Kaley visiting with Kelly and Jean Marino at the Alabama Watermelon Convention.



Queen Kaley and Alisa Lapide having fun playing “Plinko” at the Southeast Produce Show in Tampa, Florida.



Thanks Billy Smith & Kelly Marino for the beautiful “Crown” Pin I will always cherish it.



Queen Kaley with the “MELON 1” guys in Tampa, Florida.



There is never a dull moment with Mr. Harry Vaughn.



. Kaley visiting with Josh Moore with Timco Worldwide.



Thanks Wanda and Marie for an awesome convention in TEXAS!



Thanks Kevin for the book “Lemons to Laughter” Queen



Queen Kaley with the Chastain and Lapide in Georgia.



2008 Florida Watermelon Queen Kaley having fun at National's!



It's always a pleasure to visit with Cheryl Hicks. Thanks Cheryl for everything you do.



“Congratulations Kaley!”



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Mark Arney
Executive Director



Watermelon in Times Square



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Foodservice Guide for Watermelon

Faye Clack Communications represents the Canadian arm of the NWPB for public relations and communications. Recently production and print was finalized on the new Watermelon Foodservice Education Guide. The final edition is one booklet, two languages, to accommodate the full Canadian market. All original NWPB photography was utilized and the final copy is stunning! The table of contents highlights the following:

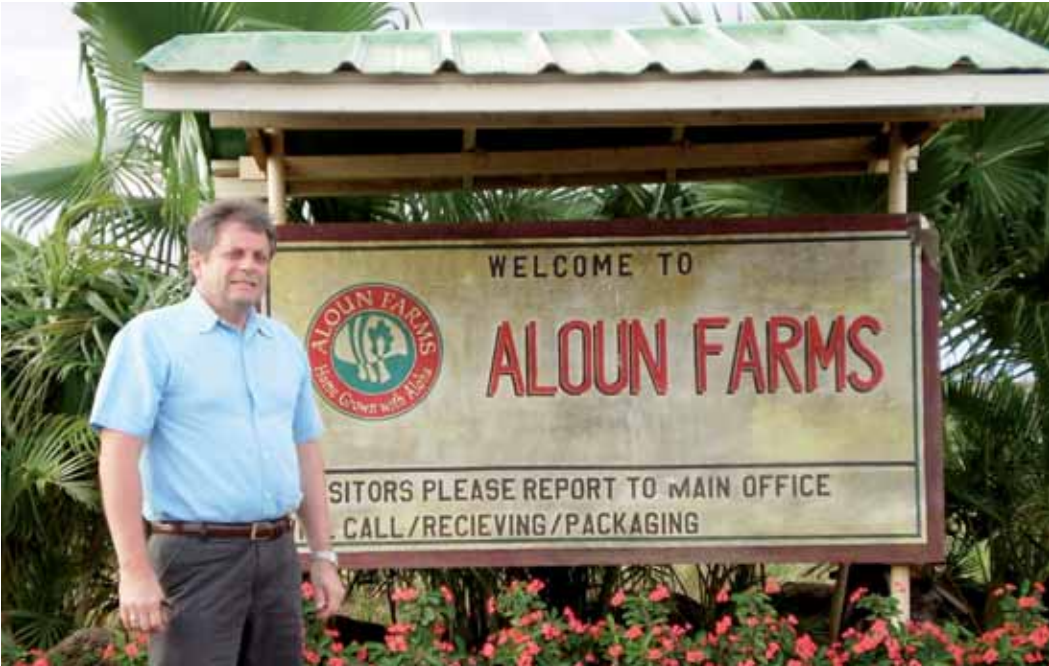
- Why Watermelon? Versatility, Variety, Value and Good for You
- Safe Handling Practices
- Removing Seeds is a Breeze
- Recipe Ideas
- Bar and Beverage Ideas
- Nutritional Benefits
- And much, much more

To check out a copy, please give us a call at the office. Be on the lookout for a US version of the same that will be incorporated in a foodservice culinary education module this summer!



News from the National Watermelon Promotion Board

Watermelon in Hawaii with Famous Amos



Mark Arney at Aloun Farms

Executive Director, Mark Arney, traveled to Hawaii to meet with USDA’s branch office staff, a major retailer, Hawaiian Department of Agriculture representatives, a restaurant chain, and Hawaiian watermelon growers and handlers for a number of reasons including industry meetings, imports, exports and promotions.

The original plan was for NWPB Director of Marketing Gordon Hunt to stop for meetings in Hawaii on his way to Japan, but his plans had to be altered to just the Japan segment.

In Japan, Gordon Hunt met with importers, retailers and US Embassy and Foreign Agriculture Service officials. This will be part of the Market Access Program where Federal grant monies help to defray promotional expenses.

There is interest with some Hawaiian growers to ship watermelons to Japan that will tie in with our efforts to expand in Japan. United State’s watermelon handlers are already shipping some product to Japan from the West Coast.

At the request of Wally “Famous” Amos, Mark Arney met with him at his cookie store headquarters in Honolulu. Gordon Hunt and the NWPB’s Director of Communications Leslie Coleman had met Amos at a school food service show in Philadelphia several months prior, where he indicated to the two his interest in a watermelon cookie to add to his other line of cookies. He also offered his services for promotional activities.

Wally has been an advocate of watermelon for years and wears a watermelon hat, shirt and shoes every day. His most recent book, “Watermelon Magic: Seeds of Wisdom, Slices of Life,” uses watermelon as a metaphor. He has been featured in Time, Newsweek and People magazines. At one time his former Famous Amos Gourmet Cookie Company was generating over \$250 million in annual revenues! His name is synonymous with gourmet chocolate chip cookies and he has name recognition with over 150 million Americans, according to a published report.

Mark met with Safeway representatives in Honolulu to discuss a promotion the NWPB did with the chain involving the National Watermelon Queen Jenna Stanford the year before last. Mark discussed a new retail display contest with Safeway representatives that will take place during National Watermelon Month in July that will involve The National Watermelon Association’s assistance.

The Hawaiian Department of Agriculture and USDA branch office were of tremendous help in Honolulu. They shared information about a grant program through the Economic Development Alliance of Hawaii for a pilot program to use RFID devices to trace-back to the field in the event of a food safety crisis.

