



## Food Safety Laws Obstructed by User Fees

Reps. Sam Farr (CA) and Rosa DeLauro (CT) have requested the Food and Drug Administration to stop asking Congress for user fees to implement the Food Safety Modernization Act.

The lawmakers, in a letter sent to Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell of the Department of Health and Human Services, asked the FDA to discontinue the request for user fees when it presents the FDA's fiscal year 2016 budget request to Congress because the proposed fees hide the true cost of implementation. Congress rejected the last five requests to implement the food safety law through user fees and will likely do so again, according to the letter.

"No bill to authorize such fees has been introduced and even if enabling legislation is introduced this year, it is highly unlikely that any new law will be enacted in time to fund these vital FSMA implementation steps," the lawmakers wrote in the letter.

Farr and DeLauro said that Congress has provided some of the funding necessary for FSMA, but "much more funding will be required to make the larger, up-front investments necessary to ensure the public health benefits the law promises." The lawmakers asked the FDA to request enough funds from Congress to support implementation of the food safety law.

FDA must have resources to retrain the existing inspection workforce, hire new staff and contract with state inspectors, Farr and DeLauro said in the letter. The FDA must provide training and technical assistance to help growers and processors to meet the law's new requirements. Other investments must be made in a new risk-based oversight system, the letter said.

FDA says that it needs \$400 million for FSMA, and the user fees suggested would not even come close to that funding need. Congressional funding of FDA sufficient to enable FDA to implement what Congress has told them to do is needed to do their job, as instructed by FSMA (and Congress).



## Food-Safety Inspections to Change in Post-FSMA

The Food & Drug Administration is retooling inspectors to be specialized in food and teaching them to assess a company's food-safety culture for the first time when deciding whether to return for another inspection. That is the primary message that Mike Taylor, the FDA's food-safety chief, said at the United Fresh Produce Association's Washington Conference in September.

The attendees had hoped that Mr. Taylor would detail the new provisions of the produce safety proposal, but he arrived to the meeting empty-handed as the White House has yet to complete the final review. The Office of Budget & Management (OMB) has the new proposals, and no one knows when they will release them.

Taylor did lay out the "sea change" its field force is undergoing to prepare for the new food-safety law. Bringing companies into compliance will be the new benchmark of FDA's field force - - not collecting evidence for enforcement actions, Taylor pledged. The FDA is shifting away from general inspectors who are trained to check drug, food and medical device firms for a more 'specialized' food inspector who can call technical experts at FDA for advice during business assessments.

A company's food-safety culture will influence how often inspectors will check on a firm, whether it's the food-safety commitment of the top leaders at a company or the effort a facility takes in developing the right plans, he said. "This focuses us on those few that don't have a food safety culture and need our attention to get compliant," he said. While the new versions of the produce safety and preventive controls (proposed) rules are not out yet, Taylor said the industry should expect to see greater flexibility in the water quality and testing provisions and a different direction on the raw manure-compost section. "You will see important new ideas in there," he said.

After Taylor's comments, two busloads of attendees traveled to the FDA's College Park, Maryland office to discuss a wide range of issues with regulators in charge of drafting the FSMA rules and overseeing various sampling programs.

One FDA official told the group to expect new supplier verification and product testing requirements in the supplemental FSMA rules. Also mentioned was to 'expect a fix to the problem of neighboring farms being designated facilities if they pack other farms' produce.' "This is an area we considered when developing the supplemental," said Samir Assar, FDA's produce safety staff director.

## FDA Releases Updated Proposals to Improve Food Safety

Based on extensive outreach and public comment, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration proposed revisions to four rules designed to help prevent food-borne illness. When finalized, the proposed rules will implement portions of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), which aims to strengthen food safety by shifting the focus to prevention rather than responding to problems after the fact.

Since FSMA was signed into law in January 2011, the FDA has proposed seven rules to implement FSMA. The four updated proposed rules include: produce-safety; preventive controls for human food; preventive controls for animal food; and the foreign supplier verification program.

"Ensuring a safe and high-quality food supply is one of the FDA's highest priorities, and we have worked very hard to gather and respond to comments from farmers and other stakeholders regarding the major proposed FSMA regulations," said FDA Commissioner Margaret A. Hamburg, M.D. "The FDA believes these updated proposed rules will lead to a modern, science-based food safety system that will better protect American consumers from potentially hazardous food. We look forward to public comment on these proposals."

The FDA is making changes to key provisions of the four proposed rules based on feedback received from the public during meetings and thousands of comments submitted to the agency on the proposed rules. "Based on valuable input from farmers, consumers, the food-industry and academic experts, the FDA is proposing to update these four proposed rules to ensure a more flexible and targeted means to ensure food safety," said Michael R. Taylor, the FDA's deputy commissioner for foods and veterinary medicine.

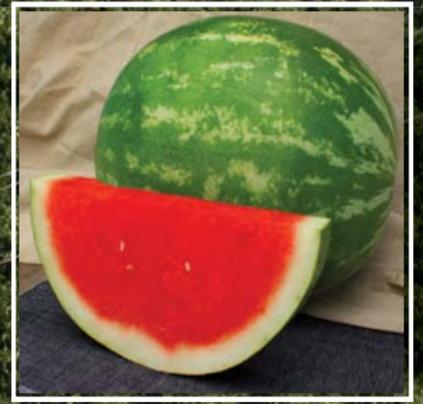
In response to public comments, the FDA is proposing to revise the water quality testing provisions in the proposed produce safety rule to account for natural variations in water sources and to adjust its approach to manure and compost used in crop production pending further research on this issue.

*SAFETY continued on page 5*

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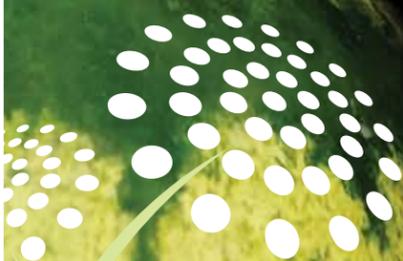
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## Supermarkets are displaying watermelons without nutrition labels

Some people spend their time being concerned and working against the ever-encroaching federal government getting its nose into every aspect of modern life. Some days it's pretty hard to argue with that notion. Watermelons seem to not be an exception. The federal government is concerned because watermelons don't come with nutrition labels and are working on rules that would correct this oversight.

It is only 'sliced' watermelons that are currently being considered as a result of a provision in the Affordable Care Act, which stipulates that as soon as a watermelon is sliced open, it becomes a potential restaurant serving and must be labeled with calorie information.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is working on a rule to implement this provision, according to information harvested by the Food Marketing Institute (FMI).

Besides watermelons bound for restaurants, watermelons displayed in supermarkets may also need labels, as the act of slicing them open makes them "food on display," which would require calorie information "directly affixed to or adjacent to the item, not just on a menu or menu board, which is the required method for restaurant food," as FMI puts it.

Jennifer Hatcher, who is FMI's Senior Vice President, Government and Public Affairs and a self-described watermelon fan, says that leaving watermelons unmo-lested doesn't do the trick either.

"The first thing a grocery store produce manager does to expose his customers to the two best attributes of that watermelon – color and smell – is to cut it open," she notes, a practice that would be imperiled by the FDA's rules.

"Both our senses and the way food retailers do business are being threatened," Hatcher laments. And, just like those obsessed with ongoing federal power grabs, she warns that government's overreach won't stop with watermelons. Birthday cakes displayed in bakery departments and olives left exposed in olive bars could be next, she warns.

As of this writing, FDA's Mike Taylor has not responded to the NWA's inquiry about the rule. More to come once he does.

## FDA opens registration period for food facilities

Food facilities that are required to register with FDA must renew their registration this year. The renewal period starts Oct. 1 and ends Dec. 31. Earlier this year, the FDA reported that there are nearly 74,000 packers or repackers of FDA covered commodities, including fresh produce. The FDA has published documents on food facility registration on its website, and has published frequently asked questions about the process online.

## Address Change Info

The National Watermelon Association this past summer found it necessary to relocate the office to a new location. Our previous landlord lost possession of the building, thus voiding our lease.

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### SAFETY continued from page 1

The FDA also is proposing, based on feedback received to date, a new definition of which farms would be subject to the produce-safety rule. The proposed rule would not apply to farms with \$25,000 or less in produce sales, rather than setting the threshold based on sales of all foods produced on the farm. The updated proposed rules also propose to simplify which entities are covered by the produce safety rule and which would be covered by the preventive controls rules.

Revisions to the foreign-supplier verification proposed rule give importers more flexibility to determine appropriate supplier verification measures based on risk and previous experience with their suppliers.

The FDA will accept comments on the proposed revisions of the four proposed rules for 75 days while continuing to review comments already received on the sections of the proposed rules that are staying the same. The agency will consider both sets of comments before issuing final rules in 2015.

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# National Report

What a busy tour for our National Queen! Brandi has loved and treasured every promotion. She is doing an excellent job representing you.

We have had so many exciting promotions, complete with fantastic media coverage. June and July were a whirlwind of promotions. We appreciate all the wonderful sponsorship for these events.

We were sponsored by the National Watermelon Promotion Board for so many promotions, many back to back, all AMAZING. Thank you so much for all your support, preparation and believing in the Queen program. Extraordinary promotions with outstanding media coverage, it was awesome!

NWA's own First President Dennis Mouzin sponsored the NASCAR races, yes two this year. The Nationwide series on Saturday and the Sprint Cup series race on Sunday at the Brickyard. What successful events, thanks Dennis.

In order to share more promotions per printing with limited space, I will again let my pictures showcase all the wonderful events.

