



## Joint Employment Can Create Potential Liabilities For Industry

Watermelon producers are vulnerable to lawsuits and potential liability under the federal law concept that they are “joint employers,” equally responsible for the wages and labor conditions of harvest and other field workers and migrant packing house workers who are actually on the payrolls of other people. These workers are entitled to many rights under federal statutes, including the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (“MSPA”) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”).

Because producers can be held jointly liable for violations of these laws, along with the crew leaders, often called “contractors,” who recruit and furnish the workers, it is imperative that producers understand the requirements and obligations of these laws in order to minimize their risk of a lawsuit and liability. An article that briefly discusses the concept of “joint employment” and reviews some requirements of MSPA and the FLSA under which violations have been asserted against watermelon producers and other growers is available on our website in the “Legislative Affairs” section under the heading “Joint Employment Issues for Growers under MSPA and the FLSA.”

## H2A Regulations Revised

On December 12, 2008, the Bush administration issued sweeping changes to the nation’s agricultural guest worker program. The changes apply to a guest worker program known as H-2A, after the visa that allows farmers to hire foreign workers on a temporary basis for field jobs they cannot fill with Americans.

Most farmers ignore the program because of red tape and delays that could cost them precious harvesting time. But, after Congress failed to revamp immigration laws and come up with a new guest worker program in 2007, the administration, seeking to attract more farmers to the program, moved forward with revisions not requiring Congressional approval.

More articles about immigration can be found at: [http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/i/immigration\\_and\\_refugees/index.html?inline=nytclassifier](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/i/immigration_and_refugees/index.html?inline=nytclassifier)

The changes, the first major ones in 20 years, include eliminating duplication among state and federal agencies in processing applications, putting in place a new wage formula the department said would be fairer to workers, and increasing fines for willfully displacing United States workers with foreign ones.

California farm officials said the changes would probably not lead them to significantly increase their use of the program. “Some changes will help us on the margins, but it doesn’t change our overall focus on

seeking legislation” to legalize existing farmworkers, said Jack King, spokesman for the California Farm Bureau Federation.

Previously, growers had to apply for workers at least 45 days before they were needed. The new rules require them to apply 60 days in advance. The new rules do not address a major issue for farmers: revising the housing requirement. Farmers have sought vouchers to help workers pay for their own accommodations rather than have to provide it for them. Some growers who have tried to build worker housing have been opposed by their local communities, and others with short-season crops find it unreasonably expensive to build housing when they require workers for only a few weeks.

Changes in the way wages are calculated would lower the current \$9.72 hourly H2A wage in California by 18%. The new rule could cause U.S. workers to be paid less than foreign workers.

Under the old rules, growers had to expend as much effort recruiting U.S. workers as foreign ones and submit detailed recruitment plans, including copies of newspaper ads, to show they could not fill their labor needs with U.S. workers. But the new rules do not require such evidence.

New safeguards would ensure that growers were complying with the law, including random audits of applications and new authority to punish violators.

“This is a program everybody acknowledges needs an overhaul,” said Craig J. Regelbrugge, co-chairman of the Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform, a trade group. “Even if regulatory reform were wildly successful and carried on to the next administration, it can’t even begin to solve the agricultural labor crisis. The bottom line is Congress is still on the hook.”

## Country of Origin Labeling - Bins and Cartons

There has been much discussion and debate about what various retailers will require in relation to country of origin labeling, now that is federal law. American consumers want to know where their fresh produce comes from. In at least one instance, the COOL labeling is required on the actual label and the packaging (bins or cartons) also.

After a complete review of the law and understanding the additional requirement from retail, the NWA Board has developed a policy that will comply with the COOL law, and will adhere to a retailer’s additional requirement. The recommendation is:

1. Print a small box on one side of the corrugated container (bin or carton).
2. Packer should place one watermelon sticker within the box

Note .. The important factor is that the packer needs to make sure that the country of origin is printed on the label.

If we can follow these two steps, you can help the industry save millions of dollars in excess corrugated package inventory and comply with COOL law and retailer requirements.



## Workers Compensation Insurance

On the home page of the NWA web site, you will see a link called NWA Insurance Services. There are numerous insurance programs that are available to our members and member companies that can save you as much as 15% off of your current premiums.

Included in those offers is a customized Workers Compensation insurance program from Odiorne Insurance, the NWA’s agency of record. The program has been written with you, our members, in mind, and can save you money in this necessary part of your business.

Cabell or John would like the opportunity to talk with you, and visit with you, to share the program, and show you first-hand how they can save you money.

And, there is an added benefit as well. For every dollar of premiums that NWA members pay for workers compensation, Odiorne will pay the NWA 1% toward advertising and promotions. Your association can benefit while you save your company money!

Please contact Cabell or John, and see what they have to offer. They are only a phone call or email away.





National Watermelon Association, Inc.  
104 East Reynolds Street, Suite 212  
Plant City, Florida 33563  
813.754.7575 fax 813.754.1118  
[www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com](http://www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com)

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*Executive Director*  
Bob Morrissey  
  
*Editor*  
Laurie J. Hofts  
  
*Layout*  
Derek Reusser  
[www.rubberneckerdesign.com](http://www.rubberneckerdesign.com)

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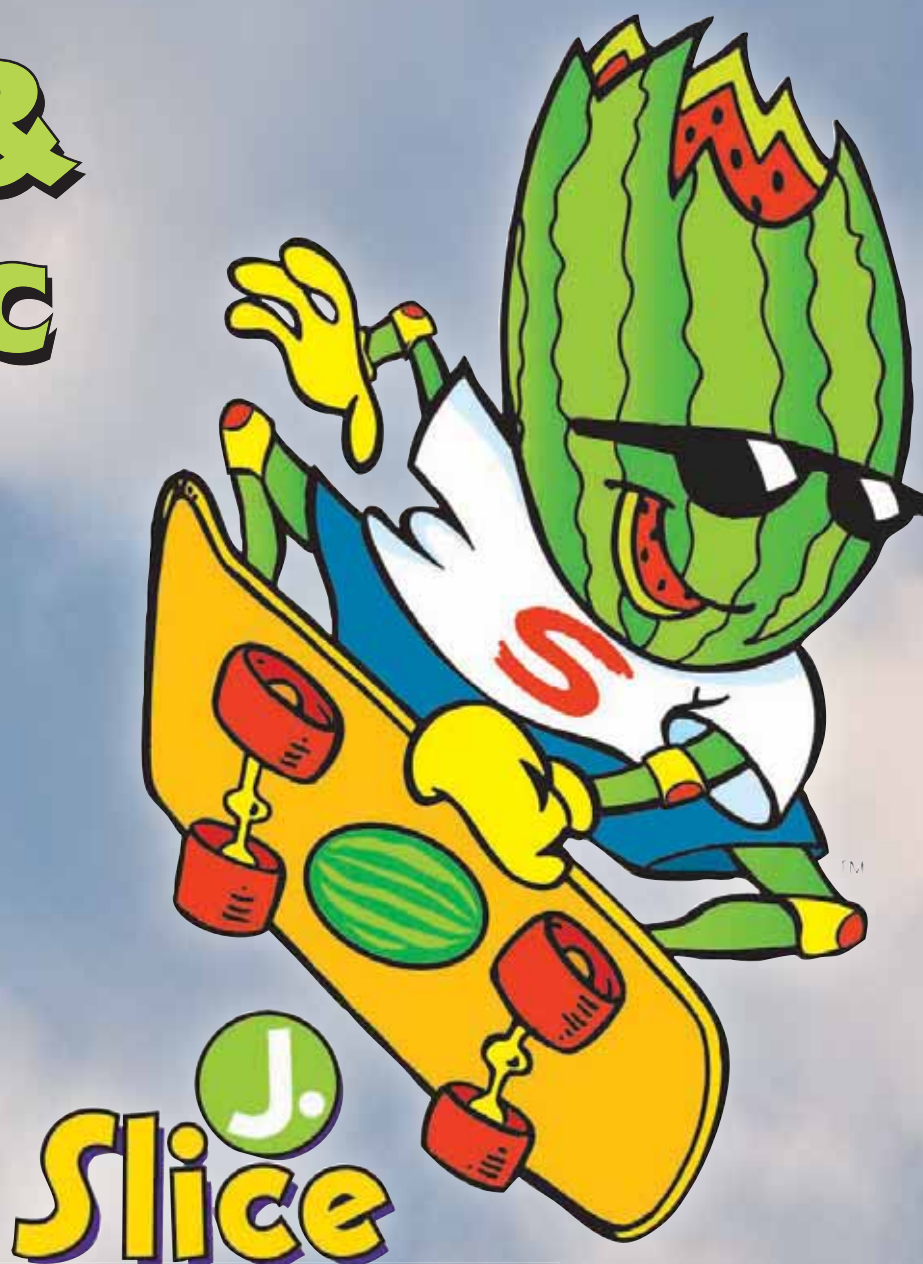
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# USDA Scientist creating new watermelon products

USDA Scientist creating new watermelon products  
*Dr. Wayne Fish, ARS Lab , Lane, OK*

Watermelon contains large quantities of (at least) two chemicals that can contribute to human health and well being. The first is lycopene, one of the most potent antioxidants of the carotenoids. Diets rich in

lycopene have been correlated with a reduced risk of prostate cancer, for example. The second chemical is citrulline. This naturally occurring amino acid functions in the detoxification of catabolic ammonia (urea production) and is a key element in the production of the vasodialator, nitric oxide. We have developed scalable processes to produce each of these chemicals for the neutraceuticals market. Furthermore, these processes are integrated so that each compound is independently removed in sequence, and the terminal waste stream of “sugar water” is employed to produce ethanol biofuel by fermentation.

The uniqueness of the watermelon lycopene process is that it produces lycopene still packaged inside a membrane to form a chromoplast. Thus, the lycopene is unchanged from the way it occurs in the watermelon. These isolated chromoplasts are the most natural form of lycopene commercially available and are readily absorbed from the digestive system. About 200 grams of lycopene per 10 tons of whole watermelons are obtained by our process. A beverage company will use watermelon lycopene-containing chromoplasts prepared by our process in a natural health drink it plans to produce and market.

We subsequently developed a scalable process to

produce citrulline from the waste stream of the lycopene production. We also adjusted the process to obtain citrulline from the watermelon rind as well. Combined, these processes can produce around 20 kilograms of citrulline per 10 tons of whole watermelons. This technology is presently under review for patenting.