The Economic Development Alliance of Hawaii awarded a total of about \$500,000 to start up the



“Wally ‘Famous’ Amos and Mark

program, which is expected to cost \$1.6 million over three years. Mark then briefed them on what our industry on the mainland is doing with traceback programs and the NWPB Crisis Management Program.

While they grow watermelon year-round in Hawaii, the majority of production parallels the mainland. Watermelon acreage in the state since 2007 has increased dramatically, with more increases planned.

Upcoming Queen Training & Mr. Food

Every spring, the newly crowned queens and their promotions coordinators travel to central Florida for a jam-packed day of media training. Historically, this day was designed to give the watermelon queens key message points, punctuated interview tips, on-camera practice, watermelon news and review, and other principles to help prepare them for a full year of promoting watermelon to the public.

Last year we took it up a notch to host a promotions coordinators’ roundtable discussion as well as provided an etiquette expert who related to manners, etiquette and image.



TRAIN continued on next page

TRAIN continued from previous page



For 2009, we will be hosting the group in Fort Lauderdale, Florida in conjunction with a Mr. Food watermelon segment taping that will feature the national watermelon queen, Maggie Bailey.

The taping will take place Friday morning, April 16th and we will move right into a 2-day training, with sessions for the promotions coordinators and queens.

Saturday the group will tour the Mr. Food studio and practice a watermelon demonstration right in Mr. Food’s test kitchens! This will be followed by a special presentation by a former Miss America on etiquette, special events, and being a young ambassador.

USDA Entitlement Meeting

The 2002 Farm Bill directed that USDA spend \$200 million of entitlement funds for fruits and vegetables from 2002 through 2007, and the 2008 farm bill increased that amount to \$406 million by 2012.

The largest “customer” of the program is the National School Lunch Program (a federal program provides more than 30 million children each day with subsidized meals and an added emphasis on nutrition due to the obesity epidemic amongst school age children) and the Emergency Food Assistance Program, Food Bank and Federal Prison Systems. All programs could potentially order substantial quantities of watermelon.

Mark Arney and Leslie Coleman traveled to Washington, DC with Paul Wiggins to meet with USDA representatives at the Commodities Procurement Branch (CPB) offices.

NWPB discussed the industry’s experience in selling to schools and emphasis on educating children about healthy lifestyles. Paul Wiggins provided invaluable input based on his experience with selling to the Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio Public school systems. We felt it vital that an industry representative was there to answer questions from a firsthand point of view.

CBP told the group that the entitlement program has formulas that subsidize recipient organizations or institutions for up to 20% off the purchases of entitlement listed commodities. Now, additional money is available from Farm Bill to use for special purchases that may increase that subsidy.

It was felt that using watermelon for schools through the entitlement program should not be ruled out in the long run, but initially the industry would be better served supplying product for the food bank and prison programs, expanding to schools once a track record is established. It was recommended to explore selling watermelon through the Department of Defense (DOD) procurement agency in Philadelphia.

In the end, it was felt that watermelon could be purchased as early as late summer.



J. Slice Coloring Book in Spanish

Our healthy hero J. Slice has a new adventure where he has to rescue his friends from the clutches of new super villian, Lazee.

The story goes that J. Slice and his friends are at the beach catching some waves and munching on tasty, healthy snacks when the new kid in town, Lazee, appears. He invites everyone over, but spoils them lazy with video games, salty food and sugary drinks. The kids get sick, they get tired, and J. Slice comes in and saves the day by getting everyone to be active, play outside and snack on some watermelon!

This great story is now available in Spanish. Contact Stephanie at ssimek@watermelon.org for more information!



2009 Watermelon CD ROM



Over the past few years, we have been consistently downsizing the green footprint of our press kit and retail kit. We have cut down on the printed materials provided therefore decreasing shipping costs, and in doing so have shifted the majority of the annual content to a CD ROM and to our web-driven tools.

We are excited that this year on the CD ROM, in addition to the new recipes and carvings, health taglines and product shots, we will be placing a new emphasis on the following categories:

- Watermelon is a Great Value
- An American Icon
- Heart Healthy
- Safe Food Handling
- Watermelon Promotion Queens

In addition to new materials being available for download direct from the CD, such as a Chef Harry public service announcement (PSA), we are happy to share some highlights from the newest watermelon recipes and carvings.

“American Cookery” was the name of the first American-written cookbook published in the United States in 1796. It contained a recipe for watermelon rind pickles!

“During SY 2008, USDA purchased over \$1137 million worth of commodities for Schools/Child Nutrition Programs. These commodities totaled over 1.2 billion pounds.”

- USDA FNS 2008 Food Distribution Fact Sheet



- Some recipes featured are:
- Blue Watermelon Walnut Salad
 - Watermelon Black Bean and Corn Salsa
 - Candy Cane Martini
 - Watermelon Chicken Curry Stacks
 - Green Tea Watermelon Punch
 - Watermelon S’mores
 - Watermelon Cucumber Shrimp Cocktail
 - Not-So-Sloppy Watermelon Joes

- The new watermelon carvings are:
- The Shark
 - The Sailboat
 - Kitty Cat
 - Outrigger Luau Canoe
 - Butterfly Basket



Georgia Report

The Georgia Watermelon Association recently held our annual meeting at The Blackshear Resort and Golf Club in Cordele, GA. The two-day event, held January 29-February 1, 2009, boasted the highest attendance numbers in recent history with more than 221 attendees. According to Charles Hall, Executive Director of the Association, “We are so pleased with this year’s annual meeting. We had a great group of attendees, an informative educational session with exceptional speakers and a terrific group of contestants for the Queen Contest. The weekend was definitely a success and we appreciate all the exhibitors and growers that supported the event.”

We are pleased to announce that Miss. Lindsey Marie Mann of Tifton, GA was crowned our 2009 Georgia Watermelon Queen during our annual meeting. Lindsey is the 20-year-old student at The University of Georgia and is the daughter of Bill and Sheree Mann. Lindsey plays both the harp and piano and often performs at weddings and other special events. Additionally, she was a church pianist for several years prior to moving to Athens, GA to attend school. Lindsey is a junior majoring in Accounting maintaining a 3.98 gpa. We are thrilled to have Lindsey as our 2009 Georgia Watermelon Queen.