Also included in this report are photos from Food Network Magazine, July/August issue, where watermelon and our National Queen, Brandi was featured, excellent coverage.

Our heartfelt appreciation to all the following sponsors of these promotions! **National Watermelon Promotion Board; Browning & Sons; Dr. Bill Martin, Martin Orthodontics; Rantz Smith Farms; Gibson Produce; Murray Tillis; Borders Melons East; Dennis Mouzin & Mouzin Brothers; Thank You!**

We are looking forward to many upcoming promotions in the fall. We are excited to again be promoting watermelon at the Marine Corp Marathon partnering with NWPB. It's a lot of hard work but certainly a venue where our product is an appropriate and appreciated fit. Spotighting watermelon in our Nation's capital for the annual Marine Corp Marathon is an awesome event for our industry. Special thanks to Stephanie Barlow, NWPB and NWA for making it happen!

Until Next Printing, Have you had Your Watermelon today?  
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Brandi visits sponsors Rantz and Stephanie Smith and daughters



A stop by Billy Smith's office for a visit!



Thank you Browning & Sons for sponsoring Winn Dixie in Chiefland Brandi is welcomed by Store Director, Paul and Merchandiser Barry



Meagan and Brandi at the Tour De Melon in Chiefland



Sponsor Dr. Bill Martin and furry friend pictured with Brandi at his Chiefland office, Thank You!



Sponsors Murray Tillis, Bob Gibson and sons in Chiefland



Montona and Brandi visit Rob Gibson and precious nephew at the festival



Brandi is interviewed at the Santa Anita Track near Pasadena, CA



In the Winners Circle to present the winner with the trophy



Juliemar and Brandi are guest in the famous Chandelier Room at the Santa Anita Track



Meagan, Jennifer and Brandi are ready for Longo's in Toronto



Running the Annual Longo's Watermelon Eating Contest



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Girls with Nicole and friend of Faye Clack Communications at Marche's Restaurant during our promotion there



July/ August Food Network Magazine, all about Watermelon and...



Brandi Harrison is featured inside



Touring Ambassador Caroline Kennedy's residence in Tokyo Japan prior to the July 4th Party



Brandi practices her Japanese with this group of Japanese comedians together they filmed a watermelon commercial



Mr. Takeda-san and Gordon Hunt with Brandi at Ambassador Caroline Kennedy residence in Japan



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More interviews



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Brandi at the Air Force Academy Commissary in Colorado



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Anita Field and Brandi before the work begins at the Brickyard in Indy



Illiana President Brad Johnston in Indy



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# Alabama Report

Greetings from Alabama,

The 2014 tour for the Alabama Watermelon Queen has been very productive this year. Queen Montana has been busy visiting schools, local farmers and farmer's markets, grocery stores, and much more!

Farm tours are one of the best ways for Queen Montana to learn firsthand how watermelons are grown. In June, Hudson Shelly gave us a tour of Shelley Farms in Southeast Alabama. The next stop was a local TV station in Dothan. Montana whipped up watermelon fire and ice salsa on WTVY Live at Lunch. During July 4th week, we visited five Rouses Supermarkets Stores in Gulf Shores, Spanish Fort, Theodore, Mobile and Saraland. Then we celebrated Independence Day at the Grand Bay Watermelon Festival. Finally, Queen Montana got to welcome over eight hundred shoppers during the opening of a new commissary at Gunter Air Force Base in Montgomery.

July was a very busy month for all of us, but we were able to squeeze in one exciting and successful trip to Indianapolis, IN. The Illiana Watermelon Association welcomed us with open arms and A LOT of watermelon during the Kroger Race Weekend promotion. During the race weekend Queen Montana was able to hand out samples of watermelon at a Kroger store and pass out tons of watermelon at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Thank you to our sponsors Mr. Billy Smith-Billy Smith's Watermelons, Mr. Jeff Garrett-Clifton Seed, Mr. Arnold Mack-McMelon, and the NWPB.

We finished out the summer by joining United Fresh at The Washington Conference in Washington DC. Queen Montana met with Senators and Representatives from Georgia and Alabama, as well as, many supporters of fresh produce. She was able to learn some of the key issues that challenge the watermelon industry.

While a great summer has come and gone, we are looking forward to have an amazing fall as we are headed back to Washington DC for the Marine Corp Marathon and Anaheim, CA for PMA. Hope to see you all there!

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



Queen Montana demonstrated how to make Fire and Ice Salsa on WTVY Live at Lunch.



Sharing coloring books and juicy watermelon on a hot day at Rouses Supermarkets.



Queen Montana and Hudson Shelley touring Shelley Farms.



Thank you Mr. Joe Watson and Rouses Supermarkets for all of your support this year!



Cooling off with watermelon fans at Grand Bay Watermelon Festival.



FL Queen Meagan and Queen Montana handing out samples at Kroger in Indianapolis.



Illiana Queen Emily, National Queen Brandi, Queen Montana, and Florida Queen Meagan helping raise money for Riley Kids during the Kroger Race Weekend.



Scott Davis with Military Produce Group and Queen Montana in front of an amazing display at Gunter AFB Commissary.



Queen Montana welcoming everyone at the Air Force Base Commissary in Montgomery.



Georgia Queen Jennifer, Queen Montana, Mar-Del Queen Shelby, and National Queen Brandi in front of The White House while in DC.



Alabama Representative Martha Roby and Queen Montana during The Washington Conference.



NWA President and the Watermelon Queens at the Fresh Festival in Washington, DC.

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# Florida Report

Greetings from the Sunshine State of Florida!!

Summer has always been my favorite time of the year but this summer has topped them all! I spent the summer living out of my bags while traveling up and down Florida and the U.S. plus Canada. The majority of our time was spent doing one of my favorite things, farm tours. Starting all the way down in south Florida and all the way up the state, I never ran into a farmer who did everything the same way. I enjoy getting to sit down with the farmers and hear the excitement they have for their crop. They've been working so hard at, and of course all the hilarious stories they have to tell!

Along with farm tours I was invited to a handful of festivals! During the summer everyone always has a smile on their face when they see a juicy slice of watermelon! While at the festivals, I found myself being tested on my seed spitting skills, watermelon eating abilities, hog calling, and even how well I can smash a watermelon!

Another way that I was able to reach out to the public about our nutritious and delicious watermelon was through grocery stores and commissaries starting in south Florida and going all the way up to Toronto Canada! Being in the stores always excites me because I have the chance to assist and teach the customers on how to pick out the best watermelon from the bin. Once the customers get a sample of our fresh watermelon they almost always leave with one in their cart! The commissaries always have a special treat because they cut up some of their yellow watermelon, which many people have never been exposed to before, but it's always a huge hit!

My year as queen may be winding down but I can guarantee that we are far from slowing down on promoting the Florida watermelon!

## 2014 Florida Watermelon Queen Meagan Morgan

Mark your calendar to attend our 47th Annual Florida Watermelon Convention on January 16-18, 2015 at the beautiful Sanibel Harbour Marriott Resort in Fort Myers, Florida. President Jim Barfield and our First lady Linda Barfield would like to invite everyone to attend this year's convention. They have been working really hard on making this year's convention an event to remember. You can go online this year to our website [www.flfwa.com](http://www.flfwa.com) and register. Please mark your calendar.

With our holiday season, approaching us in the next few months please remember when you go to your local grocery store or farmers market please be sure and pick up a Florida Fall Watermelon to add to your table.

Until next time!  
Debra Harrison  
Florida Watermelon Promotions Coordinator  
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"Thanks Don Green for sponsoring Queen Meagan to come to her hometown Watermelon Festival".



At the "Watermelon 5-K Run" in Winter Park, Florida.



Enjoying visiting with Steve and Heidi Singletary with Bayshore Farms.



Queen Meagan at the "Volusia County Watermelon Festival Day" with NWQ Brandi Harrison and J-Slice with NWPB.



Spending the afternoon at Hillcrest Elementary School with Ms. Brenda Mack educating the kids on the nutrients of Florida Watermelons.



Supporting Ross Chastain down on pit row before the green flag waves Go!



Our FWA logo went speeding around the track with Ross Chastain in Charlotte!



Promoting and handing out slices of watermelons at "Winn Dixie" through the State of Florida.



Visiting with "The Land Family" at their office in Branford, Florida.



Having fun at the Cheifland Watermelon Festival parade.



Congratulations to the 2014 Cheifland Watermelon Queen Katelyn Ressler.



Welcome to the "State of Florida" where watermelons are grown.



Queen Meagan along with the Dept. of Agriculture promoting watermelons at Farmers Market in Tallahassee.



Um! What is your favorite "RED or YELLOW"?



Queen Meagan spending the day at "Patrick Air Force Base" with Mr. Matthias- Store Director, Geoff Brunette - Produce Specialist Military



The Thomas family always makes the queen feel so special!



Thank you to Murray Tillis Farms and Bob Gibson Watermelon Produce & Sales for sponsoring us at the Cheifland Watermelon Festival.



Spending a beautiful Sunday morning visiting with Gordon Etheridge and Mike Caruthers of Etheridge Produce in Williston.