The waste stream from the lycopene and citrulline integrated production processes contains around 10% fermentable sugars while the waste stream from the production of citrulline from rind produces a waste stream that contains ~3% fermentable sugars. We have investigated the fermentation parameters of these waste streams to optimize their use in fermentations employing other feedstocks. By employing the juice processing waste stream as diluent, feedstock supplement, and nitrogen supplement in the fermentation of the primary feedstock, molasses, a savings of ~55% in potable water, ~15% savings in molasses consumption, and elimination of the need to purchase nitrogen supplements for the fermentation are realized. The juice from 10 tons of watermelons would ultimately produce about 85 gallons of ethanol. A manuscript describing the fermentation of watermelon juice in its various processing states is under review for publication.

# President Obama on Immigration

With the inauguration of our 44th President, it is important for our industry to know his stance on immigration, and the needed reform of our country’s broken system. Following are President Obama’s comments in a recent interview:

“America has always been a nation of immigrants. Over the years, millions of people have come here in the hope that in America, you can make it if you try. Each successful wave of immigrants has contributed to our country’s rich culture, economy, and spirit. Like immigrants that came before them, today’s immigrants will shape their own destinies and enrich our country.”

“Nonetheless, our current immigration system has been broken for far too long. We need comprehensive immigration reform, not just piecemeal efforts. We must work together to pass immigration reform in a way that unites this country, not in a way that divides us by playing on our worst instincts and fears. We are committed to pursuing tough, practical, and humane reform in the first year of the new administration.”

“We cannot continue to allow people to enter the United States undetected, undocumented, and unchecked. The American people are a welcoming and generous people, but those that enter our country’s borders illegally, and those who employ them, dis-

respect the rule of the law. We need to secure our borders, and support additional personnel, infrastructure, and technology on the border and at our ports of entry. We need to do more to promote economic development in migrant-sending nations, to reduce incentives to come to the United States illegally. And we need to crack down on employers who hire undocumented immigrants. It’s a problem when we only enforce our laws against the immigrants themselves, with raids that are ineffective, tear apart families, and leave people detained without adequate access to counsel. We realize that employers need a method to verify whether their employees are legally eligible to work in the United States, and we will ensure that our system is accurate, fair to legal workers, safeguards people’s privacy, and cannot be used to discriminate against workers.”

“We should fix the dysfunctional immigration

bureaucracy that hampers family reunification, the cornerstone of our immigration policy for years. Given the importance of both keeping families together and supporting American businesses, we will increase the number of immigration visas for family members of people living here and for immigrants who meet the demand for jobs that employers cannot fill, as long as appropriate labor market protections and standards are in place.”

“For the millions living here illegally but otherwise playing by the rules, we must require them to come out of the shadows and get right with the law. We support a system that requires undocumented immigrants who are in good standing to pay a fine, pay taxes, learn English, and go to the back of the line for the opportunity to become citizens. They are our neighbors, and we can help them become full tax-paying, law-abiding, productive members of society.”

# Risk Management Made Simple

USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) recently released an online tool that enables growers to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of their businesses, as well as any threats that exist. In addition, users receive customized feedback on their operations courtesy of a risk management checklist.

The new resource features four modules that comprise information gleaned from leading Land Grant Universities and government agencies. Risk Management Planning, Better Marketing Planning, New Enterprise Planning, and Farm Planning Library cover a wide range of business issues relevant to growers.

In order to receive a customized analysis of their operations, users complete two exercises which assess their risk management situation. The Risk Management Checklist is a three-page list of questions designed to stimulate conversation among the leadership teams of businesses. The second, which is a planning exercise widely used by companies in many industries, is the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis.

The risk management website was developed over the past year by a team of growers, Extension educators, risk management education consultants, the head of the National Agricultural Law Center at the University of Arkansas, and RMA professionals.

Access the new website at [Farm-Risk-Plans.USDA.gov](http://Farm-Risk-Plans.USDA.gov).

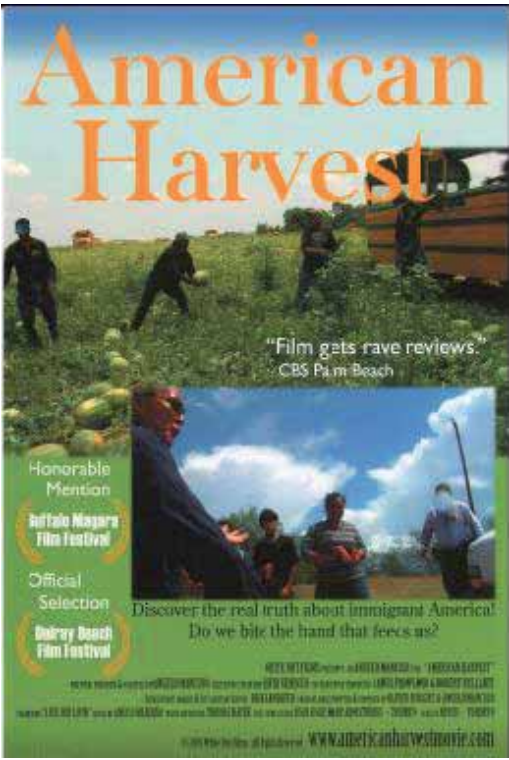
# Service Recognition

To meet a person that has worked for the same company, corporation or government agency for 30+ years is a true testament of their commitment, dedication and service to the organization. It stands as a symbol of where the organization has come from, and where it is headed. It has been looked after through careful thought and nurturing by so many, especially those that have served it well for so many years.

In organizations such as the NWA, that level of service is very apparent, with due recognition warranted to many Board members that have served for 30+ years. In addition to our Lifetime Council members, we currently have thirteen (13) Executive Council members that have served the NWA for 30+ years, and they are:

- Percy Bunch of Murfreesboro, NC
- A.R. Chapman of Arcadia, FL
- Gordon Etheridge of Raleigh, NC
- Gerald Funderburk of Jefferson, SC
- Donald Hales of Salisbury, MD
- Raymon Land of Branford, FL
- Buddy Leger of Cordele, GA
- Wallace Luffman of Salisbury, NC
- Arnold Mack of Lake Wales, FL
- Gerald Mann of McAllen, TX
- Joe Marinaro of Ft. Pierce, FL

All of us “thank you” for your years of leadership, commitment and care for the NWA, and look forward to carrying on the traditions that you have set for us.





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# National Report

This is our last printing before our National Convention in Charleston, SC. Make your plans to be there! It is sure to be fun and educational. Indulge yourself in some of America’s tastiest food. NWA President Nowell, his wife Ranell, Brittanie and I look forward to seeing you there!

**NWPB SPONSORS TO COLORADO SPRINGS**

Our busy tour picks up in the beautiful state of Colorado. We were sponsored to a grand opening of a King Sooper in Colorado Springs by the National Watermelon Promotion Board. We were soon greeted by Joanna, the beautiful daughter of Kenton Kidd, Retail Merchandiser for the NWPB. She had gift baskets filled with native items from the state of Colorado for each of us. She treated us to a tour of the Garden of the Gods, later a tour of Cave of the Winds. A delightful person, she was a pleasure to meet. Thanks to Joanna for an afternoon of sight-seeing!

We were in the new King Sooper for two days, with samples, recipes, coloring books, and autographed pictures of Brittanie to pass out. We could not stay up with the crowd. Kevin Olson, District Manager, said it was the busiest grand opening King Sooper had ever had! A record amount of watermelons were sold! Special thanks to Mark Arney, and NWPB for sponsoring us to King Sooper! What a huge success!

**MAR-DEL WATERMELON SPONSORS GRAND EVENTS**

Our National Queen Brittanie suffered a terrible loss, that of her loving Daddy, Wyatt Faircloth in August. She appreciates all the loving kindness shown her and her family during this difficult time. She also joins NWA and me in thanking Emily Frey, first runner-up helping out in her absence.

Emily certainly had a very busy time while in the Mar-Del area, and was treated royally! Queen Christina and Allison welcomed her warmly. Thanks to Will Hales for dinner and for all of Candice’s help. You both helped save the day! Thanks Allison for all the efforts in making this promotion so successful! Some of her appearances included a live morning television show in Baltimore at WJZ-13, an early morning show at WMDT TV in Salisbury, WBOC coverage from the beach, radio coverage at Froggy 99 in Salisbury, and numerous newspapers. She did in store promotions at Safeway in Baltimore, Harris Teeter in Delaware, and Whole Foods in Annapolis. During most of the week we were also joined by Florida Queen Kaley, and Debra, and Alabama Queen Samantha and Cindy.

We enjoyed the annual Rehoboth Boardwalk Beach Promotion. The girls visited the Mayor’s office in Rehoboth. We had lots of help and lunch from Mar-Del President Doug Corey and his family. Thanks Doug for the great lunch! It was soon off to Crisfield for Slices on the City docks! Free watermelon, popcorn, and movie...hard to beat! We had a great time at the Old Mill Crab House with at least thirty members joining us. We attended a drop in at the home of Brent and Audrey Serman’s home. Thanks for your hospitality! The girls were a hit at the Laurel Auction block for their annual fund raising auction. It was great to see everyone. Thanks to Paul Sawyer for lunch in Laurel.

The Annapolis Riverfront watermelon event was a huge success, with loads of people attending. We had great participation from the Mar-Del members. The day was complete with eating contest and lots and lots of watermelon. Thanks to the Maryland Department of Ag for this event and the following day for the second annual Ag Day at Whole Foods in Annapolis. This was again a huge success!

It was Emily’s 21st Birthday and Whole Foods helped her celebrate, with a great watermelon cake and flowers. The culmination of our trip was the annual Melon Ball, hosted by Arnold, Brenda and Chandler Mack. All the Queens and Coordinators surprised Emily with another party! You can safely say a good time was had by all!

This promotion was filled with lots of media coverage, early mornings, late nights and loads of fun! Thank you again Allison for all your work. Thanks for the Mar-Del Watermelon Association for sponsoring us!

**LAND WATERMELONS, SIX L’S and JACKSON FARMING SPONSOR**

Morning found Emily and I headed for the Richmond, Virginia area for the Carytown Watermelon Festival. This is the biggest festival in Richmond. They estimated 110,000 people attending this year. We joined the Kroger team in Carytown. Bob Coates always does an excellent job setting up our promotions. This year was no exception. A full page ad in the Richmond Times, complete with photo and schedule. We worked with Fran Orphan, Kroger’s Produce Coordinator, and Store Manager, Rod Brooks, serving the Carytown visitors. Emily and Rod were both interviewed by the Fox Richmond station, great coverage! Emily had autographed pictures and Kroger balloons, for everyone. We sold water with all proceeds going to the Food Bank. It was a great day!