We had 10 top notch contestants this year running for the title of Georgia’s Watermelon Queen. Ms. Whitney Leah Conner of Abbeville, GA was named 1st runner-up and Ms. Lauren Elizabeth Hale of McDonough, GA was named 2nd runner up. Additionally, Ms. Jessica Morgan Thompson of Pineview, GA received the Miss Jubilee Award. As a part of the meeting, C & L Packing/Melon 1 was awarded King Buyer and King Donor for donating and purchasing the most loads of watermelons and auction materials.

GWA would like to thank everyone that sponsored during our convention: Abbott & Cobb, AG GA Farm Credit, ACA, Albany Pallet Exchange, Bank of Dooley, Ben Morris, Borders Melons East, C & L Packing/Melon 1, C. H. Robinson, Cole Woodroof, Commercial Shuttle Service, Inc., Delta Fresh Sales, Inc., Dixon Farm Supply, HarvestMark, Helena Chemical Co., International Paper, Leger & Son, LTF Greenhouse, LLC., McMelon, Inc., Mobley Greenhouse, Nunhems USA. Inc., Planters First Bank, Rawlins Farm, Rooney Bowen Chevrolet, Seminis Vegetable Seeds, Simmons Produce, Smurft-Stone Container, South GA Banking Co., Sue Childers, Sunbelt Seeds, Syngenta Seeds, Temple Inland, Triangle Chemical Co., Tucker Farms, Valdosta Plant Co., Westlake Produce, Zeraim Gedera.

ALL SPONSORSHIPS WERE GREATLY APPRECIATED

Since convention, Queen Lindsey has begun her tour. We joined the Cordele Chamber of Commerce for their annual Fish Fry at the Atlanta Freight Depot. Lindsey greeted guests with watermelon stickers as they entered the building to enjoy the tasty catfish. Lindsey headed back to Atlanta for the annual Ag-Awareness kick-off week where she met with the House and Senate to be proclaimed on the floor as the 2009 Georgia Watermelon Queen. Thank you Mr. Buddy Leger and Rep. Buddy Harden for making the resolution possible. After visiting the capitol during this Ag-Awareness day, Lindsey joined the GWA exhibit booth where we handed out watermelon coloring books and brochures. Our 1st runner-up Miss. Whitney Conner filled in for Lindsey at the Adel, GA Ag Day at the Primary School. We demonstrated watermelon and handed out delicious slices of watermelon donated by Borders Melons East. Thank you Barry and Christine!

We are excited watermelon season is near. Please contact us if you have need for the Watermelon Queen to promote your product.

Sincerely,

Julie Akins Daughtrey
GWA Promotion Coordinator
2121 Cranford Sumner Rd.
Lenox, GA 31637
770 842 3309
akinsjulie1@alltel.net



We were fortunate to have ten wonderful contestants at our annual convention. Each of the contestants helped make our convention a success.



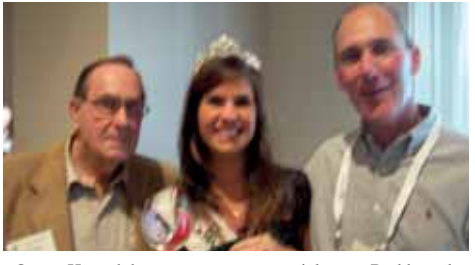
In the middle of our lovely contestants you will see the high-light of our friday night at our convention...Adams King!



Thank you Borders Melons East for sponsoring our 2009 GWA Queen Lindsey Mann.



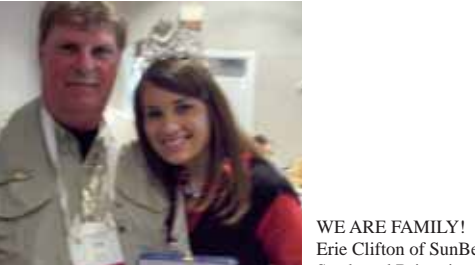
We appreciate Rich Chastain and John Lapide for their tremendous support to Georgia.



Queen Hannah between two very special men...Buddy and Greg Leger.



Sweet times with Brittanie Faircloth Garner and Mitch Mitchell.



WE ARE FAMILY!
Erie Clifton of SunBelt Seeds and Brittanie.



Hannah Jones in Charleston, S.C. ready for the President’s reception.



Lindsey Mann and Rep. Jay Roberts at the State Capitol.



Sen. Dickie Crosby, Queen Lindsey, Rep. Buddy Harden and Mr. Buddy Leger in Atlanta at the GA State Capitol.



Ag Awareness Day at the Capitol.



Queen Lindsey with Gov. Sonny Perue’s granddaughters in the Governor’s office.



A pleasure running into Ken Lewis in Atlanta during the Ag Kick-off.



Chris Greene from Cordele loves his watermelon queens!



First runner-up Whitney Conner at Ag Day in Adel, GA.



Whitney Conner served delicious Borders East watermelon slices and read a watermelon story to the students during Ag Day.