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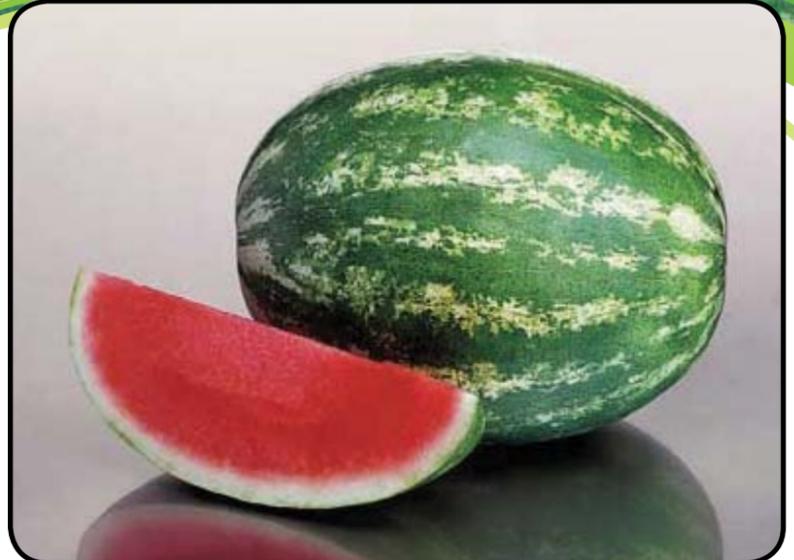
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# Georgia Report

We can't believe summer is almost over! Queen Jennifer has had a busy and packed schedule promoting Georgia Watermelon these past months.

Queen Jennifer started our season down in the heart of Georgia's watermelon country visiting some of GWA grower members and learning more about production and distribution. Thanks to Melon 1, Ricky Tucker Farms, Carr and Jane Hussey, Leger & Son, and Rutland Farms for an awesome time on the farm! From there, Jennifer traveled to Toronto, Ontario with Florida Queen Meagan and National Queen Brandi for the annual Longos Watermelon Eating Contest! Thank you to the NWPB for your coordination and support for that trip!

Queen Jennifer came back to the states just in time for the week of July 4th, watermelons' largest holiday. She made appearances and distributed watermelon samples to THOUSANDS in Kennesaw and in Athens at July 4th festivals. A huge thanks to Melon 1 and Leger & Son for donating watermelons and trucks for those events! Between festival hops, Jennifer was featured on a primetime television show Atl & Company talking watermelon with host Christine Pullara. Thank you Seminis for your support for that awesome experience! She also visited Harvey's in Tifton, and Kroger's in Kennesaw and Athens to encourage shoppers to purchase sweet Georgia Watermelon for the holiday weekend!

We went north again in mid-July for a trip to Ottawa, Canada for a week full of watermelon promotions in Loblaws locations! We had a great time showing local shoppers the 1,2,3's of picking the perfect watermelon and hosting popular eating contests!

Thanks again NWPB for your help coordinating these international trips. Later in the summer, we ate watermelon slices with the Georgia Bulldogs (Goooo Dawgs!) made visits to the Moultrie State Farmers Market and had an awesome trip with the other state queens for the Mar-Del Queen Tour. We also marched with 500 other industry representatives up Capitol Hill to visit with Georgia's congressmen and Senators at United Fresh's powerful event, The Washington Conference.

Even though Georgia's season has passed, Queen Jennifer is passionate about watermelon being a perfect food to enjoy year round! We've got a great fall and winter planned for her to continue promoting you, our association, and delicious watermelon!

Thank you for all your support! Mark your calendars for our 2015 convention, back in St. Simons at the King & Prince Resort, January 30-February 1!

Best wishes!  
Samantha T. Kilgore  
GWA Promotions Coordinator  
skilgore@asginfo.net  
706-845-8575



These girls loved seeing the Watermelon Queen at the Farmers Market in Moultrie, Ga.



Sharing a slice with Coach Mark Richt!



Making friends in Ottawa in Loblaws!



Helping shoppers at Loblaws in Ottawa!



Great to see our friends at Leger & Son!



Walking up Capitol Hill in DC!



Festival in Washington, DC with Florida, Alabama, South Carolina, Mar-Del and National Queens!



Love checking out watermelon in the field!



Visiting Mr. Ricky Tucker at his farm



Visit the Rutland Farm Market in Tifton!



Walking through Carr Hussey's new packing shed.



Marche' restaurant with Queen's Brandi and Meagan in Toronto



Having a good time at the Longos Eating contest



Love seeing everyone eat watermelon in Toronto!



Sometimes, Queen Jennifer even competes in the contest!



Atl & Company with Christine Pullara



Kroger in Kennesaw promoting Georgia grown watermelon.



Passing out watermelon at the July 4th festival in Kennesaw! Thanks Melon 1!



Showing shoppers how to pick out the perfect watermelon in Athens



Thanking our troops at the July 4th festival in Athens!



Passing out watermelon at the Rehoboth Boardwalk!



Wholefoods in Delaware with the other queens!



Helping auction off watermelon at the block!

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# NWPPB UPDATE



watermelon.org

## Carving Contest!



### Ready, Set, Grow

NWPPB partnered with the folks at *Ready, Set, Grow* in their Spring/Summer publication for the first time this year. *Ready, Set, Grow* is a publication that was developed by the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners ([www.napnap.org](http://www.napnap.org)) to help make busy moms' lives easier. They pair their counseling and recommendations along a number of dimensions with the products and/or services that the consumer marketplace provides. The Spring/Summer edition of *Ready, Set, Grow* began national distribution in late May across a network of nearly 6,000 pediatric offices. The edition will be in distribution until October 2014.

Summer's end marked the close of the watermelon online carving contest, hosted via the What About Watermelon? blog and promoted through social media. This was a record-breaking year with a whopping 221% increase in carving participants. The entries spanned the five carving categories of Most Elegant, Best Basket, Funniest, Best Animal, and Best Star-Spangled Watermelon, with the grand prize people's choice winner being a Darth Vader carving. As the saying goes, "Save a Pumpkin, Carve a Watermelon." Winners received Amazon gift cards and online recognition in all of our digital spaces. The first 25 entries also received a watermelon cutting board courtesy of our friends at Dexas. To view all of the finalists, visit the blog at [WhatAboutWatermelon.com](http://WhatAboutWatermelon.com).



**Watermelon**

Make summertime even sweeter!

Your family can now enjoy a healthy lifestyle choice every month of the year with Summer's perennial favorite sweet treat – watermelon. Packed with vitamins A, B6 and C, the anti-oxidant lycopene and the amino acid citrulline, it's a dose of summer "Yum!" At 92% water it will keep your kids hydrated all season long.

Look for healthy watermelon recipes your family can make together at [watermelon.org](http://watermelon.org).

### Hydrate Your Skin With a Watermelon Spa Day

Watermelon's 92% water and contains an excellent source of vitamins A and C. So go ahead and use any leftovers to cleanse your skin and shrink the appearance of pores with a refreshing watermelon face toner.

#### Watermelon Face Toner

##### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup watermelon, blended to make about 1/3 cup juice
- 1 tbsp witch hazel
- 1 tsp distilled water

**Instructions:** Blend watermelon until smooth. Add watermelon puree to a bowl and combine with the witch hazel and water, mixing well. Store in refrigerator in an airtight container for up to 5 days. Apply toner to clean face. Allow toner to remain on your face for a few minutes and then rinse off with warm water and pat dry.





# Watermelon Queens Go International!

Summer was jam-packed with U.S. watermelon promotions both in and out of the country. Watermelon Queens were requested to attend not one but two U.S. Embassy 4<sup>th</sup> of July receptions in Japan and Canada where U.S. watermelon was also served. Both events were received successfully and the watermelon queens made fantastic impressions on the ambassadors and their audiences.

Watermelon Queens were also requested at several Canadian retail stores during the summer. Some of these promotional ambassadors traveled as far Newfoundland to educate consumers! One retailer, Freson Bros. held their first-ever "U.S. Watermelon Fest" which included watermelon eating and seed spitting contests, watermelon bowling, and sampling. The queen was interviewed by four different radio stations and did live on-air radio spots. "The feedback from the stores has been fantastic," said Freson Bros. Advertising Services Director adding, "Allyson was a fantastic Watermelon Queen and did the Watermelon Promotion Board and Freson Bros. proud at the events and on the radio." NWPB would like to thank the queens, promotion coordinators, and our retail reps for all of their efforts and coordination in the many successful in-store appearances.

## School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference

NWPB returned to the School Nutrition Association's annual conference held this summer in Boston. This year, of the 7,165 conference participants, there were 3,530 foodservice attendees and 1,437 directors. According to the attendees, watermelon did not disappoint. Commodity boards and those in the fresh produce industry continue to attract engaged and ready audiences for the fresh fruit and vegetable grant. Attendees consistently express their appreciation for watermelon's ability to provide free materials for schools from the classroom to the cafeteria.

## Let's Keep Juicing!

NWPB has partnered with Family Features to keep the watermelon hydration movement going by creating a mat release featuring watermelon juice. Family Features is the industry leader in food and lifestyle content placement. The mat release distribution began in August. So keep an eye out for it in your local print and online news outlets!

### How to Juice a Watermelon





## U.S. revokes PACA status for Canadian suppliers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture revoked the privileged status Canadian produce sellers have enjoyed under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act effective Oct. 1.

Officials at the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, which oversees PACA claims, notified Canadian officials of the change in an Oct. 2 e-mail. AMS e-mailed the undated letter to Susie Miller, director general of the market and industry services branch of Canada's agriculture department known as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Miller did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

"As of Oct. 1, 2014, Canadian entities wishing to file a formal complaint against a PACA licensee must provide a surety bond prior to acceptance of the formal complaint for adjudication," according to the letter, signed Charles Parrott, deputy director of the USDA's fruit and vegetable program.

Those surety bonds will have to be for twice the amount of the claim, making it difficult for small and medium growers and shippers to do business with the U.S., said Ron Lemaire, president of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association. Sellers would have to pay the existing \$100 filing fee plus the surety bonds. "That means someone who sold \$200,000 worth of produce would have to post a bond of \$400,000," Lemaire said. "The produce industry just doesn't have that kind of capital. Our government has let us down."