The next two days we covered Kroger stores in the Richmond area. Fran Orphan passed on the word of Emily’s birthday and the store had more cake and flowers for her! The Kroger shoppers loved her as she helped the customers pick the perfect melon, served samples, and passed out recipes. Thank You Emily for all your hard work, we appreciate you! Special thanks to Raymon Land, Freddie Ellis, and Brent Jackson for sponsoring us to Kroger.

**MIDWEST MARKETING, WABASH VALLEY GROWERS, AND MOUZIN BROTHERS SPONSOR**

Brittanie and I were sponsored to the Lexington, Kentucky area for some outstanding Kroger promotions. It was a grand reopening. We thank Randy and Jim at Midwest Marketing, Anita at Wabash Valley Growers, and Dennis at Mouzin Brothers for sponsoring us. Frank Polion with Kroger had us all set. We were joined one of the days by Maggie Bailey, IWA Queen and her coordinator Beth Frey. We enjoyed our time with you! Both girls served the delicious samples of Indiana watermelon, passed out recipes, and nutrition information to all the Kroger shoppers! Special thanks to our sponsors and Kroger!

**BROWNING & SONS SPONSORS**

We were delighted to be sponsored by Browning & Sons to the Kid’s Expo at the civic center in Albany, Georgia. We were joined by Georgia Watermelon Queen, Hannah Jones and coordinator Julie Daughtrey. We worked the Harvey’s exhibit booth. The first hour of the Kids Expo is for kids with special needs. We were so busy... coloring books, stickers and plenty of fruit for these kids. It was an awesome day! Special thanks to Lisa Overman and Michael Purvis with Harvey’s and to Browning and Sons for sponsoring.

**WASHINGTON DC, UNITED FRESH PRODUCE ASSOCIATION**

NWA joined with the United Fresh Produce Association in the largest public policy event of the year held in Washington DC in September. Our National and all our State Queens, and coordinators were joined in attendance by several of our NWA members. By joining with UFPA and other Fruit and Vegetable industry, we are able to have a larger voice with our Congressional leaders, and officials at the USDA as we express concerns facing our industry. The kick off event was the Fresh Festival on Capital Hill. Chef Joe Poon joined Executive Director Bob Morrissey, our Queen Brittanie, and all the State Queens and coordinators in participating and serving at the reception. We certainly had the most visible booth area, with our gigantic watermelon serving as a back drop, the girls and Joe; it was destined to be a hit!

Brittanie and I visited our Georgia Senators and Representatives. It is very beneficial to our industry to voice our concerns to our elected officials. This is an outstanding opportunity to do just that! Our promotion ended with a tour of the East Wing of the White House. It was a real pleasure to have so many of our NWA members on hand for this conference.

**NWPB SPONSORS US TO PMA**

We were pleased to be sponsored to PMA again this year by the National Watermelon Promotion Board. Brittanie and I enjoyed working the booth with Mark, Gordon, Leslie, Stephanie, Jason and Andrea. What a fantastic team. PMA is an awesome opportunity for those in the industry. This year’s convention had over 2,450 booths, 800 exhibiting companies, and an estimated attendance of 17,000 industry leaders. All the State Queens were also able to attend. This is a great experience for all of them, to get a better feel for the scope of the industry. It is always a treat to get to visit our people, and all the retailers we have had the opportunity to work with this year as well as years past.

NWPB also had Chef Joe Poon to create excitement with his fabulous work! They also featured Katie Brown preparing recipes. Stephanie just continues to outdo herself with the annual industry party. It was awesome, entertainment and music at the BB King Blues Club. Thanks Stephanie! Special thanks to NWPB for all that you do, and for sponsoring us to PMA.

**DELTA FRESH, JOE SIMMONS, CHRIS GREENE, AND PINEVIEW PEANUT & GRAIN SPONSOR**

Brittanie was welcomed to her hometown of Pineview, Georgia for their annual Harvest Festival and parade. We thank Jarrett Carr for driving her and furnishing the car. It’s a very small town with lots of heart, and they love our Brittanie. Following the parade she mingled with the crowd and passed out stickers. She was on hand to handle all the drawing for the various prizes. They were home town proud to have our National Queen back in Pineview! Special thanks to Chris and Paul at Delta fresh, Joe Simmons of Simmons Watermelons, Bob McLeod at Pineview Peanut and Grain, and Mr. Chris Greene for making this possible.

On behalf of NWA, and myself I would like to thank Brittanie for the fantastic job she has done for us as our National Queen! We both look forward to seeing you in Charleston!

Eleanor Bullock,  
NWA Promotion Coordinator  
229.273.8638 office, 229.322.9933 cell  
Email Eleanor@websign.net



Brittanie is busy at King Sooper in Colorado Springs



Kevin Olson, District Manager welcomes Brittanie



Joanna and Brittanie tour Garden of the Gods



Christina, Emily, Samantha, and Little Miss in Laurel



Mar-Del Group gathers at the Old Mill



Mar-Del President Doug Corey and his family on the Boardwalk



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# National Pictures



On the set at WMDT in Salisbury



Emily thanks Arnold and Chandler Mack for the Melon Ball



Happy 21st Emily!



Whole Foods Welcome



On the air at the Carytown Festival



Emily poses with Fran and Rod



Busy Kroger Shoppers



Another Cake for Emily in Richmond



Kroger Kids love Watermelon in Lexington



Beth and the girls get a big thank you from Kroger in Lexington



Brittanie is 21! Congratulations!



Hannah and Brittanie say Goodness Snakes Alive at the Kids Expo!



busy day in Albany at the Kids Expo!



NWA 2nd Vice President Brent Harrison and Chandler Mack at the United Conference



Brittanie visits with US Representative Jack Kingston in DC



A visit with Senator Johnny Isakson, and Senator Saxby Chambliss



Also Representative Jim Marshall



All Our Lovely Girls at the White House



NWPB shows off their new booth at PMA



Mark poses with all the girls



NWA President Nowell Borders and all our girls



Talking Heads? Is this a new variety?



Parade Ready in Pineview with Driver Jarrett Carr



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# Alabama Report

Greetings everyone from our Alabama Watermelon Association and our Queen Samantha,

As of this issue of the Vineline, our queen Samantha will have successfully completed her 2008 reign. There are many accolades I would lay upon Samantha and the first one being how superbly she handled the requirements of being our Alabama Watermelon Queen. Samantha is an extremely dedicated young lady in every aspect of her daily life. She holds dear to her heart her belief in God, her belief in her self, her belief in her family and her belief in performing to the best of her ability. These are qualities every young person should strive toward.

October 24th – 27th Samantha and I traveled to Orlando, Florida, for the fantastic PMA. We had a blast seeing our friends and meeting new people from all over the world! Samantha did a superb job representing our AWA as she handed out personalized watermelon huggies and autograph cards, smiling at every opportunity for pictures, and making new friends in every aisle, during the very successful PMA. I would like to personally thank the following people: Jim Mastropietro of International Paper, Cheryl Hicks of PCA, Myron Harrison of Temple Inland, Terry Jones of McMelon, and Kelly Marinaro of Sunny Fresh. The words are not easy to find so please know how much each of you mean to Samantha and me.

I asked our Samantha for one last statement for the Vineline. Her response, “ ‘The 2008-2009 Alabama Watermelon Queen is Samantha Leigh Dunn.’ Wow! I must say those are the most important words I have ever heard! This year has been the most unbelievable, unforgettable, and MAGICAL year of my life! My greatest thanks are sent to my whole new family, the Alabama Watermelon Association and everyone else involved in making my year as your queen so amazing. Please know that if it were not for this wonderful opportunity I would not have been able to experience all the MAGICAL things in the “Watermelon World”. I look forward to seeing everyone at our AWA Convention and NWA Convention. THANK YOU AND MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL!”

Samantha and I are looking forward to seeing everyone during the upcoming conventions and most certainly at our National Convention at the Francis Marion Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina. Once again, Samantha, you have been an awesome queen for our association and we are so very proud of you! Good luck at National’s!

Cindy Vaughn  
AWA Promotion Coordinator  
352-314-5988 home  
407-448-3780 cell



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Thank you to Will and Candice Hales for their sponsorship to Hales Farms during Queen Samantha's reign.



During PMA Samantha played "Wheel of Fortune" with Texas Queen Marie. I wonder what prize Samantha earned playing the wheel. Ask her!



While at PMA Samantha visited with Georgia Queen Hannah...



and Mar-Del Queen Christina. All our lovely queens had a great time in Orlando!



Our AWA Queens always take the time to visit with Myron Harrison of Temple Inland. In our group shot we have from left to right: Michael Daum, Angela Barron, Adam Fugate, Queen Samantha, Mr. Myron, Perry Rodriguez, and Bob Clayton.



PMA would not be complete without a visit with AWA Queen Samantha and Jim Mastropietro of International Paper.



Samantha always has something going on with Stephanie Simek, NWPB!



Thanks you to Gordon Hunt and the entire staff of the NWPB for a delightful evening at BB King's after a long day at the PMA.



Our Queen Samantha and Mr. Kelly Marinaro at BB King's, Pointe Orlando. A special thank you to Kelly and Jean for their continued support of our AWA Queen program.



Queen Samantha and Bob Morrissey, Executive Director, NWA.



Queen Samantha had a great time visiting with George Humes and Jay Jones, Sakata Seed, during PMA.



What is this? The Blue Man Group? No, no, no! It is the "What's in your pallet" duo with our Queen Samantha!



We never know whom we will meet while visiting with Cheryl Hicks, PCA. Cheryl, thank you for introducing Samantha to Steve Marinello, Seald Sweet. Steve, great booth at PMA!



Our Queen Samantha loved the "Go Bananas!" display furnished by the PMA, do you?!