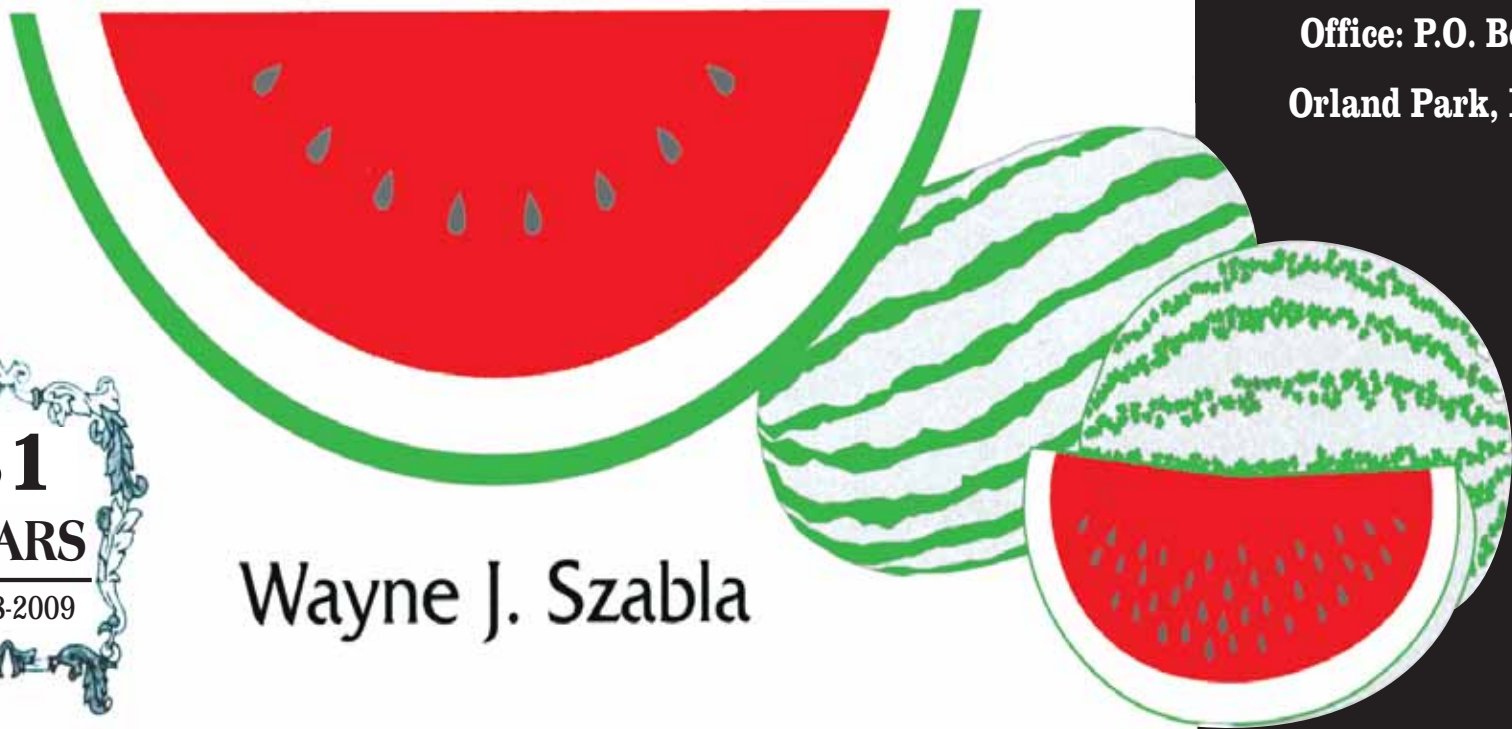
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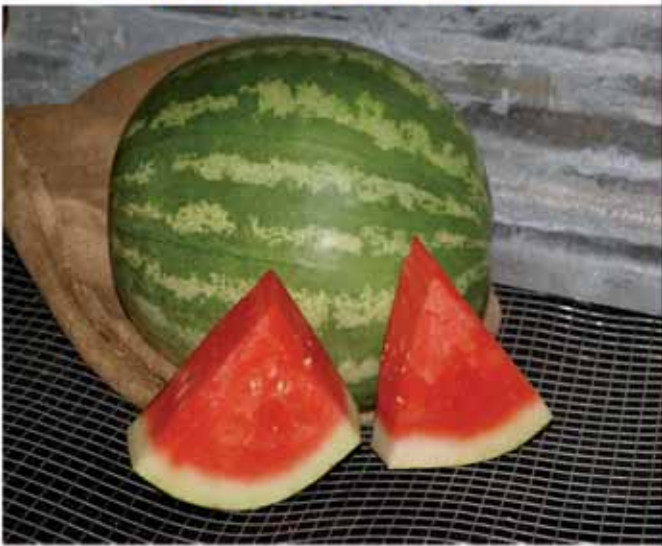
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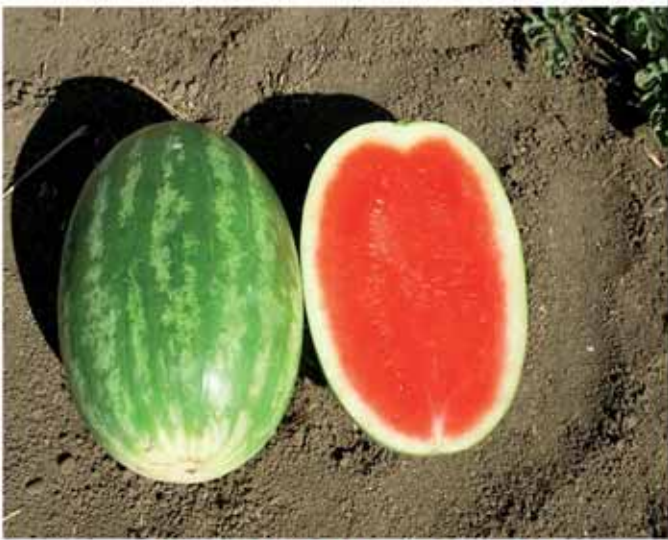
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Illiana Report

Heaps of Thanks to the South Carolina Watermelon Association for hosting the National Watermelon Convention in Charleston SC. About 20 Illiana Association members made the trip to South Carolina to enjoy the friendship and knowledge at the convention. The crowning of Illiana Queen Maggie Bailey as the 2009 National Watermelon Queen was the icing on the cake for the Illiana delegation. We are all proud of her and know she will work hard and do a terrific job for everyone in the next year.

Casino Aztar in Evansville IN was the site for the celebration of the Illiana Watermelon Association’s 20th convention and what a party it was! The Island Luau theme was kicked off with a whole hog roast for the President’s Reception on Friday night. IWA welcomed National Queen Maggie Bailey home and wish her much success in the following year. Illiana had much more to celebrate as it received the 2008 NWA Chapter Membership Award and Emily Frey was named the 2008 Young AG Spokesperson.

Illiana Watermelon Association also lauded the success of two of its largest promotions—the Kroger 200 NASCAR event and the 1st Annual Watermelon Drop. These 2 events would not be possible without the help of many, many people. Thank you again to the National, Florida, Texas, and Georgia Associations for your support at the Kroger Race Event. The Watermelon Drop was a success because of a large committee of hard-working local Knox County citizens headed by John Frenz and Rick Linenburg. Special Thanks to Mike Lankford for overseeing the construction of that HUGE watermelon. We invite everyone to join us on New Years’ Eve for our next Watermelon Drop!