Lemaire said CPMA has been working with the recently formed Fresh Produce Alliance, the Canadian Horticulture Society and the Ottawa, Ontario-based Fruit and Vegetable

## FDA seeks help for food safety compliance

Saying it is unable to single-handedly oversee compliance of the Food Safety Modernization Act, the Food and Drug Administration is emphasizing voluntary compliance and other measures.

Through the Food Safety Modernization Act Operational Strategy document, the FDA says public health will be improved through prevention, voluntary compliance, risk-based oversight and expanded cooperation in the food safety community, according to a news release.

In a blog post about the document, called "We're Reinventing Ourselves to Keep Your Food Safe," FDA officials Michael Taylor and Howard Sklamberg said the new approach will be a "springboard for discussion." And we know discussion is needed, because the strategy that will make FSMA a success requires significant change in how we at FDA do our work and how we work with our partners," according to the blog.

The FDA has been focused on creating regulations related to the food safety law, passed by Congress in 2010, the agency said the next phase will focus on ensuring compliance with the rules, the agency said in a release.

Dispute Resolution Corp. to convince the Canadian federal government to act. "It is very frustrating because this was avoidable if the Canadian government would have acted," Lemaire said. "We had poor bureaucratic support until this year because they felt it wasn't an issue that the U.S. would get tough on. "But it's being discussed right now in Parliament," Lemaire said.

It's not surprising that the AMS revoked Canada's privileged status, said Matt McInerney, executive vice president of the Irvine, Calif.-based Western Growers. He has been working on the issue since the PACA trust was established in 1984, he said. "We were extremely optimistic earlier this year," McInerney said. "Then

"The agency has to design methods to promote widespread voluntary industry compliance with the new rules, as well as establish preventive/public health-focused inspection and sampling programs to oversee compliance," according to the release.

The agency is developing enforcement strategies to be used when producers, processors, distributors and importers fail to comply voluntarily. The FDA must change the way it works, according to the release, because of the global scale and complexity of the food system.

"Hundreds of thousands of growers and processors worldwide are producing food for the U.S. market, using increasingly diverse and complicated processes, managing complex and extended supply chains, and making millions of decisions every day that affect food safety," according to the document. "The burgeoning scale and complexity of the food system make it impossible for FDA on its own, employing our historic approaches, to provide the elevated assurances of food safety envisioned by FSMA and needed to maintain a high level of consumer confidence in the safety of the food supply."

The FDA document said the that food safety depends "primarily on the food industry." Food industry managers must commit to implement science- and risk-based preventive measures and manage their operations and supply chains to prove that appropriate measures are being implemented.

this summer we discovered it appeared the Canadian government wasn't going to act." Produce sellers in the U.S. ship about \$10 million of fresh produce annually to Canadian buyers who don't pay, McInerney said.

The Canadian government has failed to live up to a 2011 pledge under the Canada-U.S. Regulatory Cooperation Council (RCC) to implement a similar program to protect U.S. companies that export to Canada. The RCC has identified 29 regulatory barriers to trade, including the need for Canada to initiate a payment protection program similar to PACA. U.S. and Canadian officials were set to meet in mid-October to discuss the PACA issue.

# National Watermelon Association Convention

Sunday - Thursday • February 15-19, 2015




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**NWA 2015 Hollywood's Winter Playground**  
Sunday - Thursday, February 15-19, 2015 | La Quinta Resort & Spa, La Quinta CA

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**Sunday, February 15, 2015**

- Eldorado Polo Club Matches (Ticketed Event)

**Monday, February 16, 2015**

- Watermelon Invitational Golf Tournament (Ticketed Event)
- San Andrea Fault Jeep Tours (Ticketed Event)
- Palm Springs Luncheon Tour (Ticketed Event)

**Tuesday, February 17, 2015**

- Grower-Shipper Seminar - Recall Readiness
- Welcome Reception
- Dinner & Entertainment

**Wednesday, February 18, 2015**

- Breakfast & Opening Session
- Watermelon Seed Spit Contests
- Watermelon Eating Contests
- Annual Watermelon Auction

**Thursday, February 19, 2015**

- Breakfast & General Session
- NWA Awards Reception
- NWA Annual Awards Banquet







# Illiana Report

Hello Everyone!!!

It is crazy how fast this summer has gone!!! Queen Emily has been very busy this summer with many different promotions. The pictures here are just a small snip of what she has been doing.

Queen Emily has been involved in several visits to elementary schools. During her elementary visits the children have LOVED watching the "Watermelon Magic" video that we all were introduced to at the National Convention. She also has several different watermelon books that she has been reading as well as handing out stickers, activity sheets and coloring books. Some of the classes also had the opportunity to try out the seed spit competition. We love visiting elementary schools and promoting the health benefits of watermelon. The children have been very attentive and excited to have the opportunity to have our Queen come visit them.

Queen Emily has also participated in several Watermelon Festivals around Indiana and parades as well. She helped out with the seed spit competitions, watermelon eating contests and had to opportunity to help judge the festival queen contests.

Our BIG promotion for the summer was Race Week!! We spent an entire week attending several events put on for Riley Children's Foundation in conjunction with Kroger. IWA made a check presentation to the Riley Children's Foundation for \$27,000!! This was money raised by IWA at our annual convention. Then later in week we handed out FREE watermelon at the Brickyard Nascar Race and raised another \$2,850 for Riley by collecting donations. Thank you so much for the chapter queens and coordinators who came to help us!!! These girls worked very hard and never once complained. We also had many volunteers who gave of their time to help as well as many sponsors. We could not have done this without all of you and we are so very appreciative of you giving of your time to make this a very successful week!!! Riley Children's Foundation thanks you as well!!

Queen Emily has also been very busy with in-store promotions for Marsh and Kroger this summer. Queen Emily greeted customers at the door of each and every one of these stores with a smile promoting the sales ad for watermelons. There was rarely a cart that went into the store without a watermelon in it. I am positive that the stores had an increase in sales during her visits. She was very helpful in helping customers pick out the perfect melon and giving them samples, recipes and brochures on the health benefits of watermelon.

There have been so many things going on it is hard to mention every single one of them. Most importantly, we have had some very generous sponsors this year. It is because of our sponsors that we are able to do the number of promotions we do each year. I want to thank each and every one of you!!!

From behalf of IWA....we hope you all have had a GREAT summer!!!



Ribbon Cutting for Kroger Grand Opening, Pekin IL



Marsh Store Promotions



Marsh Store Promotion Downtown Indy



Watermelon Anyone?



Relay for Life, Champaign IL



Queen Emily with Chef Poon

Thank You  
Lori Edwards  
Promotion Coordinator  
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iwapromocoordinator@gmail.com



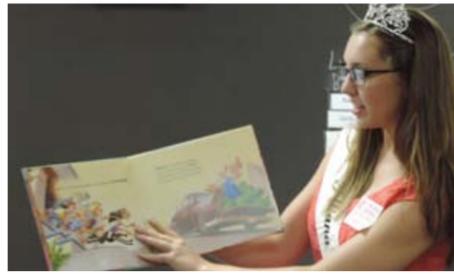
Photo Bombed by Chef Poon



Military Museum



Miss Emily is at her FAVORITE Place - Indiana State Fair!!!



Reading books to an elementary class



Miss Emily with one of many classrooms visited this year



Kelly Tyner and Queen Emily



Mike Horrall with Queen Emily during farm visit



Dennis Mouzin and Queen Emily



Nurse Queen Emily



Miss Anita and Queen Emily at Military Museum



BUSTED!!!!  
Please return our cooler!!!!



July 4th Parade



Emily and Chef Poon make an appearance on FOX 59 in Indianapolis



Thank you so much to these girls for helping during race week!!!



Oaktown Parade



Queen Emily with Professor Watermelon



Queen Emily, Kevin Kotansky/Kroger and National Queen Brandi



Blake Mouzin, Queen Emily, Dennis Mouzin

## ARE YOU READY TO BENEFIT FROM TAP?

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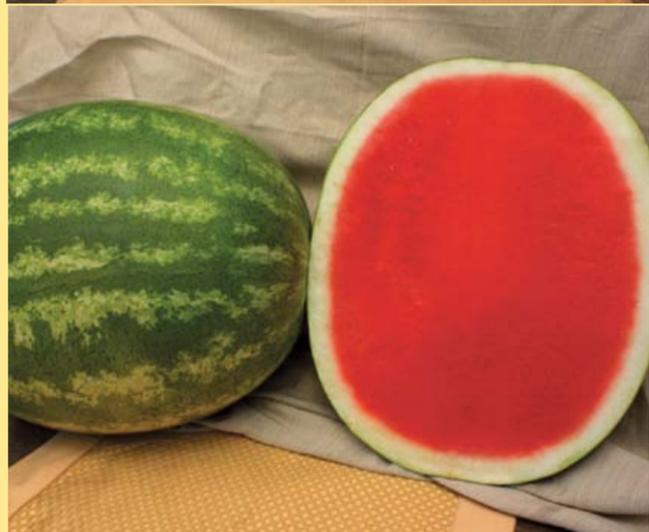
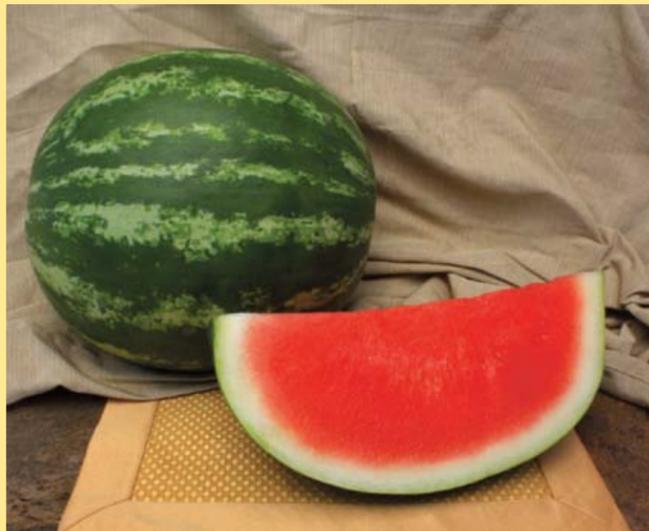


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# Mar-Del Report

Greetings from the Mar-Del Watermelon Association!