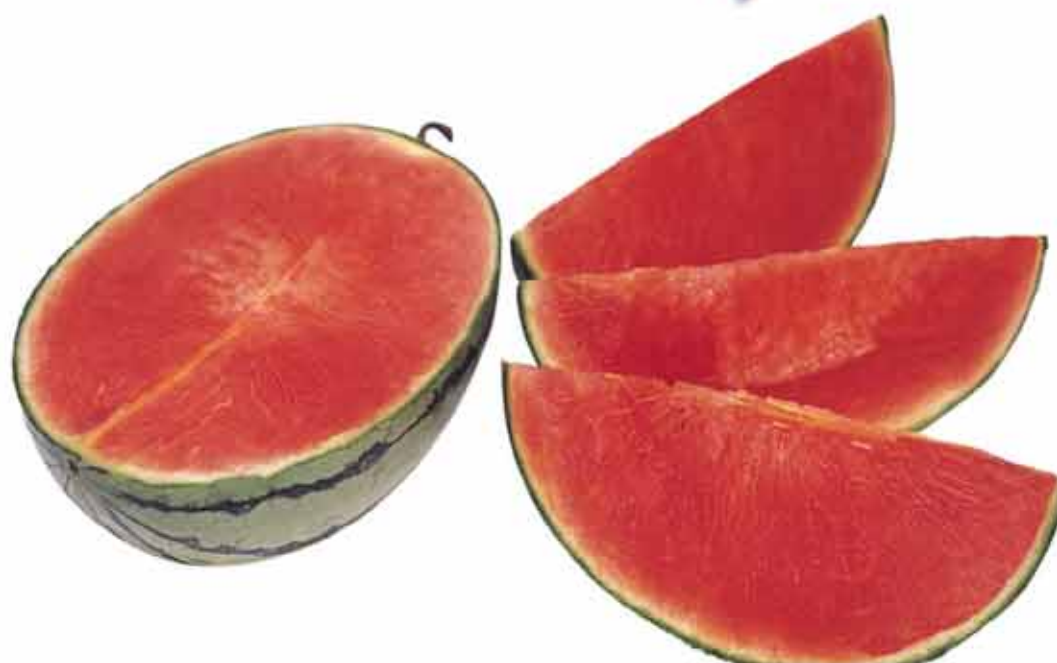


Queen Samantha, you have been an awesome queen this past year!



Our Alabama Watermelon Association wishes you the best of luck at the National Watermelon Convention!





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# Florida Report

Watermelon Greetings from the Sunshine State!  
Hope everyone had a safe and wonderful holiday season.

This year Queen Kaley and I have traveled all over the world promoting Florida watermelons. We have been blessed through our wonderful sponsors to travel not only in the state of Florida but all the way to Canada promoting watermelons. Thanks to our sponsors for such a great year. Queen Kaley has done over 125 plus promotions through out her reign and has represented our association with great pride, dignity, and dedication, always willing to go and promote that watermelon product. I am personally proud of Kaley this year for all that she has done for the watermelon association and will always cherish our great memories together. FWA wishes you the best of luck as you compete in February for the national title. We are very proud of what you have done for FWA. I have been really blessed the last two years as your promotions coordinator to have had two wonderful queens. 2008 Queen Kaley and 2007 Queen Tara. What a wonderful job they both have done for our association.

August, Queen Kaley and I traveled to Delaware for the Queen Tour. What a memorable experience Kaley and I will always have from not making your connecting flight due to bad weather to not having luggage. Thanks to a very kind and wonderful President Paul Sawyer for being at the airport to greet us after a long day and night with no luggage or makeup. A special thanks to Travis Hastings and Will Hales for a wonderful dinner. Thanks to our sponsors Melon 1 for a wonderful time and memorable promotion.

In October PMA was held in Orlando, Florida. What a huge success it was this year. Hopefully everyone got a chance to stop by FWA booth to play “Plinko”. Secretary/Treasure Patty and I would like thank everybody that stopped by to give us a helping hand. A huge thank you goes out to Carr and Jane Hussey “Sweet Mama Produce” for all the wonderful gifts that you provided for us to make our “Plinko” game a success. Special thanks goes out to our President, Paul Sawyer for helping Patty on Monday tear down and load the game. I heard it was fun.

If you are planning on traveling in the next few months, don’t forget to take a tour of our website [www.fwatravel.com](http://www.fwatravel.com) and get travel discounts for all of your travel needs.

Mark you calendar for the 41st Annual Florida Watermelon Convention, March 27-29 at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota in Sarasota, Florida. President Paul Sawyer and his wife Jackie, Patty and I have been working really hard this month for an exciting watermelon event. Our theme is going to be Christmas – Jingle Belle Jamboree. Check out the details on the Florida Watermelon Association website at [www.flfwa.com](http://www.flfwa.com). Hope to see you there!

Debra Harrison  
Florida Watermelon Promotions Coordinator  
Email:[debrathreel@earthlink.net](mailto:debrathreel@earthlink.net)  
Home Phone: 863-494-1163  
Cell Phone 863-990-0675



These ladies are prettier than Vanna White, Queen Brittanie and Eleanor.



Carr Hussey and his family at PMA in Orlando.

Thanks Queen Kaley for all the good times and hard work this year.



FWA Kaley at Longo’s with the employees at Rutherford store.



Way to go! Queen Kaley at the watermelon eating contest



Thanks Stephanie and NWPB for a wonderful year!



Queen Kaley passing out slices of watermelons at Wal-Mart.



Kaley first pitch on the baseball field in Leesburg....  
“Watch out”.



Queen Kaley visiting with Mary Jones in Indiana.



Always a pleasure visiting with Arnold and Chandler Mack in Delaware.



Visiting Congressman Adam Putnam in Washington, D.C.

Queen Kaley at the Capitol.



Florida Watermelon Booth in Orlando at PMA.



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Mark Arney  
Executive Director



## Gathering Watermelon Histories - USPS Watermelon Stamp Efforts

The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) has spotted a new opportunity to keep watermelon top-of-mind with consumers. We are working on a proposal to the United States Postal Service to design a watermelon stamp.

In order to be eligible the subject needs to meet the criteria of being a real American icon, and watermelon is just that. We're collecting history, stories, images and photographs that make the case of watermelon being an American favorite.

If you have any information you'd like to share to help build the case please let us know. We'd love to include facts and history from every growing area.



## USDA Announces New Board Members

Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer recently announced the appointment of two producers, two handlers, six importers and one public member to serve on the National Watermelon Promotion Board. They will serve three-year terms beginning Jan. 1, 2009 and ending on Dec. 31, 2011.

Chandler Mack, of Babson Park, Fla., District One, has been reappointed as a producer member. Reappointed importer members are: Jesus Chuy Lopez, Rio Rico, Ariz. and Alan M. Guzi, Delray Beach, Fla.

Jim Barfield, Immokalee, Fla., District One, is a newly appointed producer member. Newly appointed handler members are: Jean Marinaro, Vero Beach, Fla. and Stephen Ross Nichols, Lakeland, Fla.

Newly appointed importer members are: Jeffery D. Fawcett, McAllen, Texas; James Glenn Henderson Jr., Edinburg, Texas; Les Hefner, McAllen, Texas and Dale DeBerry Jr., Boerne, Texas.

Patrick J. O'Connor, Mason, Mich., is a newly appointed public member.

The producer members were nominated by producers, the handler members were nominated by handlers and the public member was nominated by the National Watermelon Promotion Board. More information about the research and promotion programs can be found at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/rpb.html>.

## News from the National Watermelon Promotion Board

### Board Meeting in Orlando, Florida

Our fall board meeting was well attended last month. For those who were unable to attend we again began the meeting with a crisis communication training session facilitated by Clarence and Ellen Jones.

The following day we had our full board meeting where we showed the annual DVD, showcasing the year's activities that included retail promotions, the Katie Brown partnership, in-flight media, educational outreach and international marketing efforts, to name a few topics. If you would like a copy of the DVD let us know.

NWPB's spring board meeting will be held in conjunction with the National Watermelon Association's annual convention in Charleston, South Carolina. Our meeting will be on Saturday, February 21 from 1:30pm to 4:30pm. Contact Rebekah Dossett at (877) 599-9595 or by email at [rdossett@watermelon.org](mailto:rdossett@watermelon.org) if you have any questions regarding the meeting.



## A Million Cooks - All About Food from Farm to Table



The NWPB is excited about our recent affiliation with a new online food network called A Million Cooks. com. This website features a network of over 170 cooking experts.

Interested in learning about local foods, like watermelon? Taking a cooking class? Then check out AMillionCooks.com. While you're there, sign up for the "Daily Dish" email, which is a 1-minute audio program featuring Chef John Ash. You can access the "Daily Dish" online or via your mobile phone Monday through Friday. Hear useful food and cooking tips from one of the country's top chefs.

## U.S. Watermelon in Mexico:

During the past months and weeks, U.S. watermelons were available in the Mexican market. In Guadalajara the warehouse that imported them sold the product to Wal-Mart and other warehouses.

Our retail merchandising company in Mexico, Grupo PM, supported COSTCO's U.S. watermelon sales with in-store promotions. A total of 31 demonstrations giving away our Spanish language materials and featured watermelon POS provided some very good results: a sales increase of 56% during the promotional period!

Grupo PM also decorated 15 warehouses that had U.S. watermelons available in Mexico City and Guadalajara, and distributed POS materials to other warehouses handling the U.S. product.



Promotions in Mexico



More promotions in Mexico

## Watermelon MarketPlace Accepting Listings Now!

Discover today the place where buyers and sellers can easily find and market watermelon industry products and services!

Why list on the MarketPlace:

- It's free, fast and easy!
- Buyers, including retailers, brokers and industry members will come to the site for business solutions
- Find new contacts and business opportunities

Who can list on the MarketPlace:

- Watermelon growers, handlers and brokers
- Fresh-cut suppliers
- Concentrate manufacturers
- Bin and merchandising companies
- Seed and crop protection suppliers
- Label and packaging companies
- And more!



## Consumer Purchase Behavior Study

The new Rose Research study has been completed and we have the results posted online in the Industry Member section.

The purpose of the 2008 study was as follows:

- Understand the dynamics operating in the watermelon category - - between both summer and winter purchasing/non-purchasing.

- Measure consumer awareness of watermelon health benefits.

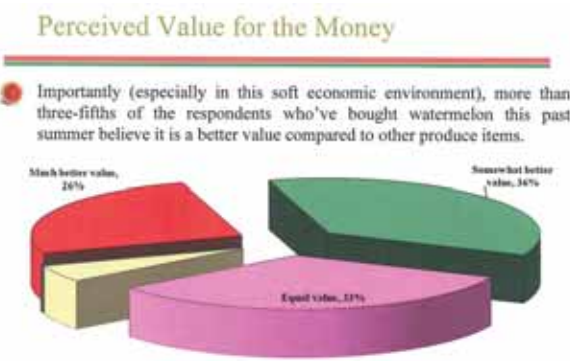
- Determine the affect the economy has on watermelon purchasing habits.