Eight intelligent, articulate and beautiful young ladies competed for the 2009 Illiana Watermelon Queen title. Johnna Thompson of Lawrenceville IL is the new Illiana Queen. She attends the University of Illinois majoring in Agriculture Education and Communications. Johnna received a \$1000 scholarship from International Paper. She also receives a \$1500 wardrobe allowance provided by Great Lakes Produce, JRT Inc, Rick McDougall of JRT, Freyco Produce, First American Bank, Kenworthy’s, Mouzin Brothers Farms, Frank Stangle and Son Inc, and Crop Production Services-Oaktown. Luggage is donated by Midwest Marketing.

1st Runner-up is Alexandra Jordan. Alex received a \$500 scholarship from International Paper. She also collected \$200 from Abbott & Cobb as the winner of the Watermelon Queen Contestant seed spit competition. Chelsea Sullivan is 2nd runner-up and her \$200 scholarship is provided by John Nowaskie Melons. Sheena Oramas was named Miss Jubilee and was awarded \$100 by Double T. Dave Richards of Landstar provided flowers for all the winners. 2008 Queen Maggie Bailey was presented an outgoing scholarship by Keith Carter of Kemper CPA. Maggie thanks Norman Lamb Produce for her queen video.

The accommodations and meals were superb and the variety of activities available for free time was limitless. Saturday night after the banquet and crowning of Johnna, IWA hosted a wrap up party at Jillian’s Billiard’s Club. We talked, we laughed, we bowled, we ate, we enjoyed hours of fun and friendship. We hope you all can join us next year at the Casino Aztar Hotel in Evansville IN. Queen Johnna got right to work on Thursday March 12 passing out watermelon and stickers at the Knox County Ag Day Celebration. Thanks to Indian Hills Produce for the delicious melons and to Double T and Mouzin Brothers for sponsoring Johnna.

Early Friday Morning Johnna and I headed to the North Carolina Watermelon Convention being held in Raleigh. We were escorted by Tim Dunn of JRT, Inc., who also sponsored our trip. Johnna enjoyed meeting Doug and Teena Johnson who work for JRT out in North Carolina. Many thanks also to everyone from the North Carolina Watermelon Association for their hospitality. We had a terrific time!

As we roll into the heart of the watermelon growing season Johnna and I wish everyone a successful year. If we can help you promote your watermelons please give me a call.

Sincerely,
Beth Frey
Promotions Coordinator
Illiana Watermelon Association
1707 McDowell Rd
Vincennes IN 47591-5059
812-886-5409 812-890-0620
loveshallmark@hotmail.com



National Queen Maggie with Johnna, Alex and Chelsea



Alexandra shows off her winning form in the seed spit.



These young ladies all know their way around a watermelon promotion!



Congratulations 2009 Texas Queen Mollie



Queen Johnna and her parents J.R. and Sandy Thompson



Maggie and Kaley catch a 5 minute break at the Georgia Convention



The State Queens "ham it up" before the National Watermelon Auction!



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Mar-Del Report

Greetings,

July and August are busy months for the Maryland-Delaware Watermelon Association but we would have to admit, the winter is action packed, as well! This year our convention was held once again at the beautiful, Hyatt Regency Resort in Cambridge, Maryland on February 6th and 7th. We were so thankful to have such a great attendance again this year and record one of our best auctions to date. We would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone who attended our convention and donated or purchased items or loads. Also, thank you to everyone who donated items to our incoming or outgoing queens, they greatly appreciate your generosity. In addition, thank you to all of the sponsors and state chapters who sent their Queens. We were delighted to be joined by Florida, North Carolina, Alabama, and National. This year we had an all star judging panel which included: Jo Ann Walston - DE Dept. of Ag Marketing Specialist, Mark Powell - Chief of Marketing for the Maryland Dept. of Ag., Josh Rowe - Sales Specialist for International Paper, Leslie Coleman - Director of Communications for the NWPB, and Dawn Collins -DMC Farms and former MAR-DEL Secretary / Treasurer. These individuals had a hard task but awarded the title of 2009 Mar-Del Watermelon Queen to a phenomenal young lady, Miss Jessica Haden of Salisbury, Maryland. We have a great feeling about Jessica and we can't wait for everyone to meet her. We know she will be a great representative for our association and the Watermelon Industry.

Soon after our convention we joined everyone in beautiful Charleston, SC for the National Convention. It was a busy week but Queen Christina stepped up to the challenge! Congratulations Christina on a job well done, we're so proud of you and we know your future will be a bright one.

Sincerely,
MAR-DEL Watermelon Association



Queen Christina was enjoying her stay in Charleston with a few of her biggest supporters: Richard Wojciak, Mark Collins, Will Hales and Josh Rowe.



Pretty ladies in this picture! Queen Christina is enjoying a few laughs with Brenda Mack, Jean Marinaro, Sandy Silvia, Pat Hastings and Harriet Joyce.



Queen Christina really appreciated the watermelon pitcher and glasses the MAR-DEL Assoc. purchased for her!



Queen Christina got a good luck hug from Mark and Dawn Collins at Nationals.



Thanks to Jay Rider and Ray Vincent, we made a few extra dollars at the MAR-DEL auction!



Delaware Secretary of Agriculture, Ed Key, shares a moment with George & Marlene Collins, recipients of the 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award at the MAR-DEL Convention.



MAR-DEL was honored to host several visiting Queens at our convention: Samantha (AL), Brittany (NC), Kaley (FL), Brittanie (Nat'l), as well as our own, Christina.



Charles Wright was a great sport by letting the magician put him in the spotlight!



Our new Queen, Jessica, gets the opportunity to thank Harry Vaughn for the beautiful earrings!



Ray & Clay Vincent presented Jessica with an auction item donated by Vincent Farms.



A big thank you to everyone who purchased an item for Queen Christina at our auction: David Lowe, John Lapide, Josh Moore, Josh Rowe, and Doug Corey.