Queen Shelby and I have finally had a chance to breathe as our summer has been filled with watermelon promotions all over the world! We started our summer right off with a week spent in Kitchener, Canada and Newfoundland, where Queen Shelby had many grocery store promotions and some well-deserved sight-seeing!

As soon as she returned home it was Delaware State Fair time and Shelby showed the fairgoers how to make Fire and Ice Watermelon Salsa and a No Bake Watermelon Cake. There was no time to waste and Queen Shelby attended a Buy Local Cookout at the Maryland Governor's home, where she met many local famers from Maryland who had donated their fresh produce to be used in delicious dishes.

Queen Shelby's next visit was right down the road from her hometown, Hebron, MD, where Charles and Michelle Wright of Wright's Market, hosted their annual Watermelon Festival filled with a Watermelon Princess pageant that Shelby was the MC for and many other watermelon activities.

Our next week was one of our favorites – the National Queen Tour of Maryland and Delaware! We were elated that so many queens were able to join us! We had the National Queen Brandi, South Carolina Queen Brooke, Georgia Queen Jennifer, Florida Queen Meagan, and past National Queen, Kaitlyn Kelley Miller. Our week began with a trip to the Rehoboth Beach Boardwalk, where the girls handed out slices of watermelon to those visiting the beach. We had a grocery store promotion at the Giant in Rehoboth Beach, DE and the girls judged a watermelon carving contest. The next day, the Queens were taken to the Laurel Auction Block, where they saw how all of our area's watermelons were sold years ago. Farmers, brokers, and locals joined us for the warm morning as watermelons, donated by local farmers, were auctioned off. A big thank you to those famers who donated watermelons! The girls had interviews with a local radio station, Froggy 99.9 and our local news station, WMDT, where they promoted our awesome product. For the end of the week, we took the Queens to Annapolis, MD for a Rotary Crab Feast at the Naval Academy Football Stadium, where slices of watermelons were handed out to over 5,000 people! While we attempted to take a sailboat ride on the Chesapeake Bay, Mother Nature had other plans, so we enjoyed lunch inside instead. To wind down the week, the Queens had a grocery store promotion at Whole Foods in Annapolis. What an awesome, fun-filled week we enjoyed with great company! Thank you queens and coordinators for all your hard work that allowed us to pull this week off!

Well friends, we are barely into August, but we have run out of room and there is so much more to share that you will have to wait and hear about in our next edition of the Vineline! We would like to thank Dawn Collins for helping us out throughout the summer. In addition, we cannot forget Vincent Farms, Melon1 and John Lapide for donating watermelons for our summer promotions. It is so nice to have one less worry during our busiest time.

Until next time, we are sending you our warmest watermelon wishes!

Watermelon Love,

Caitlin Givens  
Promotions Coordinator



Queen Shelby with Randy and Whiskey from Froggy 99.9.



Shelby with students from Sandy Hill Elementary School that she visited as an end of the year incentive.



Shelby with her billboard!



Shelby with Nicole Marenick and Chef D from "At Home with Chef D" in his studio in Kitchener, Canada.



Thank you DE Dept. of Ag, Scot Givens, Kaitlyn Kelley Miller, Dawn Collins, and all the queens and coordinators for their help at the Rehoboth Beach Boardwalk promotion.



Shelby at a Zehr's Grocery store in Canada and her "Maryland Crab" balloon.



The Queens visited the Rehoboth Beach City Commissioner to thank them for their help for our boardwalk promotion. They even dropped off a few watermelons!



Queen Shelby at Zehr's in Bayview, Canada with watermelon cupcakes.



Shelby and the queens served up lots of slices of watermelon to go with lots of steamed Maryland crabs!



We found the Yum-Yum crew in Kitchener, Canada! What a neat surprise.



The girls at the Laurel Auction Block in Laurel, DE.



Shelby with one of the store's watermelon train display.



Queens visited with the Carr and Jane Hussey of Sweet Mama.



Shelby at the DE State Fair and her No Bake Watermelon Cake



A huge thank you to Melon1 for your hospitality and luncheon during our National Queen Tour Week!



Thank you Charles and Michelle Wright of Wright's Market for a full day of watermelon fun!



A huge thank you to Melon1 for your hospitality and luncheon during our National Queen Tour Week!



Proud partner with NWA for 6 years.

chep.com



## Let Facts, Not Fear, Guide Healthy Food Choices



*A reprint from The Alliance for Food and Farming*

There are decades of nutritional studies that clearly show that consumption of fruits and vegetables improves health and leads to a longer life – these studies were largely conducted using conventionally grown produce. There is an impressive body of work by the government, plus peer reviewed science, that shows that residues, if they are present at all, do not pose a food safety concern. Yet certain activist groups continue to perpetuate misinformation that provokes fear about produce safety and one even resorts to the extent of calling fruit and vegetables “dirty”

Two new peer reviewed studies have become part of that scientific body of work that demonstrates the health and safety of produce. This information should be reassuring to consumers with concerns about pesticide residues. The first comes from the University College of London and showed that people who ate seven or more servings of produce per day reduced their risk of premature death by 42%. Consuming that many servings reduced the risk of death from cancer by 25% and heart disease by 31%. This research was published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* and studied the eating habits of over 65,000 people from 2001 to 2013. The study also examined produce consumption of lesser amounts each day and found that risk of premature death by any cause is reduced by 14% if you eat one to three servings a day; 29% for three to five servings; and, 36% for five to seven servings.

Another peer reviewed nutrition study published in the *Journal of Food and Chemical Toxicology* found that if half of all Americans increased consumption of fruits and veggies by a single serving a day, 20,000 cancer cases could be prevented annually.

So while the first study addressed how healthy fruits and veggies really are, the next study reinforced that both organic and conventionally grown foods are safe to eat. A study conducted by Oxford University and published in the *British Journal of Cancer* found that there was no difference in cancer rates of middle aged women who consumed organic foods compared to women who ate conventionally grown foods. This research was sponsored by a British cancer research charity. According to that charity’s health information manager Dr. Claire Knight:

“This study adds to the evidence that eating organically grown food doesn’t lower your overall cancer risk. Scientists have estimated that over 9% of cancer cases in the UK may be linked to dietary factors, of which almost 5% are linked to not eating enough fruit and vegetables. So eating a well-balanced diet which is high in fruit and vegetables – whether conventionally grown or not – can help reduce cancer risk.”

Note the term “adds to the evidence.” How much more do we need? It is time to stop the fear mongering and let consumers know the facts about produce safety. And, those facts support the recommendation of health experts everywhere – eat more conventionally and organically grown fruits and veggies for better health and a longer life. Both production systems yield very safe foods and it is always the right choice to eat more.

## Mexico and US Sign Food Safety Statement



Officials from the U.S. and Mexico who signed the food safety statement included (from left) Mike Taylor, FDA deputy commissioner, Enrique Sánchez Cruz, executive director of SENASICA, Margaret Hamburg, FDA commissioner, and Mikel Arriola Peñalosa,

commissioner of COFEPRIS. Although it is only two pages, the document signed by Mexico and US officials is being called a milestone in the pursuit of cooperative food safety efforts, especially for preventive practices and verification requirements for fresh produce.

“We know that food safety is more a journey than a destination, but there are times when we can point to a major milestone along the road. Today, we reached such a milestone in our long-standing relationship with Mexico by signing a statement of intent to establish a new produce safety partnership,” Mike Taylor, deputy director of the Food and Drug Administration wrote in his blog.

“This collaboration is a priority for public health,” said federal commissioner of COFEPRIS Mikel Arriola Peñalosa. “The partnership will focus on implementing preventive practices and food verification measures that meet the guidelines and best international practices for produce safety.”

The statement of intent calls for:

- Exchanging information to better understand each other’s produce safety systems;
- Developing effective culturally-specific education materials;
- Identifying common approaches for training auditors; and
- Enhancing collaboration on laboratory activities and outbreak response/trace-back activities.

## Local Funding Weakest Link in Food Safety Chain



A disturbing trend well-known among food safety experts will just get worse as federal officials implement the Food Safety Modernization Act. Budget cuts for state and local health entities charged with monitoring everything from fresh produce operations to tattoo parlors is not a surprise.

Joseph Corby, executive director of the Association of Food and Drug Officials agreed that the report provides further documentation of what many people already know.

“The most frustrating thing is we know these things are happening,” Corby said, “Staffs are shrinking, public health is at risk, but the people who can change it are ignoring it.” Corby said state legislators and city and county officials aren’t dealing with the problem.

The NEHA report says the effect of budget cuts translates into decreased ability to respond to foodborne illness outbreaks. According to the report, responses from state and local health and agricultural departments, shows a 30% loss of staffing capacity from 2009 through 2013.