- Update the attitudes and behavioral practices of consumers since the last project was conducted in 2006.

The affect of the current economic environment is certainly important in relation to consumer purchase behavior.

The study found that at least three-quarters of the respondents agree that they are paying more attention to prices (including food products) and cutting back on expenditures due to the current economic climate.

When looking at consumers' perceived value for the money, importantly (especially in this soft economic environment), more than three-fifths of the respondents who've bought watermelon this past summer believe it is a better value compared to other produce items.







*Thinking Summer?  
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of watermelon  
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Watermelon is the star ingredient of so many creative dishes and healthy lifestyles now.

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So keep watermelon in stock year-round. Thanks to continued growth in imports, there's more availability in the cooler months.

We'll help you sell more watermelon throughout the year with special support programs.

Visit the Retailer section of [Watermelon.org](http://Watermelon.org)





# Georgia Report

Georgia’s Queen Hannah Jones has had a busy year and has done a good job for us. We would like to say a big THANK YOU to Browning and Sons for sponsoring us again to a Harvey’s John Boy and Billy Grilling Contest In-store promotion in Fitzgerald, GA. The Harvey’s team is beginning to feel like family to us! They are big supporters to our watermelon queens year after year.

In October Hannah and I were off to Orlando, FL for PMA. We enjoyed our new Georgia Pavilion at the show where we had a lot of our watermelon family join us. Thank you Promotion Board for the wonderful NWPB party. Also, thank you Temple Inland for the special dinner while in Orlando. The attendance was high at the show this year and Hannah worked hard greeting new people.

At the beginning of December, Hannah and I enjoyed our trip to Jekyll Island to the Annual Farm Bureau Convention. GWA has an exhibit booth at the convention every year and many of the Farm Bureau members look forward to having their picture made with the Queens every year. Thank you GA Department of Agriculture for the meal in the Hospitality Room in Jekyll.

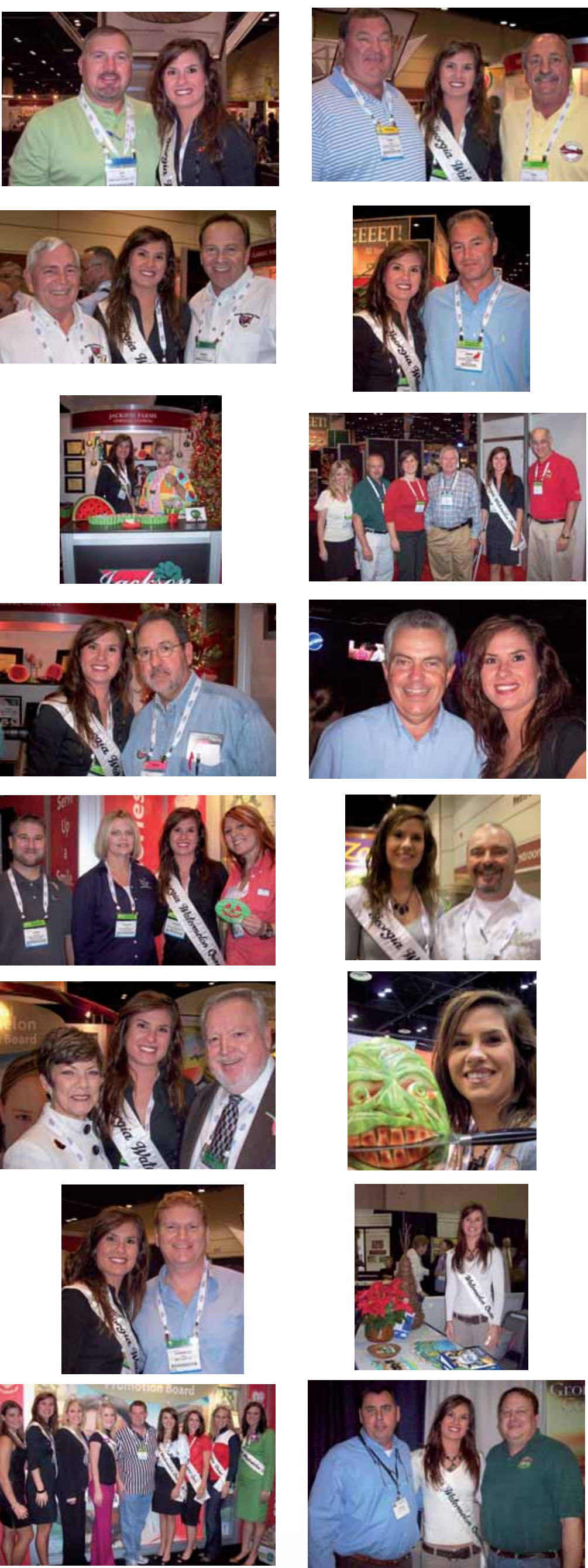
As we wrap up our year we would like to share our 2008 tour with you:

- Feb 21 - GA State Capitol Visit - Atlanta
  - Cordele Chamber Legislative Fish Fry - Atlanta
- March 12 - Ag Celebration Kick-Off Week - Atlanta
- April 11-13 - NWPB Seminar Training - Orlando, FL
- May 7 - Sutherland’s Food Show - Forrest Park
- May 13 - Sailplane Dinner - Cordele
- May 15 - Education Day/Farm Tour - Butler
- May 30 - WALB Noon Show - Albany
- May 31 - Harvey’s In-store - Richmond Hill
- June 4-8 - Adelily Festival - Adel
  - Community Center Day In the Park - Adel
  - Adel Nursing Home - Adel
- June 14-21 - Ribbon Cutting - Cordele
  - Kiwanis Fishing Rodeo - Cordele
  - Taste of Melon - Cordele
  - WALB Noon Show - Cordele
  - Cordele Library - Cordele
  - First Methodist Daycare - Cordele
  - First Baptist Daycare - Cordele
  - WSST Noon Show - Cordele
  - Wal-Mart In-store - Cordele
  - Parade - Cordele
  - Farm Bureau Luncheon - Cordele
  - Big Melon - Cordele
  - Seed Spit - Cordele
- June 26-29 - A & P In-store - Toronto Canada
  - Sobeys In-store - Halifax Nova Scotia
- July 3-4 - Stone Mountain Parade - Stone Mountain
- July 4 - Agrirama - Tifton
- July 8 - Education Day/Farm Tour - Cordele
- July 19-20 - GA Mountain Fair - Hiawassee
- July 19 - Whole Foods In-store - Atlanta
  - Hero for Children - Atlanta
- July 23-25 - Kroger In-store - Indianapolis
- July 26 - Harvey’s In-store - Ft. Valley
- Aug 1-2 - Tom Watson Brown Festival - Thomson
- Aug 2 Gov. Sonny Perdue Fish Fry -Perry
- Aug 16 - Triathlon - Cordele
- Aug 23 - Kroger In-store - Macon
- Sept 6 - Harvey’s Children’s Expo - Albany
- Sept 10-12 - Capitol Hill Legislative Visits - Washington D.C.
  - United Food Show - Washington D.C.
- Sept 27 - Harvey’s In-store - Fitzgerald
- Oct 24-27 - P M A Trade Show - Orlando, FL
- Dec 7-10 - Farm Bureau Convention - Jekyll Island

Thank you to everyone that has made this wonderful year possible!

Don’t forget to contact the GWA office at 706-845-8575 or visit our website at <http://www.georgiawatermelonassociation.org/Convention/convention.htm> which will take you directly to our conference page to make your reservations for our 2009 Annual Convention to be held in Cordele, GA at The Lake Blackshear Resort. Feel free to book online to make your reservation more convenient.

Sincerely,  
Julie Akins Daughtrey  
Promotion Coordinator  
P. O. Box 2278 Dalton,GA 30722  
770-842-3309  
akinsjulie1@alltel.net





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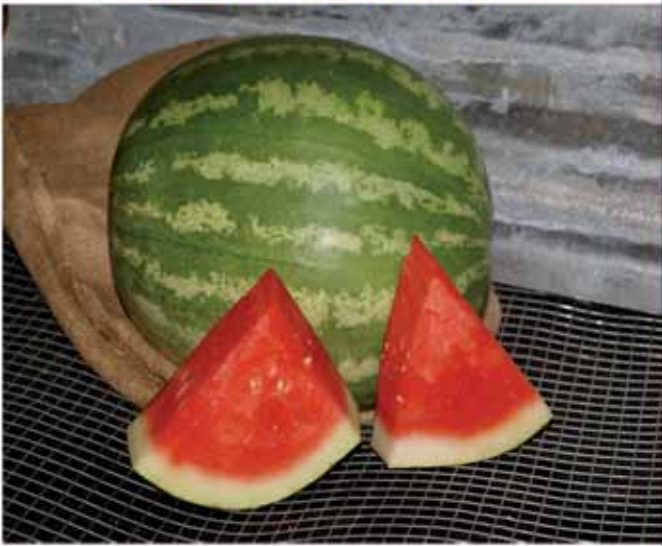
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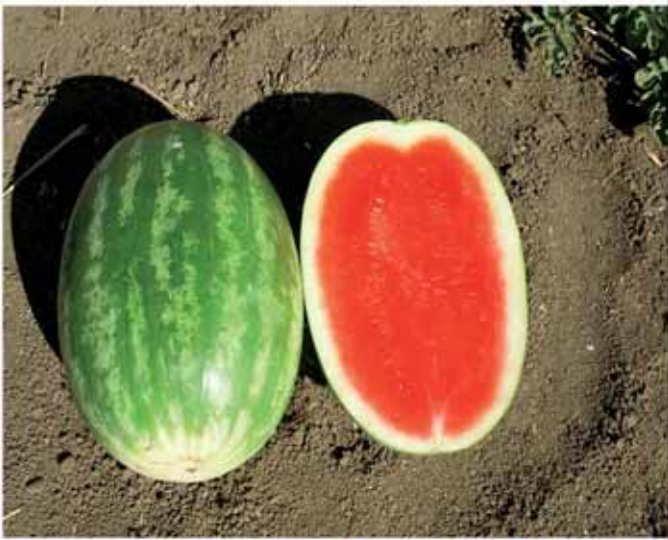
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# Illiana Report

Hello and Happy 2009! By the time you read this Vincennes will have celebrated its First Annual Watermelon Drop on New Year’s Eve. Is there a better way to bring in the New Year than with watermelon? At press time the confirmed plans included a worship celebration at the First Methodist Church followed by a DeeJay and a band playing downtown all evening. The activities culminated with the rise of a huge lit watermelon and then the dropping of real melons, along with fireworks. Queen Maggie was featured doing the countdown, singing throughout the evening and leading the crowd in singing Auld Lang Syne. Make plans to join us next New Year’s Eve for the Second Annual Watermelon Drop---It’s only going to get Bigger and Better! Maggie started Saturday Oct. 4 with a parade in Freelandville, IN and ended the day at an end of harvest season hog roast hosted by Anita Field. Many IWA members, local dignitaries, friends, and family came together to celebrate with food, a bon fire, and hayride. Maggie enjoyed spending a relaxing evening with her watermelon family.