Past MAR-DEL Queens congratulate Jessica: April ('88), Amanda ('02), Lani ('04), Allison ('05), Stephanie ('07) and Christina ('08).



Our 2008 Queen, Christina shares a crowning moment with our new Queen, Jessica Haden.



The banquet would not be complete without getting in a photo with one great MAR-DEL couple, Will and Candice Hales.



What Fun!



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Food Safety legislation is introduced

As expected, bills are being introduced into the U.S. Senate and House that will address growing consumer concerns of food outbreaks.

In the U.S. House, The Safe Food Enforcement, Assessment, Standards and Targeting Act of 2009 was introduced by Rep. Jim Costa (CA) and Adam Putnam (FL).

In the U.S. Senate, The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009 was introduced by a bi-partisan group of Senators, led by Senator Dick Durbin (IL).

“There are many association executives that have had input into both of these bills, and believe that the legislation is live-able and realistic”, said Bob Morrissey, NWA Executive Director. “Both of these bills are very similar in nature, which is a huge advantage down the road when both sides of Congress need to come together with one common bill. The bills are based on the basic values of GAPs and GHPs with input from farmers, packers and associations, and are reasonable. And, the bills provide needed support and authorities to the FDA that will provide advantages to all of us in the produce industry. The NWA’s new watermelon-specific program is more comprehensive than any of the requirements from either one of these bills.”

“We are working with the Congressional sponsors’ offices to gain co-sponsors to the bills in an effort to move them forward, and to head off a couple of other bills that we do not particularly feel comfortable with. None of us want federal regulation of food safety, but in these times it has become apparent that the legislation will happen, and sooner rather than later. By following the guidelines, as much as possible, that we have outlined in our voluntary program, each farmer and packer/shipper should be fine with this legislation.”

Stay posted to the NWA web site for further updates, and learn where you can help.

Watermelon Food Safety – 2nd Edition Released

At the recent national convention, the NWA released the second edition of its watermelon-specific food safety & traceability program for the industry’s use.

“After an extensive peer review, the NWA released an updated version at the last national convention during an extensive food safety and traceability seminar”, said Bob Morrissey. “Many thanks go out to the numerous industry friends and colleagues, USDA, Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association, the academic community from many universities, and the Food and Drug Administration for their valuable input.”

“Our efforts for the remainder of 2009, and beyond, will be to educate the industry on our voluntary program, and support their efforts as much as possible to install GAPs and GHPs into their operations, along with a sustainable track-and-trace program.”

Morrissey concluded, “It is all up to us, the industry, to implement quality food safety processes into our operations prior to the federal government passing future food safety legislation that will tell us to do it. We continue to provide consumers with a quality and safe watermelon crop, and by implementing some of these voluntary guidelines, we can be even better for it.”



NWA Website Updated

When was the last time that you visited the NWA web site? Did you know that it has become a valuable resource and up-to-date information center for you?

Your web site has been designed with you, our members, in mind. The site includes key areas of high interest including:

- News Alerts
- Food Safety & Traceability
- Legislative updates
- Scientific research initiatives
- The Vineline magazine
- Off The Vine newsletter
- National Queen program
- Much more

Please make a regular visit to your web site, and keep abreast of what is happening in your association, in our industry, in Washington, and what is or could affect your business. It is a valuable resource for you to use. Take a look.

RECAP continued from page 7



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North Carolina Report

The North Carolina Watermelon Association is extremely proud of 2008 Watermelon Queen Brittany White who has been a wonderful spokesperson and Ambassador for the State Association and our watermelon industry this year.

As Queen Brittany’s reign came to a close, she traveled to the Mar-Del Watermelon Association Convention held February 6-7, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Resort in Cambridge, MD and joined other State Watermelon Queens for a fun-filled weekend. Thank you to the Mar-Del Association for a wonderful visit.

Queen Brittany represented the North Carolina Watermelon Association superbly as she competed in the National Queen Pageant held during the 95th Annual Watermelon Convention, February 19-22 at The Francis Marion Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina. The Association was extremely proud of Brittany as she participated in the Speech, Interview, Promotions Wear and Evening Gown competition. Thanks, Brittany!

The North Carolina Watermelon Association held its 28th Annual Convention March 13-14, 2009 at the Crabtree Marriott in Raleigh, NC. The weekend was an educational and enjoyable one for those in attendance. Five young ladies competed for the 2009 NC Watermelon Queen title. All contestants did a wonderful job. Miss Kensley Leonard of Southern Pines, NC was crowned 2009 NC Watermelon Queen. Leslie Revelle of Murfreesboro, NC was named 1st runner up and Brianna Tracy of Wendell, NC was named 2nd runner up. Christina McWhirter was selected by her peers as Miss Jubilee. Congratulations to all young ladies competing for the 2009 NC Watermelon Queen title.

Thank you to all members, individuals, families, auction donors, companies and NCWA for such a wonderful convention. Thanks also to the 10 former NCWA Queens who were in attendance to show support for the NC Watermelon Queen program.

The North Carolina Watermelon Association welcomes Kensley Leonard as their 2009 North Carolina Watermelon Queen and Ambassador for the coming year. Kensley is an 18 year old student at Pinecrest High School, planning to attend North Carolina State University this fall, where she will major in Communication Studies. She is the daughter of Barry and Kay Leonard of Southern Pines. Queen Kensley is excited and looking forward to opportunities to promote watermelon in 2009. Visit our website at [HYPERLINK “http://www.ncmelons.com”](http://www.ncmelons.com) www.ncmelons.com for more information on our 2009 NCWA Queen Tour!

Susan Mills
NCWA Promotions Coordinator



Queen Brittanie with Don and Mary Hiller at the Mar Del convention.



With Josh Rowe of International Paper



Queen Brittany in her “flapper attire” with NCWA President Floyd Taylor at the National Convention



Contestants at the North Carolina Watermelon Pageant



At the National Convention



Queen Kensley with Brianna and Leslie



Queen Brittany with Joe Jones at the North Carolina auction



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South Carolina Report

Greetings from SC!