“With the magnitude of the loss, many of the new expectations of state and local programs to integrate into the larger national system are effectively unachievable,” the NEHA report concludes. The report states that nearly half of all funding for food protection and foodborne illness response programs comes from state and local governments.

Although the federal Food Safety Modernization Act does not specifically assign duties to state and local entities, the FDA will have to “lean harder on states and locals to implement FSMA.”

Corby said the FDA already relies on state and local inspectors who are contracted to do inspections for the federal agency. Of the 23,000 FDA inspections in fiscal year 2012, 60% were conducted by state and local officials under contract. It’s less expensive for FDA to

contract out the work than to hire additional staff of its own.

State and local departments generally can’t afford to refuse the FDA contracts because they are using that money to balance their budgets.

Other highlights from the NEHA survey respondents include:

- 17% of local agencies decreased abilities to do routine inspections;
- Of the smaller local agencies (responsible for populations up to 250,000) who must investigate food manufacturer or processor facility outbreaks, 60% report they do not have capacity to meet that responsibility.
- Of state agencies with jurisdictions greater than 1 million, 42% do not have the capacity to sample foods and 60% do not have the capacity to collect and process environmental swabs.

## College Kids Seeking Jobs Should Consider an AG Major

Agriculture was recently rated at No. 5 in a listing of the top 10 college majors with low unemployment, according to a post at the American Society for Horticultural Science website, based on a Georgetown University study.

Jobs in agricultural or natural resources fields often shift with the economy, but unemployment is still pretty low for people with these majors. The Georgetown University study pegged the rate at 7% for new college grads, but this dropped to 2.4% for those with both experience and a degree. Some schools offer online degrees in these fields, and getting started usually only takes earning an associate degree or less.

For those interested in becoming a scientific researcher, earning a Ph.D. is often the norm. Jobs in these fields are available whether you’re the outdoorsy type or you prefer to work inside.



Source: American Society for Horticultural Science

# North Carolina Report

## Greetings from North Carolina

The NC Watermelon Queen Breanna Williams has been busy traveling across NC this watermelon season. Her travels have taken her from the mountains to the coast and many stops in between.

A popular promotion for Breanna this summer was the “Watermelon Day” events at the NC Department of Agriculture Farmers Markets. Nick Augustini, Marketing Specialist with NCDA helped us sample lots of watermelon at the market stops in Charlotte, Asheville, Greensboro and Raleigh. A highlight at the Western NC Farmers Market was the watermelon eating contest and Breanna had lots of fun cheering on the contestants. The State Farmers Market in Raleigh hosted the biggest watermelon contest. Huge watermelons were brought in from all across the state for the competition. Hundreds of spectators were on hand to help guess the weights. Breanna had the privilege of assisting with the weighing and awarding of prizes.

NC Watermelon Festivals are a big part of watermelon season in NC. The Fair Bluff event was Breanna’s first festival and she had a great time sharing the watermelon message with attendees. A special thank you to Mr. Joe Jones for driving Queen Breanna, in the parade, in his 1972 Cadillac convertible. The weather at the watermelon festival in Murfreesboro was a little rainy. But the rain did not dampen the enthusiasm of the crowd and their love for watermelon.

Mr. and Mrs. Percy Bunch hosted the queen and had a wonderful parade float for her. Queen Breanna also emceed the “Little Miss Watermelon” pageant and helped with the watermelon eating and seed spitting contest. The Winterville Watermelon Festival gave Breanna the opportunity to meet lots of consumers and share the watermelon message. Our 2013 NC Watermelon Queen Allyson Brake assisted the Mar-Del Queen Shelby Hurley and Josh Rowe at the Carytown Watermelon Festival in Richmond, VA.

Retail promotions were also an important part of Queen Breanna’s summer. Several eastern NC Food Lion stores hosted special promotions to benefit the Hope for the Warriors program and our queen was invited to assist in the events. These in-store promotions allowed Breanna to help raise money for a great cause and promote watermelons to many shoppers.

Queen Breanna really enjoyed learning about the production side of growing, packing and shipping watermelons from Mr. Rodney Jackson and Mr. Matt Solana at Jackson Farming Company in Autryville, NC. Lots more events to come.

Until next time....  
Sharon Rogers  
Promotions Coordinator  
ncwatermelonqueen@gmail.com  
336-583-9630



Sunset Beach Food Lion “Hope for the Warriors” promotion



Queen Breanna enjoyed spending time in Fair Bluff, NC during the NC Watermelon Festival



Food Lion, Holden Beach, watermelon promotion



Queen Breanna, Joe Jones and Chandler Worley sampling watermelons during the Fair Bluff festival



Queen Breanna shares watermelon with Food Lion customers



News 14 Carolina interviewing Breanna during “Watermelon Day” at the Piedmont Triad Farmers Market



Queen Allyson, Josh Rowe and Mar-Del Queen Shelby Hurley enjoy the Carytown Watermelon Festival in Richmond, VA.



Emerald Isle Food Lion promotion



NC Watermelon Festival in Murfreesboro, NC. Watermelon queen float for parade.



Queen Breanna shares watermelon stickers and smiles with attendees at the Winterville Watermelon Festival.



Queen Breanna enjoying Food Lion in store watermelon promotion



Queen Breanna congratulates the winners of the “Little Farmer” contest at the Murfreesboro Festival.



Watermelons are everywhere during the Winterville Festival. Breanna enjoys a fun watermelon thirst-quencher on the hot day.



“Watermelon Day” at the Charlotte Farmers Market



Little Miss Watermelon and Queen Breanna at the Murfreesboro Watermelon Festival



WFMY-The Good Morning Show in Greensboro, NC hosted Queen Breanna for a live on-air interview to promote NC watermelons.



Watermelon winners with Breanna at the Western NC Farmers Market “Watermelon Day”



Queen Breanna congratulates the watermelon eating contest winners at the Murfreesboro Festival



Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Jackson and their family for welcoming Breanna and giving her a tour of Jackson Farming Company in Autryville, NC.



Western NC Farmers Market staff getting ready for “Watermelon Day”



Mrs. Frances Bunch and Breanna slice watermelon during the festival.

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- Blocky fruits of medium green color with dark green stripes and firm, crisp, smooth interior
- 14- 20lb fruits with high brix
- HR to anthracnose

## Wayfarer F1

- Strong vigorous plant
- Brix 11-12 with excellent traditional sugar baby flavor
- Very firm crisp flesh, excellent shipping ability
- Well adapted to grafting on TZ 148



## Troubadour F1

- High brix with deep red color
- High yield potential
- Strong vine
- Excellent interior appearance
- Excellent eating quality

## Crunchy Red F1

- High brix
- Appealing deep red color
- Good shipping ability
- Meets fresh cut standards
- Wide growing adaptability

## Accomplice

- Prolific male flower production
- Allows for 100% triploid population when interplanted between 3rd & 4th triploid plant
- Potential for increased yield of triploid watermelons

# South Carolina Report

On June 19-22, Brooke traveled to Hampton for the annual Hampton Watermelon Festival. She was joined there by Esther Chappell and Gracen Vaughn who rode in the parade with our Queen. During the weekend, Brooke visited Coosaw Farms, Williams Farms, Kinard Farms and F.H. Dicks Company. We also had the pleasure of having Kendra Kennedy join us for the farm visits.

June 28, found us at the S.C. Farmers Market where Brooke passed out delicious watermelon slices of cool watermelon. Brooke spent July 4th and 5th in Daytona Beach, Florida with Florida Coordinator, Debra Harrison and Florida Watermelon Queen, Megan Morgan. The group served watermelon at the NASCAR race where Ross Chastain was a driver. They also had an in-store Bi-Lo promotion in Orlando, Florida.

On July 3-6, Emily Dicks filled in while Brooke was in Florida at our annual Charleston River Dogs promotional weekend. Three in-store promotions were completed in the Charleston area and then Emily joined Matt Cornwell, Rusty Kinard, Benny Hughes, Chris Cortez and Dr. Tony Keinath for the huge watermelon cutting at the River Dogs Stadium. As in years past, this was a very successful promotion for the S.C. Watermelon Association and Emily did a wonderful job as our queen for the event.

The Blackville Field Day on July 10th, brought in a record crowd. Brooke had a wonderful time with our growers and visitors. She especially enjoyed going into the field and learning all of the up to date growing information on our product. Gilbert Miller did an outstanding job of planning this year's event. On July 11-12, Brooke was in Bluffton and Hilton Head working with Food Lion and Walmart.

The Pageland Watermelon Festival parade was held on July 19th. Brooke was honored to ride in the parade as the S.C. Watermelon Queen. After the parade, we were able to meet with Billy Jenkins and his family for a short visit and many pictures. Billy and his family had numerous entries in the parade and all of the Jenkins grandchildren were able to participate.

The MarDel Queen Tour took place on July 30-August 2. Queen Coordinator, Caitlin Givens did a great job of coordinating all of the events for those in attendance. The events were an interview with Froggy 99.9, watermelon slices on Rehoboth Boardwalk, Giant Foods, Laurel Auction Market, Annapolis Crab Feast, and Whole Foods. We were also treated to a wonderful lunch at Melon 1 with the Lapide family. Thanks go to Patty Lapide Oesterle and Alisa Lapide for taking the time to join us at several events and also for planning the delicious lunch.

In August, the S.C. Watermelon Association provided watermelon slices to The Clemson Tigers, The USC Gamecocks, The Citadel Bulldogs, The South Carolina State Bulldogs and The Presbyterian Blue Hose. Thanks go to Brooke Bell, our first runner-up for filling in at the Presbyterian and Clemson cuttings.