Thanks, Anita!

The month ended in Orlando, Florida at the PMA convention. Maggie enjoyed spending time in the Sun World booth helping pass out promotional items. Thank you, Sun World for helping sponsor Maggie. The view of the lagoon at the Packaging Corp. party at Jimmy Buffet’s Margaritaville was fabulous. Thanks to Cheryl Hicks for inviting us. The Watermelon Promotion Board party was also a blast from the talking watermelon heads to the caricature artist. On Nov. 11 Queen Maggie spoke to the YMCA GLOW (Girls Learning their Own self-Worth) about being a good friend, loving yourself, making positive choices, and being the best you can be. Next Maggie emceed the Miss Northwest Territory Outstanding Teen Pageant on Nov 15. She did an outstanding job and used her well developed public speaking skills to host the event, as well as, share information about the Illiana Watermelon Association.

The Vincennes Christmas Festival of Lights was held the evening of November 21. Maggie looked festive dressed in white and green, riding on a shiny red corvette driven by IWA president Brad Toney. We used the parade as an opportunity to advertise the First Annual Watermelon Drop. Maggie spent the last two weeks of December doing radio and television interviews blanketing the area with information about the Watermelon Drop.

Mark your calendars for March 6-8 and join us for the Illiana Watermelon Association annual convention. It is being held in Evansville IN at the Casino Aztar Hotel. Reservations can be made at 1-800-544-0120.

Best Wishes for the New Year,

Beth Frey  
Promotions Coordinator  
Illiana Watermelon Association  
loveshallmark@hotmail.com  
812-886-5409  
812-890-0620



Maggie in the Sun World booth at PMA



You know it's a party when the Watermelon Talks!



Wouldn't we all love a watermelon Sailboat?



Maggie at the Freelandville Parade



What a beautiful group of Watermelon promoters gathered in the NWPB booth



Maggie at Blazer 91.1-Spreading the word about the Watermelon Drop



Miss Maggie Bailey--2008 Illiana Watermelon Queen  
(You've done a wonderful job! Thank You!)



Maggie speaking to some of the GLOW girls






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# Mar-Del Report

Greetings from Maryland and Delaware-

It doesn't seem possible that it is almost time to crown a new Maryland-Delaware Watermelon Queen. Now is time when I usually say something along the lines of, "Christina has evolved into a wonderful Queen..." However, this year is different. Christina began her reign with a full breadth of knowledge of the agriculture industry, an uncanny ability to speak in public and 'strike up conversation,' and a strong, confident sense of herself. I can proudly say that she takes direction like a pro and the NWPB will be glad to know she can get out the 'key messages,' word for word. As someone who has seen MANY watermelon demonstrations, I must say she catches my full attention like it isn't the 87 time I've seen watermelon salsa being made. From a beautiful rendition of Patsy Cline's, "Crazy," at the Heritage Shores Assisted Living Center to being the Master of Ceremony for the Little Miss Watermelon Pageant to countless days at the very hot, Delaware State Fair, Christina has tailored the presentation of herself, and our product to a "T". Thank you Christina for all of the hard work you have put into the position and for all the sacrifices you have made to help us promote our delicious, nutritious, Mar-Delicious Watermelons. We are truly thankful to have you as our representative and can't wait to cheer you on in Charleston!

Since my last submission, Christina has attended two of the most action-packed watermelon weekends--Washington D.C. with United, and Orlando, Florida for PMA. Washington was a great trip and a wonderful opportunity for Christina. Our first night we had fun catching up with everyone and were treated to a wonderful dinner by Brent Harrison and Chandler Mac--thanks guys! The remainder of the trip we were briefed on current Ag. issues and Christina made several pertinent remarks during our Congressional visits. What would be the perfect cap on a trip to D.C.? A visit to the White House, of course! Thank you, Bob Morrissey for making that all possible.

A month later, Candice Hales stepped in to escort Christina to PMA. Thank you to Travis Hastings and Will Hales of True Leaf Seed for treating Queen Christina to a night at Wolfgang Puck and the Cirque de Soleil show Nouba. The convention was all about watermelons, as always, and the Association is very thankful to the Maryland and Delaware Departments of Agriculture for always welcoming us into their booth. Christina did a great job all weekend and loved the NWPB's party which is always a fun night of networking. Thank you to John and Alisa Lapide for looking after Christina the last day of the show and for taking her to the airport--she enjoyed her time spent with you both!

A big thank you to everyone who has supported our association, our MAR-DELicious branding efforts, and our queen, Christina this year. Your dedication to us and the watermelon industry is much appreciated.

I am looking forward to introducing our 2009 Queen and reporting about Christina's accomplishments at Nationals in the next article.

Everyone is invited to our 43rd Annual Convention February 6th & 7th at the Hyatt Regency Resort in Cambridge, Maryland. For more information on attending or for a list of sponsorship opportunities, contact Jay Rider at 410-726-8464, Will Hales at 410-726-9105, or myself--I hope to see you there

Warmest Regards,

Allison Castellana  
MAR-DEL Promotions Coordinator  
443-783-5553  
acastellana@crisfieldcityhall.com

Thanks to Will Hales and Travis Hastings, Christina was able to attend the Nouba show from Cirque De Soeil



We are always grateful to the Maryland and Delaware Departments of Agriculture for welcoming us into their booth at PMA and being so accommodating



Christina and Will ran into someone else from the Eastern Shore--Brandon Catlin who is employed by Timco



Christina enjoyed meeting Jim Schmied of Sun World



As always, our queens enjoy spending time with everyone from International Paper!



The NWPB brought in Celebrity Chef, Katie Brown and the Queens had a great time watching her hard at work



Christina catching up with Brent and Susan Harrison



Wow Will, Travis and Queen Christina...is this your new idea to promote watermelons?!?!?



Two lovely ladies, Queen Christina and Katie Brown trading autographs at the NWPB Party--a stellar affair, as always



It's always fun in Florida and with the Florida ladies--Christina playing a little Plinko with Patty and Debra



Chandler Mac and Queen Christina check out one of the Wumbler characters



Thanks Richard Wojciak for always being so supportive of our queens!



Queen Christina with Rhonda and Rich Chastain of Melon1



No question here, these ladies are all about Watermelons!



Paul Sawyer and Christina...who knows



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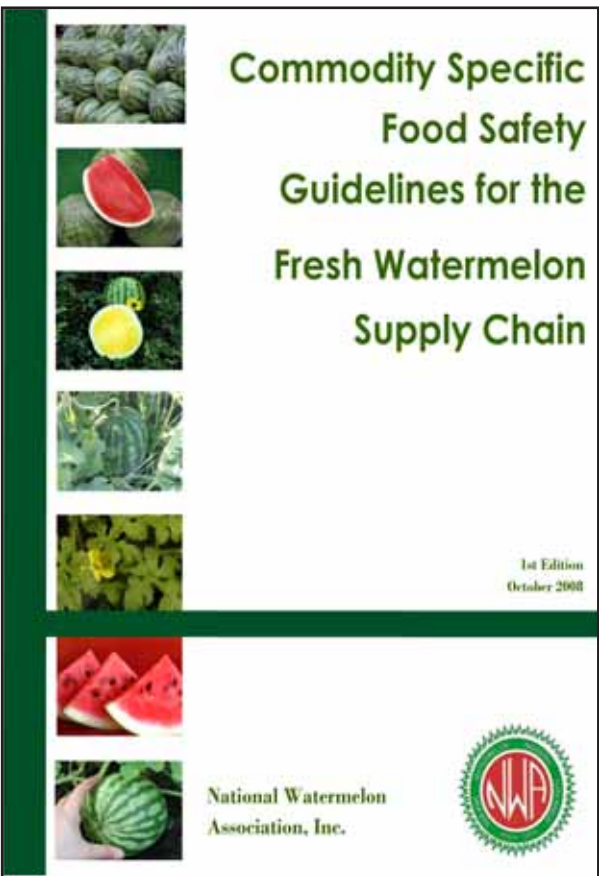




# Watermelon Food Safety Program Released

After two years of study, collaboration and work, the NWA unveiled the first edition of a commodity-specific food safety program for farmers and packers/shippers in October 2008, and will release the second edition at the national convention in February 2009.

“It goes without saying that we do not want to do anything that is going to change how watermelons are grown or packed, and we do not want to increase industry’s costs either”, said Bob Morrissey,



NWA Executive Director and Chief Editor of the program. “Food safety has become a necessary part of every agricultural operation due to dwindling consumer confidence in the safeness and healthiness of fruits and vegetables as a result of all of the publicized outbreaks of recent years.”

“Our program, written exclusively for the watermelon industry, is a complete farm-to-fork process. From pre-planting to retail sales or foodservice serving, we have captured everything that we possibly could in that entire pathway.”

“If your operation has been certified by the USDA, your State’s Agriculture Department or any third-

# Supplemental Information Available

The Watermelon Food Safety Program provides many additional pieces of vital information that “may” apply to your operation. There are areas of food safety that require detail, which we have provided to those members that need this information. Key areas of focus include:

- Wild Animal Management
- Sanitary Water Surveys
- Worker Training Materials
- Pesticide and Chemical Usage
- Pest Control
- Manure and Compost Usage
- Farm Bio-Security
- Record Keeping Forms

Please review and utilize whatever information that may apply to your operation, especially the record keeping forms. Remember ..... If it is not documented, it never happened!

party audit firm, you are already doing the vast majority of what we have included in our ‘voluntary’ program. We anticipate that you will be able to identify any minor details that may be missing, which will allow you to incorporate those elements and gain additional points in future audits. The ultimate goal for us all is to continue to provide a safe, healthy crop to consumers, and be ready for future federal legislation that this program parallels. Our industry is counting on every operation to ‘voluntarily’ incorporate good food safety processes which will help us all in the end. The NWA stands at the ready to help any farmer and packer/shipper to understand the program and to incorporate it into their operation.”