Our 2009 South Carolina Watermelon Association Convention was held January 16&17 in Columbia, SC. It was a successful weekend and enjoyed by all who attended. The new 2009 South Carolina Watermelon Queen is Summers Slaton of Blythewood, SC. Summers is a student at Winthrop University majoring in Early Childhood Education. At Winthrop she is on the Dean’s List and is a member of Alpha Delta Pi Sorority. Summers is thrilled to be the new SC Watermelon Queen and will be a wonderful asset to our association.

Summers attended the George Watermelon Association Convention held at the Lake Blackshear Resort in Cordele, Georgia at the end of January. She was thrilled to meet all of the nice folks in Georgia along with the Georgia Watermelon Queen Contestants and all of the Georgia has-beens who attended. At the end of the convention, Summers was very happy to congratulate the new Georgia Watermelon Queen, Lindsey Mann. She wanted to thank everyone for making her feel so welcomed!

The SCWA was thrilled to have the 2009 NWA Convention in our home state. We hope everyone enjoyed beautiful Charleston, SC! We would like to congratulate the new 2009 NWA Queen Maggie Bailey. We know she will do a wonderful job and look forward to working with her and Eleanor this year!

Our schedule is filling up fast so please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to have our queen at an event this summer! She is excited and ready to go!!

Until next time,

Julie Murdock
SCWA Promotions Coordinator
864-313-8168
Jewels412@charter.net



Two of the contestants are all smiles with Bradley O’Neal at the SCWA Auction.



The SC Watermelon ‘has-beens’ give Summers a lift!



Scotty Sandifer proudly displays his Clemson blanket during the Auction.



Summers was excited to meet several other queens at the GWA Convention.



SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers congratulates 2009 SCWQ Summers Slaton.



Summers enjoyed chatting with Miss Eleanor.



2009 SCWQ
Summers Slaton
and 1st runner up
Collins Medlin



Summers poses by her favorite fruit!



Lonnie Beach was proud to sponsor Queen Summers.



Summers loved talking with NWA Queen Brittanie.



Stevie Still, Mark Williams and Hamie Dicks welcome Summers to the Watermelon Family.



Summers congratulates the new 2009 GWQ.



Martin Eubanks looks forward to working with Summers this year.



Summers was happy to pose with Rusty Kinard.



SCWQ Summers Slaton is looking forward to an exciting year!



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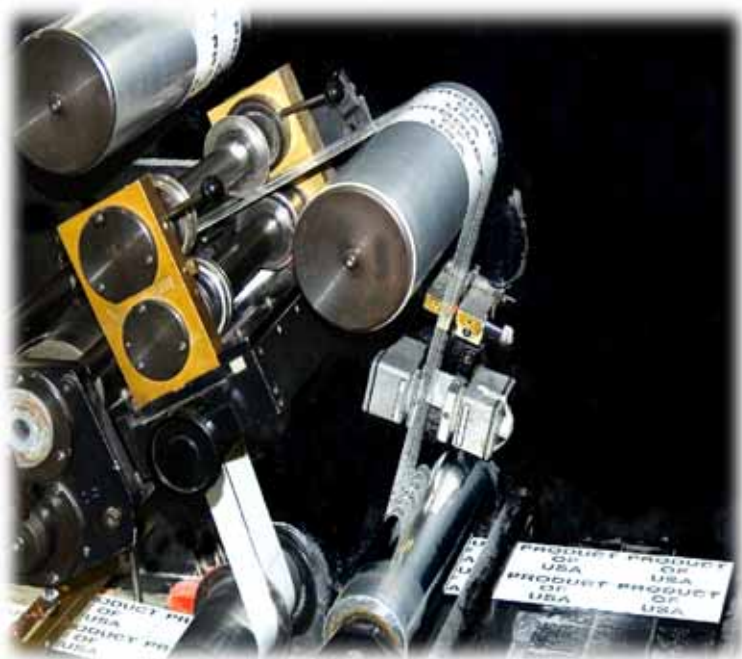
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Texas Report

It seems just like last week that we were anticipating our 2009 Annual Texas Watermelon Convention...and the 2009 NWA Convention has come and gone and here we go again. Starting a new year that will probably be 1/2 gone by the time you read this....

Our Texas Convention was held at South Padre Island, Texas with good attendance and everyone having a well informed and good time. This is due a lot to our great sponsors:

International Paper Company-Edinburg, Texas,. International Paper Company-Ken Mears...J R Produce Supply-McAllen, Texas...Temple Inland, Edinburg, Texas...Temple Inland Bogulusa, Louisiana...Syngenta Seed, Weatherford, Texas...Henderson Packaging-Edinburg, Texas.... Texas Melon Exchange-McAllen, Texas...Warren Produce-McAllen, Texas....Wiggins Wholesale,-Snook, Texas....Wiggins Farms,-Snook, TexasShippers Supply-Pharr, Texas...Nun hems Seeds USA-Pharr, Texas....Abbott & Cobb McAllen, Texas....W. G. Frazier & Son-San Antonio, Texas....Willhite Seed Company Poolville, Texas....C & V Supply-Mission, Texas...Gowen Company-Texas.....Hazera Seeds-McAllen, Texas....Majestic Produce-McAllen, Texas....and many more by giving their time and help during the convention. Thanks to you all so very much.

We also had some great speakers: Mark Arney & Andrea Smith from the NWPB...Dr. Benny Bruton from Lane Oklahoma Research Center speaking on biofumigation and microbiats for control of fusarium wilt in watermelons. Also from Lane Research Center Dr. Fish topic was “Watermelon, How one day may reduce cancer, lower blood pressure, and fuel your car and all at the same time. And a big thanks to Richard De Los Santos with the Texas Department of Agriculture, he spoke on watermelon promotions in Texas. Thanks to our Commissioner of Agriculture Todd Staples and the Department for their great GO TEXAN logo.

Past President Ward Thomas has been an excellent officer the last two years. Ward was always there taking care of business where he was in or out of the country. Also Ward is Chairman of Booth committee and always attending all the meetings associated with the PMA. At the Texas Convention, Ward sponsored and kept the Texas Holdum games going. Thanks to Ward for all you do.....

Paul Wiggins bought Queen Mollies Luggage for her at the annual Auction, the luggage was donated by W. G. Frazer & Sons....