Summers Slaton McBride and Brooke attended the Schutzenfest Festival in Ehrhardt, S.C. on August 15-16. After the parade, Brooke and Summers were treated to lunch by Rusty Kinard at Rusty & Paula's Restaurant in Bamberg, S.C. Brooke and I are looking forward to the upcoming events in September and October – Legislative Visits in Washington, D.C., the S.C. State Fair with Joe Poon, PMA in Anaheim, CA., and The Marine Marathon in Washington, D.C.

Another wonderful watermelon year is coming to a close. We sincerely hope that it has been a profitable and fulfilling one for each and every one of you. Our blessings go out to our watermelon family as we approach the Holiday Season!

Ann Bryant  
S.C. Promotions Coordinator  
abryant028@charter.net  
864-303-3995



The Hampton Watermelon Festival.



The River Dogs mascot with Emily.



Esther, Brooke and Gracen riding the Cinderella Coach in Hampton, S.C.



Ready to serve the crowds at the River Dog Baseball game.



Visiting at Coosaw Farms in Fairfax, S.C.



Blackville Field Day, Blackville, S.C.



Meeting with Mark Williams at Williams Farms in Islandton, S.C.



Pageland Watermelon Festival, Pageland, S.C.



Brooke Bell meeting the Clemson Tigers.



Checking out the melons with Rusty Kinard at Kinard Farms in Lodge, S.C.



The Jenkins Family with one of their parade entries.



What a tiny person among all of the giants at The Citadel in Charleston, S.C.



Melon always steals the show at F.H. Dicks Company in Barnwell, S.C.



Rehoboth Boardwalk, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.



Steve Spurrier looks forward to meeting the Watermelon Queen, Brooke Allender.



Brooke with Commissioner Weathers at the S.C. Farmers Market.



Laurel Farmers Market, Laurel Delaware.



Brooke Bell with Presbyterian College Head Coach, Harold Nichols.



Emily Dicks at a Bi-Lo promotion in Charleston, S.C.



Brooke looking at all of the mounds of blue crab at the Crab Feast, Annapolis, Maryland.

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For best results, use a Sakata early pollenizer – Ace or new Wild Card.

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#### **Secretariat**

45-count / Traditional rind

### Mid Maturing

#### **Kingman**

36/45-count / Traditional rind

#### **Unbridled**

36/45-count / Dark rind

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# Texas Report

Howdy from Texas!

It has been a busy summer for Queen Kendall Duke who, as you all remember, was our 2013 Texas Watermelon Queen, and who has been working for the association as our 2014 queen. She has traveled all over our great state working for the NWPB and HEB promoting our favorite fruit. She has been to cities like Kyle, Humble, Mission, Pharr, San Antonio, Austin, and Brenham to name a few. Once again she has been a wonderful representative for the association. Kendall has been participating in all kinds of promotional experiences in the stores, the most memorable being when she danced in the grocery store with the HEB mascot- a grocery bag! (I'm sorry I don't know what happened to the picture.) She has been passing out hundreds of samples of watermelon, recipes, coloring books, stickers and hugs. She has a great attitude and a lot of energy and she's made us very proud.

Her most recent trip that was not an in-store promotion was to Plains, Texas for the Yokum County Watermelon Round-Up sponsored by Texas Melon Exchange and McWhirter Farms, and it was one of Kendall's favorite trips. Kendall said, "I had a wonderful time. Not only did I take part in the seed spit contest. I was also able to judge the car show where I later presented the "Queen's Pick" award to the owner of a beautiful, red 1968 Mustang. One of my favorite parts of the visit was getting to know everyone and visiting with those who I had the privilege of meeting last year. All while enjoying those sweet slices of watermelon."

The next trip planned is the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. in October, which we are looking forward to. And of course we are also looking forward to our convention on November 7th- 8th and hope many of you will be able to make it. We are bringing back our pageant and are very excited to welcome a new queen into the watermelon family.

May you all have a wonderful holiday season and a blessed new year.

Fondest regards,

Barbara Duda  
TWA Secretary/Coordinator  
bcduda62@gmail.com

Kendall was having fun at a Cedar Park HEB Promotion.



The HEB in Sharyland, Texas- notice the light?

Ever want to cuddle up with a watermelon?



Visiting with a cute customer



Discussing recipes and the health benefits of watermelon



They even had face painting at the HEB in Pharr, Texas.



Enjoying another HEB promotion in San Antonio with two beauties



I was so proud of Kendall- she always has a smile on her face.

Having a "sweet" moment with her favorite guy, Luke Brown



Kendall teaches a customer in how to choose a watermelon.



Kendall got to see some friends.



A pretty threesome



The Austin promotion



Happy to take one more picture!



Kendall with some Yokum County beauties



Just having a little fun!



Enjoying the Plains Festival with Connie McWhirter and weather man, John Robison.

Kendall and one of the car show favorites



Seeded or seedless, it's all good!



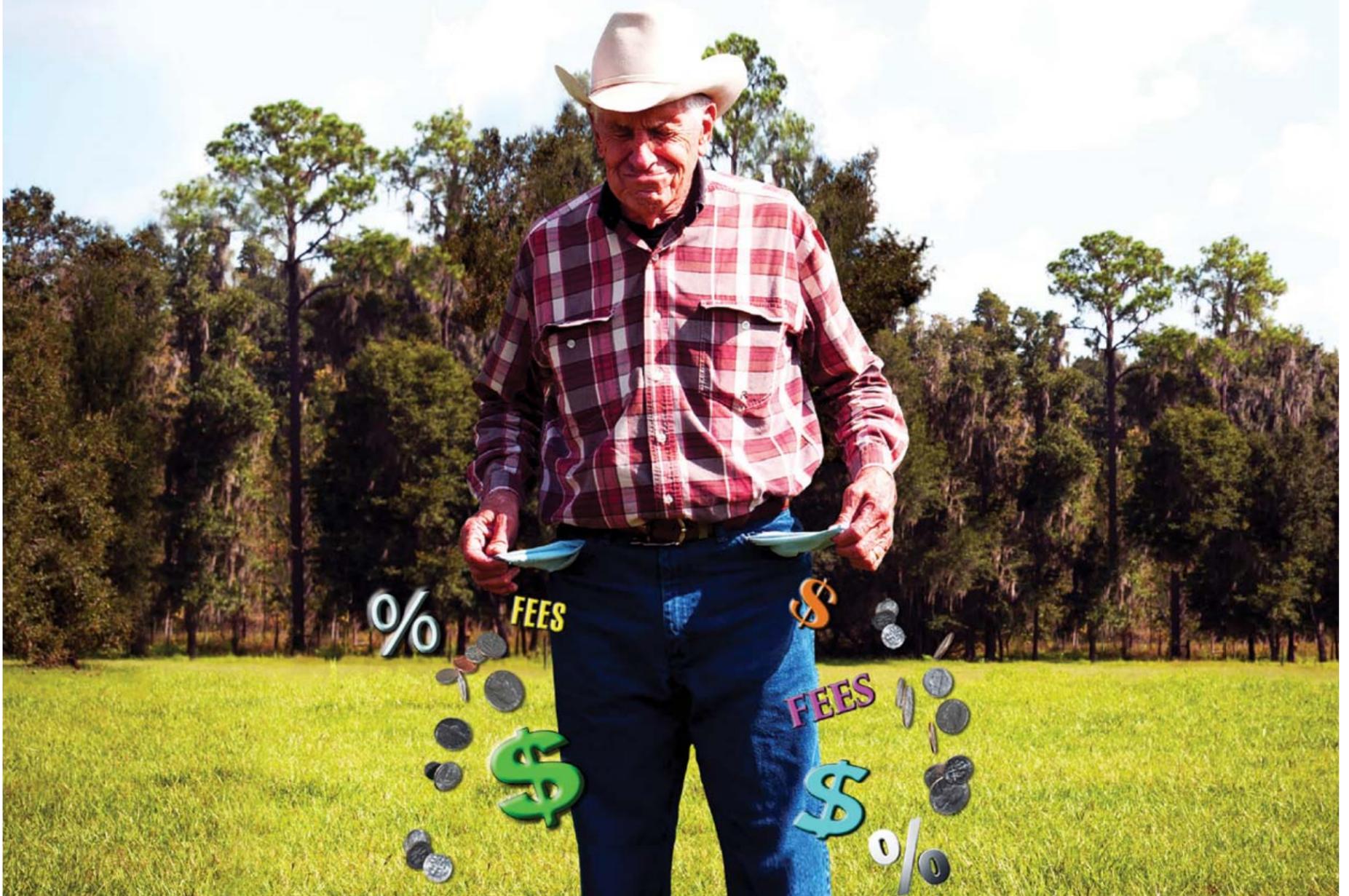
Visiting with Connie and Macky McWhirter and Teretha Jones

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## Western Report

**IT'S CONVENTION TIME!!**

**January 17, 2015**

**New York, New York Hotel & Casino**

**Las Vegas, NV**



**The Western Watermelon Association will hold its annual convention on January 17th, 2015 in Las Vegas, NV. This convention brings together growers, shippers, distributors and related service providers of the watermelon industry in a relaxed environment. We have an exciting line up of guest speakers this year. Breakfast and lunch will be provided as well as a three hour long social hour for members to gather together and exchange ideas and meet one another. All are welcome and encouraged to attend! Please contact the Western Watermelon Association for more information.**

**Western Watermelon Association  
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Nogales, AZ 85628  
[www.westernwatermelon.org](http://www.westernwatermelon.org)**



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## Uncle Sam does not need you; We do!

We all receive news from different sources, by-and-large based on our generational preferences and experiences. Many of us are used to the morning newspaper, magazines and television news, while younger generations have moved almost exclusively to the internet and social media. No matter how you receive news, one would have to be a hermit not to hear about Washington and the dysfunction that has been promulgated there (in seemingly high speed) for the past 6-8 years.