# Farm Self Audit

Within the new food safety program, we have developed a checklist that every farmer can use to monitor their farm operations, and know where any voids may exist.

“The self audit was designed to reflect the farm portion of our watermelon food safety program to be a user-friendly guide for farmers”, says Bob Morrissey. The audit covers numerous areas including:

- 1. Risk Management
  - 2. Exclusion of Animals
  - 3. Adjacent Land Use
  - 4. Water Use (Irrigation)
  - 5. Hygiene Practices of Workers
  - 6. Production Practices
  - 7. Equipment and Containers
  - 8. Record Keeping
  - 9. Handling of Damaged & Culled Watermelons
  - 10. Chemical Treatments
  - 11. Traceability
- “By auditing your own farm prior to an audit or to see where you stand with food safety principles, you will be helping your business and the industry to provide one of the safest food supplies to consumers. I encourage you to take advantage of this tool, and let us know how we can help.”

# Packer Self Audit

Similar to the farm self audit, the watermelon food safety program has a self audit checklist for packers & shippers to utilize. It also reflects the packer/shipper portion of the program from start to finish.

The audit covers numerous areas including:

- 1. General Maintenance of the Grounds and Shed
- 2. Water Supply
- 3. Trash and Waste Disposal
- 4. Packinghouse Operations
- 5. Post-harvest Washing

- 6. Worker Hygiene Practices and Training
  - 7. Storage
  - 8. Equipment and Shed Sanitation
  - 9. Transportation
  - 10. Cleaning Materials
  - 11. Traceability
  - 12. Record Keeping
- “The majority of the industry’s packing sheds are doing most of these elements already. This user-friendly guide will help each operation to know where they are with a complete food safety program, and be better prepared for an audit with a third party firm or retail customer. This should become an invaluable tool for the industry’s use, and will help your operation for the coming season.”





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# North Carolina Report

## Watermelon Greetings from North Carolina!

As we continue with Queen Brittany’s Wonderful Watermelon Adventure, we find Brittany in Fairbluff, at the Fairbluff Watermelon Festival. Queen Brittany was delighted to have the honor of crowning the Fairbluff Watermelon Queen. Queen Brittany is a past Fairbluff Watermelon Queen.

From Fairbluff, Queen Brittany was off to Murfreesboro for the NC Watermelon Festival. Mr. Percy and Mrs. Frances Bunch were most gracious and hosted Queen Brittany for a fun-filled weekend. Queen Brittany enjoyed a street dance on Friday night with some of the former queens and on Saturday was the MC at the Watermelon pageant. Thank you to the folks in Murfreesboro for making Queen Brittany feel so at home!

Watermelon Day at the local State Farmer’s Markets was a highlight of Queen Brittany’s Wonderful Watermelon Adventure! After awarding the ribbons for the largest watermelons, Queen Brittany signed autographs and posed for pictures with her fans. At the Greensboro Farmer’s Market, Queen Brittany also did a radio interview for a local station.

Our next stop was in Kitty Hawk at the “Life is Good” festival. Queen Brittany signed autographs and did a radio spot for the festival.

Queen Brittany’s next adventure was to lobby congress in Washington, DC. Queen Brittany enjoyed seeing Washington and how it works. She met and signed autographs for several of the North Carolina Congressional Delegation, including her own Congressman-Rep. Mike McIntyre. Queen Brittany did a wonderful job representing North Carolina in Washington.

The last stop on this part of Queen Brittany’s Wonderful Watermelon Adventure took her to Orlando, for PMA. There Queen Brittany signed many more autographs and posed for many more photos! Chef Harry stopped by the booth and Queen Brittany helped him carve melons.

Thank you to all who have made this Wonderful Watermelon Adventure possible! Visit our website at [www.ncmelons.com](http://www.ncmelons.com) to see more pictures of Queen Brittany’s adventure!

Until next time-

Susan Mills  
NCWA Promotions Coordinator



With Mr. Floyd Taylor, NCWA President at the NC Watermelon Festival in Murfreesboro



With Congressman Howard Coble at the reception



With Mrs. Gloria Richardson and Mr. Gordon Etheridge at Watermelon Day at the Raleigh Farmer’s Market



With Chef Harry, loving watermelon!



Watermelon Day at the Greensboro Farmer’s Market



At PMA! What fun!



Radio promotion at “THE SOUND” in Kitty Hawk



With Mr. Brent Jackson at PMA



With Congressman Bob Etheridge in Washington



With Chef Harry at the NCDA booth at PMA



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# South Carolina Report

### Greetings from SC!

As our busy summer was coming to an end...Football season was just gearing up! In August we had three back-to-back football promotions. We started out at Clemson University in Clemson, SC where we served watermelon to the football team after a tough scrimmage. Queen Amanda was thrilled to meet coach Tommy Bowden and cheer on the Tigers! Our next stop was Furman University in Greenville, SC. Amanda enjoyed serving watermelon to the Paladins and talking with Coach Bobby Lamb about the upcoming season. We finished up the football promotions at The University of SC in Columbia, SC. Amanda with the help of Brad Boozer's son Mathew and several other employees of the Dept. of Agriculture and Farmers Market stayed busy passing out watermelon to the Gamecocks! A highlight of Amanda's trip was meeting award-winning coach Steve Spurrier who stated that the SC watermelons were the best that he had ever tasted.

The next stop on our busy tour was Ehrhardt, SC where Amanda attended the Schutzenfest Festival and road in a vintage mustang for the parade. After the parade, Amanda and several local queens were presented at the vendor fair by the Mayor of Ehrhardt and later all of the girls were treated to a wonderful home cooked meal by the Schutzenfest Committee.

Amanda was extremely honored to be asked to light the torch for the Watermelon Olympics in Belton, SC on Labor Day. She participated in numerous events that ranged from a watermelon-eating contest to a watermelon toss. We finished out the day with Amanda selecting the winner of the watermelon-carving contest. We were very excited to be a part of a whole day dedicated to watermelons!

In September, we arrived in Washington, DC for our annual legislative visits and were thrilled to visit and work with all of the other members of the watermelon organization. Amanda enjoyed attending the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Conference and did a wonderful job lobbying for our product on Capital Hill.

Our first runner up Amanda Gold attended PMA in Orlando, FL where the SC Booth had wonderful eye appeal, as well as information and samples of products produced within South Carolina. We had a great time at the NWPB Reception held at BB Kings where Amanda just loved the talking watermelon heads!

We hope to see you all at our convention on Jan 16-18 in Columbia, SC. We are also looking forward to having everyone in our beautiful state for the NWA Convention in historic Charleston, SC!

Until Next Time,

Julie Murdock  
SCWA Promotions Coordinator  
Jewels412@charter.net



Amanda was excited to attend a Clemson University football practice.



Amanda enjoyed riding in the Schutzenfest Parade.



Clemson University football players stop by our table to grab a slice of watermelon.



Our Watermelon queen lit the torch to start the Watermelon Olympics.



Amanda poses with Head Coach Tommy Bowden.



Amanda loved all the unique carvings at the reception in Washington, DC.



Brad Boozer and Amanda enjoyed meeting Furman University Head Coach Bobby Lamb.



Amanda was thrilled to see Bradley and Louise O'Neal in DC.



Many melons were cut to serve to the hungry Paladins.



Amanda and Congressman Joe Wilson.



Our group was all smiles at the University of SC football practice.



The girls enjoying the sights of Washington, DC.



The SC Gamecocks enjoyed the delicious watermelon.



Stopping by the NWPB booth at PMA.



Head Coach Steve Spurrier had a slice.



Louise O'Neal and daughter Angela at their booth at PMA



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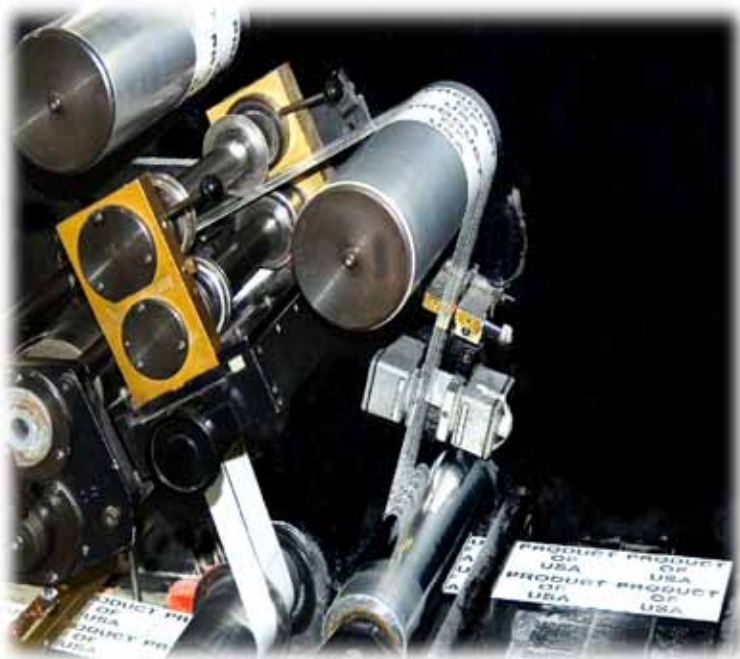
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# Texas Report

Happy New Year 2009, hoping you had a successful and bountiful 2008 and 2009 wishing you the best in all your endeavors.

This past year has been a rewarding year for the Texas Watermelon Association especially with our 2008 Texas Watermelon Queen Patricia Marie Fletcher. Marie has been a real joy to work with and a real trooper. She has the knack to fit in any situation and doing it with style. Marie is from McAllen Texas, attending school at DePaul University in Indiana for the past 4 years. She will graduate in May and is excited about the possibility of promoting watermelons nationwide. Marie says she enjoyed the privilege of being the Texas Watermelon Queen promoting watermelons this past year and wishes good will to each and every one of you.

In October, the Association was well represented at the State Fair of Texas on pre-opening night and also the first day of the Texas State Fair. Many thanks to Richard De La Santo with the Texas Department of Agriculture for his full participation with watermelons. Kenny Sutton, Sutton Fruit & Vegetable from Kaufman, Texas provided Richard with 4-5 bins of watermelons to be carved and served. Chef Joe Poon attended the Thursday night Gala and also opening day Friday.