Thanks to Bob Morrissey and Laurie Hofts for a great NWA Convention. Thank you all for coming to NWA, and if you did not attend, you really missed out on a lot of good watermelon information as well as a good watermelon fun time.

Thanks again to 2008 Texas Watermelon Queen Marie Fletcher, we are very proud to have you for our queen. Also welcome new 2009 Texas Watermelon Queen Mollie Bennett, she is so excited about this upcoming year working for the Association. We attended the Illiana Watermelon convention right after NWA, we always enjoy the Illiana convention. We will be attending the Florida Convention the last week of March.

Congratulations to our New 2009 President Roy Larralde, and first lady Marlene Larralde. We look forward to working with both of them... Jimmy Henderson our 1st Vice President and Paul Wiggins our 2nd Vice President..

Congratulations to all of you. We will be going back to the Embassy Suite Hotel in McAllen, Texas for the 2010 convention, January 21-24, Also we have a new web site that should be up and running real soon. Check it out. www.texaswatermelon.com Until Next Time.....

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



Laurie I love those sun-catcher earrings.....



Mollie's Family.....



Jimmy Henderson, 1st vice President Texas Watermelons Assoc. and mom enjoying the auction.



Past President Ward Thomas, Sue Thomas and current 2009 Texas Watermelon association President Roy Larralde.



Nowell Borders, NWA Chairman of the Board and Rick Linkenhoger at the Texas Auction.



Ken Mears with International Paper Company presents Mollie with a check....



Mark Dickerson presents Mollie gifts bought for her at the auction.



Macky McWhirter and Summer Keylon both present Mollie with gifts they each purchased for her.



Guess who is proud of Mollie, Troy Pennington.....



2008 Queen Marie, 2009 Queen Mollie and current Texas Watermelon Association President Roy Larralde and First Lady Marlene...



Ward Thomas with NWA Queen Brittany, Maggie Illiana queen-current NWA Queen, 2009 Texas Queen Mollie, 2008 Florida Queen Kaley, and 2008 Alabama Queen Samantha..



Past Texas Queens Lacy, Emily, Kelly, Marie and 2009 Texas Queen Mollie.



OH, This is so fun.....



Two flapper gentlemen at the NWA Reception party.



Mr.&Mrs. James Wiggins, Myron Harrison and Marie at the NWA Party.



Who are these guys anyway?????



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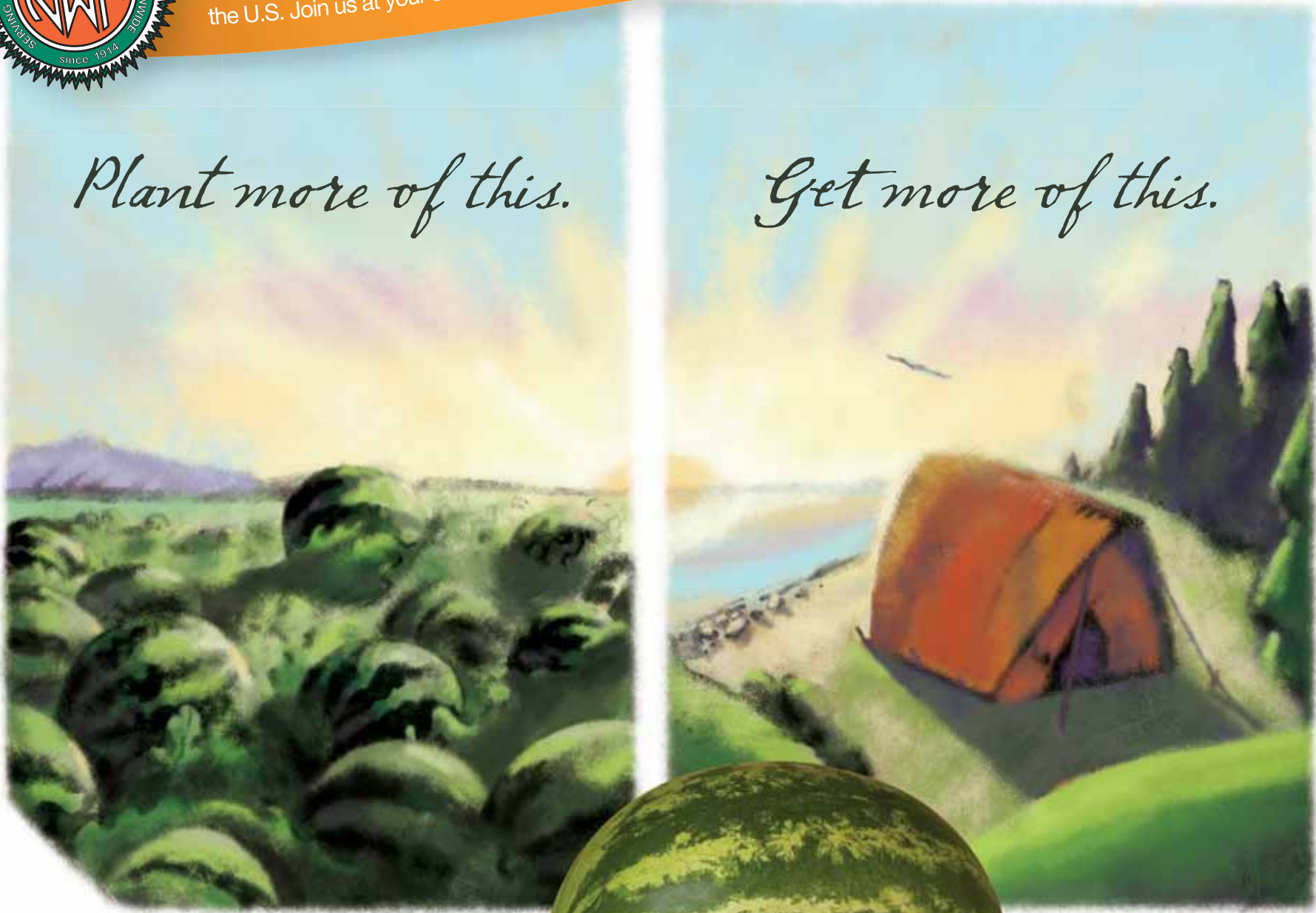
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