It is very easy to get frustrated, or vote for change during elections (to 'vote all the bums out', as that old saying goes), or not vote or care at all. Our human spirit and confidence in our federal government has been diminished, as represented by the historic low approval ratings of Congress and the President.

There are some that will say that Washington has accomplished very little in the past 6-8 years, and that seems to be the S.O.P. of the District of Columbia and will continue until after the 2016 Presidential election cycle.

As a citizen of this country, and a long-time voter, I have chosen to say 'No More'. I cannot accept the never-ending excuses, ineffective leadership, and escalating dysfunction of my federal government. Enough is enough! That dog just won't hunt anymore.

I have had the pleasure to meet Speaker John Boehner on two occasions this year, along with a few Congressmen and Senators (from both parties). And, I am pleased to be able to call my own U.S. Congressman a good friend. If you will allow me, I will share with you that some of the news that is reported is correct (and not tainted), and some is never reported because it cannot achieve the hype that media outlets crave.

Speaker Boehner does have difficulty with the Tea Party within his own party. That is not 'new' news, and it is largely based on the House rule known as the Hastert Rule, which will not allow any bill to come to the floor without the majority of the majority party in support of it. The Speaker of the House has about 180 members that are in lock-step with his party's political principles, and the remaining 45+ in the Tea Party ranks. That is where his primary issues lie. When he has a bill to take to the House floor for consideration, he must go to the other side of the aisle (Democrats) to try to get the needed votes to pass a bill. It also hurts the Speaker's progress when Tea Party Senators like Ted Cruz speak out against Republican House initiatives that he does not agree with, or the President threatens to stop deportations two months before the 2014 mid-term elections if it will teach the Republicans a lesson for inaction, thus helping Democrats during the elections. Politics at its best (or worst) seems to be like an old Western stand-off.

If you must ask, Yes there is a big rift between the House Republicans and the President. It is based on a huge divide in policy, the President's seeking of a signature law to solidify his legacy, a lack of negotiating to the middle by both sides, and mistrust of the President to uphold the laws of our country, which he has shown on occasion to adjust through his exercise of executive powers to postpone major portions of the Affordable Care Act, admit illegal migrant children into the country, or the recent 5-for-1 prisoner exchange with Al Qaeda for the return of Bowe Bergdahl. Without trust, how can anyone work together?

Here is the Reality that we (and they) face - - Immigration Reform is not a Republican issue; it is not a Democratic issue; it is not a Tea Party issue; it is not a President Obama issue; IT IS AN AMERICAN ISSUE! They are all at fault for dragging politics into the issue - Again! The fact of the matter is that

Immigration Reform is a humane issue; it is a family issue; it is a global feeding issue; it is a Christian issue; and it is an economic issue for our country. Without migrant labor to plant and harvest our crops, this world will die of starvation! In 10-30 years it is predicted that the feeding of our world will become the most important issue facing us. And our government is arguing about an immigration policy. What's up with that?

The issue now lies in the hands (currently) of the House Republicans. The typical road for them to follow during an election cycle is to 'Kick the can down the road' and put off solutions and/or legislation dealing with Immigration Reform, meanwhile they lose votes from the growing and important Latino vote to the Democratic Party.

I have come to know a little about Speaker Boehner, and I am fully confident that he wants to get immigration reform done. He recognizes that the migrant population is a key component to our nation's economy. They contribute every day to our success, and provide a vital solution to our industry's labor needs that we would not have otherwise.

Now that Eric Cantor (VA) lost his primary and has left the Majority Leader's post, the new Leader is Kevin McCarthy, a congressman from the single largest AG district in the USA. Many of us believe that this change will open that door to create Immigration Reform in the next Congress (2015), as long as it does not get kicked down the road to leave it up to a new President.

Where does all of this take us? Two key places. First, when we ask you through E-blasts to write or email your legislators to move Immigration Reform forward (or any other federal initiative), please by all means do so, and have your employees and suppliers and family members do so as well. We need every voice possible to join us in this effort to 'TELL OUR LEGISLATORS WHAT THEY NEED TO DO TO HELP OUR BUSINESSES'.

Second, please consider making a political visit with your association (the National Watermelon Association) in 2015. We have to reverse the agenda in Washington to once again become ours; not theirs. If the House of Representatives is truly the People's House, then the agenda needs to represent what the people want (and not include what we do not want). Your voice face-to-face with your legislators can make a huge impact. There will be two significant opportunities to do this next year, and we will alert you in advance to both of them.

It is troubling to realize how the NWA (and other AG groups) have changed across the years - - and changed necessarily! It used to be that we developed government relations and our agenda to be lobbied to our government officials, but recent years have altered that mission to become a protectionist proposition of our members' businesses, the traditions of our industry, and the association - - protecting it all in a defensive posture from our very own government. That is a trend that we must change.

We are not alone in this endeavor. Other AG groups are holding back on political campaign contributions in an effort to hold politicians accountable for their campaign promises. The mantra seems to be in agreement with the lyrics from an old Janet Jackson song, 'What have you done for me lately?' Maybe that is what it will take for some of our legislators to steer the agenda back into what the people need; and Not need - - like more and more rules, regulations and government oversight.

This is a Call-to-Arms for YOU! Are you prepared to join our forces? We can do this - Together! We have the know-how and a strong will, so please let us not ever under-estimate ourselves and be distracted or frustrated by the negativity. We will be steadfast to keep our sights high with a positive attitude. We all love this business, and our Watermelon Family. Families that stick together are connected by strong roots. At the end of the day, that is what really matters. Godspeed.

**Bob Morrissey**



## New FDA Rules Still Flawed

Industry leaders say the FDA's revised food safety rules are a step in the right direction for fresh produce operators, but still have room for improvement. The revised rules, released Sept. 19 and published in the Federal Register Sept. 29, include the produce safety rule, the preventive controls rule and the foreign supplier verification program. The comment period on the revised regulations will extend until mid-December. Final regulations on the rules will be released later next year.

David Gombas, senior vice president of food safety and technology for United Fresh Produce Association, saw both good and bad in the revisions. "Some of the changes they proposed I think the industry will be happy with - like the water and compost rules - but some of the things that were not changed I'm disappointed in and I don't think (the FDA) took the produce industry into consideration," Gombas said. Revisions to the foreign supplier verification program fell short of industry expectations, he said.

Jim Gorny, vice president of food safety and technology for the Produce Marketing Association, said the FDA revised its definition of farms to eliminate the overlap between the preventive control rule and the produce rule. "If you are on a farm, you are covered by the produce rule," he said. However, packinghouses that are not on a farm still must deal with the preventive controls rule, and Gorny said it would make sense if all fruit and vegetable packinghouses - both on farm and off farm - were under the produce rule to avoid confusions. Gombas said the FDA rules will put stand-alone packinghouses at an economic disadvantage.

The produce safety rule also excludes farms of less than \$25,000 in covered sales from the regulation, Gorny said. "Granted, (the small farms) do represent a small number of servings, but if there is a foodborne illness outbreak associated with a very small farm, it still affects everybody that is doing the right thing," he said. The revised water requirement may not be any more science-based than the original proposal FDA but it does give growers more flexibility, Gombas said. "It will require testing for something that we know doesn't relate to food safety," he said, referring to the agency's stipulation that water is tested for generic E. coli. "My advice to FDA is to keep hard numbers out the rule because we know it is not science-based at this point," Gombas said.

FDA's language on mandatory product testing in food facilities is troubling, Gombas said. "For fresh-cut, that could kill the industry if everybody had to do what Earthbound Farm does now, which is testing every lot of product - that will completely change the fresh cut industry," he said. End product testing doesn't make the food any safer and will add expense, he said. "Product testing will be onerous for the produce industry," he said.

Relating to the Foreign Supplier Verification Program, Gombas said the revised rules still require the importer to do a hazard analysis and will require an audit, going above the demands of the produce safety rule. What's more, the rule excludes very small foreign suppliers, those that have less than \$25,000 of sales of covered commodities. That may cause some importers to source from very small foreign suppliers instead of using an aggregator to avoid regulation, Gombas said. That kind of loophole won't help produce safety, he said.

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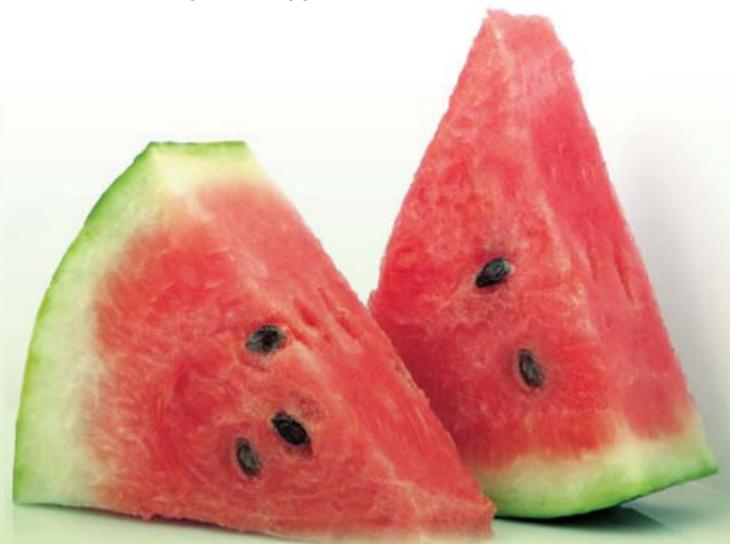
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