Chef Poon sliced and diced and as you well know he draws a crowd. He had all types of watermelon carvings including the Go Texas Logo, Texas A&M, University of Texas, Roses for the ladies and many more.

Next we were off to Florida for PMA. Marie enjoyed the PMA and enjoyed meeting a lot of new people. Thanks again to my friend Lavenia Collier for helping out at the show. I believe Ward Thomas calls her the name tag lady. We enjoyed the show and talked with some old friends as well. Thanks to Myron Harrison with Inland Container for inviting us to a customer dinner, we had a great time. And as always, the NWPB outdid themselves with many surprises at their annual party.

Farewell to 2008 and Happy Beginnings to 2009.

Until next time,

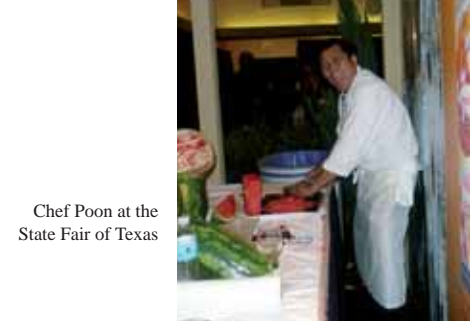
Wanda Letson  
Texas Watermelon Association  
P.O. Box 903  
Weatherford, TX 76086  
melonred@sbcglobal.net



Chef always has a great time visiting with Karey at the State Fair



Texas Department of Agriculture Commissioner Todd Stephen and wife at Texas State Fair. Thanks Kenny Sutton for furnishing the watermelon and again thanks to Richard for all he does for us.



Chef Poon at the State Fair of Texas



Mr. Gerry enjoys the NWPB dinner with fellow watermelon growers



President TWA Ward Thomas & Richard with the Texas Department of Agriculture visiting at PMA



These girls look like they are up to something.



Jeff, Laurie, Maggie, Marie, Beth and Myron pose for a quick shot at the Texas PMA Booth



Mark Arney and the NWPB proudly show off their new booth at PMA.



NWA President, Nowell Borders, takes time for a quick picture with the watermelon queens



Welcome aboard to Laurie Hofts (with husband Tom) to the NWA office.



Thanks so much to Marie and Javier Jasso with Farmers Mkt.



We are always glad to see Mr. & Mrs. Mack



Queen Marie always smiling with that beautiful heartfelt smile



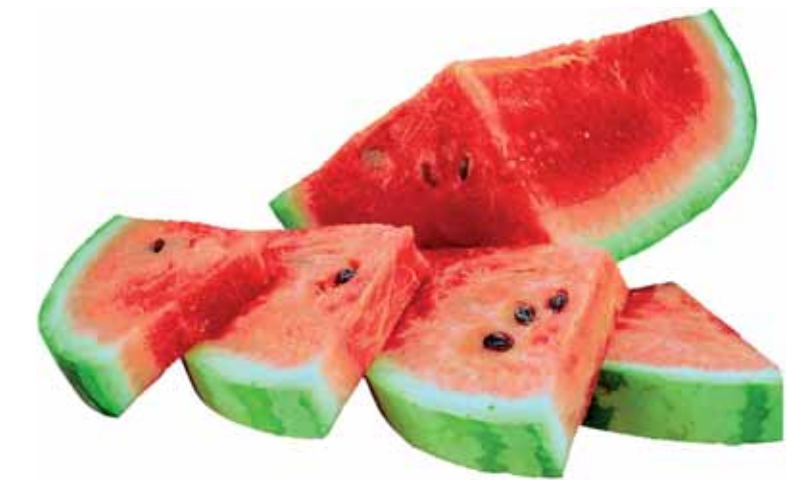
Illiana Queen Maggie visits Queen Marie at the Press Booth



Thank you Jeff for always helping out at PMA



The girls say Hello to Ms. Carrie



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# Membership Challenge

To any business, including our association, building the membership is vital to our future success. Attracting new members is like prospecting in the sales field. The more people that you come into contact with, and the more people that you ask, the better your chances are to ‘sell’.

All of our members have a unique opportunity to get involved with our committees, at the chapter and national levels to help steer the future of the organization. In turn, new members provide additional revenues that allow us to increase promotions, scientific research, food safety initiatives, federal initiatives in Washington, and so much more that are the keys to the industry’s future.

From a farmer or packer/shipper perspective, you have a very unique opportunity to add new members through your supply chain. Think about how many suppliers that you deal with each year such as farm equipment, fertilizer, chemicals/pesticides, plants, seed, germination services, plastic mulch, irrigation equipment (tape, etc.), packaging, pallets, trucking, labels, truck dealers, and so many more. You pay them thousands of dollars for their products to grow, pack and ship watermelons every year. Are they all members of your chapter association? If not, then why not? It may be something as simple as an ‘ask’ or ‘suggestion’.

From a supplier perspective, you sell your products top many farmers and packers/shippers that in some cases are not members of a local watermelon chapter. Would you share the benefits of membership with them, and encourage them to get involved? Our membership rates through the chapters are the lowest of any trade association in the country!

Please join us in 2009 to make a huge difference in our membership roles. By building up the chapter roles, we will all benefit. Let’s get non-member companies involved and make a bigger difference for the industry in the end. Let’s create the largest membership increase in memory in 2009, together!

To become a member, contact your local chapter below:

Georgia Watermelon Association  
P.O. Box 1109  
LaGrange, GA 30241  
info@georgiawatermelonassociation.org  
www.georgiawatermelonassociation.org

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

Illiana Watermelon Association  
10146 South Street, Road 241  
Decker, IN 47524  
illianawatermelon@gmail.com  
www.illianawatermelon.org

North Carolina Watermelon Association  
P.O. Box 58220  
Raleigh, NC 27658  
cathyprice@bellsouth.net  
www.ncmelons.com

MarDel Watermelon Association  
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Barb\_murillo@mchsi.com

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Alabama Watermelon Association  
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# Future NWA conventions announced

For your future planning purposes, the NWA is proud to announce the convention cities and properties for the upcoming years.

96th National Convention  
February 17-21, 2010  
The Fairmont Hotel  
Dallas, Texas

97th National Convention  
February 23-27, 2011  
Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine  
San Diego, California

98th National Convention  
February 22-26, 2012  
Ritz Carlton Hotel  
Amelia Island, Florida

Please include these convention dates on your upcoming calendars. We look forward to providing a successful experience including business, prospecting, education, and entertainment that our members have come to expect from your NWA.



The Fairmont Hotel - Dallas, Texas



Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine - San Diego, California



Ritz Carlton Hotel - Amelia Island, Florida



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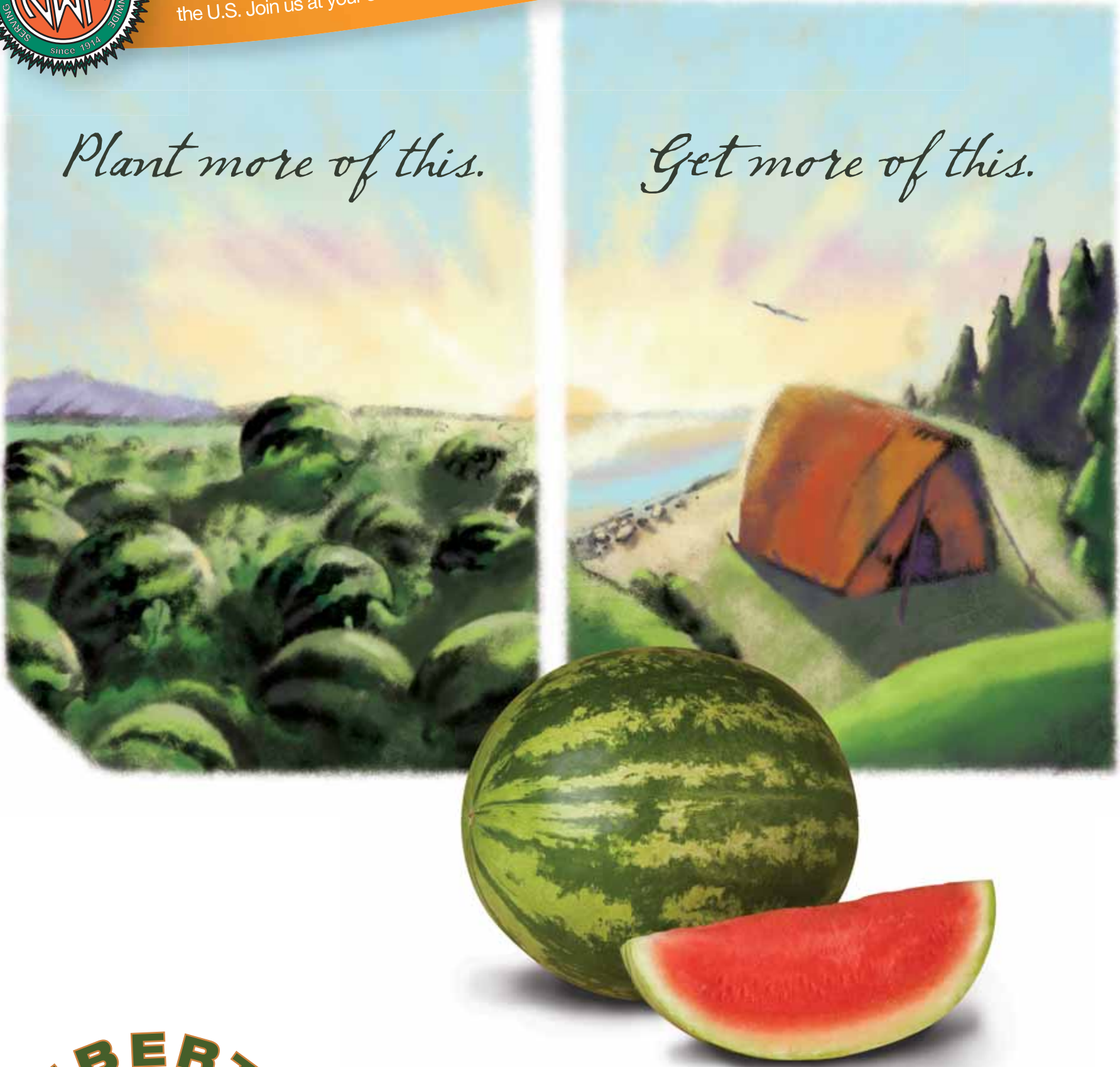




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