



Did you ever ask yourself (or another person) what the National Watermelon Association does for its members (for you)? In today's competitive world where you have many choices to make, that is a valid and appropriate question to ask of any association, organization, group, charity or business that you are considering doing business with, or supporting. What you receive in return is important to your business – to your livelihood – and to your Association. A return on your investment is a question that should be asked, and validated by the Association too.



The National Watermelon Association is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives and livelihoods of our members by promoting the best interests of the watermelon industry from production to consumption in the growing, grading, handling, transporting, distributing, and selling of watermelon. That is our established Mission, and we pursue that charge in all that we do for our members.



Our goal each and every day is to pursue solutions for our members' business challenges related to all areas of federal public policy and government relations, production research, food safety and traceability, networking opportunities, expanding communications, the national convention, training aids, marketing the Association, and much more. In many cases, what we do is not possible by individual members, but together, we can accomplish much.

- **Congressional designation of July as National Watermelon Month**
- **Created our watermelon pre-print bin for packing and retail display**
- **Discovery of the virus and subsequent solution to Vine Decline (viral disease)**
- **Writing of Watermelon Food Safety & Traceability Guidance**
- **Honoring our forefathers and past leaders in the Association's Hall of Fame**
- **Welcoming young watermelon farmers in our Future Farm Leaders program**
- **Expanding into major promotions (with the NWPB) at the Marine Corps Marathon, the National Display Contest and NASCAR Watermelon race team**
- **Impactful educational sessions (recalls, outbreaks, legal and labor)**
- **Expanded record-setting national conventions**

There are some people that have the idea that the National Watermelon Association is solely about the watermelon queens and the corresponding promotions that accompany those efforts. The queen-related promotions play an important role in our promotional activities, but they are also joined by other cornerstone programs and services that work to satisfy the needs and desires of other members. Members are involved for a variety of reasons, and needs. Our job is to work toward achieving successes to meet the needs as best we can.






Across the cover of this issue are examples of a few major successes from recent years in vital areas of the business that have made a difference for our members. There are so many more, but these will give you a brief taste of what the Association does for our members each and every day.

In this issue of The Vineline member magazine, we will share some of the major programs and services that are available to our members. Following your review, we believe that you will see meaningful 'Value' in what it means to be a member of the National Watermelon Association.

Enjoy the reading as you review numerous programs and services that we intend to make a difference for your business, and for the Association's membership. Enjoy!

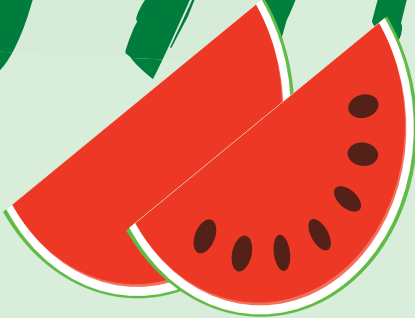






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Subscription rates: USA and Canada, no charge to Association members. All others, U.S. subscriptions, \$30.00 per year (U.S. Dollars); Canadian Subscriptions, \$40.00 per year (U.S. Dollars); Other foreign subscriptions, \$50.00 per year (U.S. Dollars).

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Publisher - National Watermelon Association • Layout - www.rubberneckerdesign.com

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Public affairs can be defined in a simple fashion Through involvement and relationship-building we engage with our federal legislators and administrators to craft legislation and rules that will help (not hinder) our members’ businesses and livelihoods. That is the gist of it. Our country’s public affairs however are construed in a various number of ways, largely based on the ever-changing political environment. What that tends to creates is a vacuum in many cases of disgust, distaste and a genuine dislike for most anything to do with politics, politicians, and public policy. We agree with you wholeheartedly!

However, the job of lobbying for and creating good public policy to meet the needs of our members, to include a decrease in burdensome regulations, continues to move forward no matter what condition or position that the political arena may be settled into yesterday, today and tomorrow. Building those relationships, educating those legislators, and looking forward is vital to our public affairs and government relations program.

The areas of involvement that the National Watermelon Association is engaged in are vast, as well as timely and opportune when legislation and debate do arise. Add to that our educational component of new laws and requirements has taken shape to guide our members through the myriad of legislation, rules and regulations. Here is a sampling of the Hot Topics this year:

A Public Policy Forum on FB

For all of our friends that are on Facebook, we have created a Public Policy Forum page that is ‘by invitation’ only. This page is geared to provide key insights and news mainly about the Presidential election, the candidates, their platforms, and how their positions may affect our business. Other federal campaign or election news may also be added.

The postings on this page are intended to be bipartisan, straight-forward, and unedited from the sources that we capture them. The followers of this private Facebook page deserve to know -- and when they sign up indirectly indicate that they too want to know -- what the larger issues are related to the Presidential campaigns, debates, positions and election. Call it the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly -- sort of sounds like what Hillary vs. Trump may be later this summer!

If you are on Facebook, sign up for this page, and become aware of their platforms, their positions, and their intentions as they relate to all of the things that can and will affect our lives. We’ll even throw in a few cartoons and videos periodically to keep us all smiling.

A Day of Watermelon



Contacting Your Legislators

A Day of Watermelon is not a program for every one of our members. We all have different roles within the industry. Yet this program is one that is FOR ALL.

At periodic times throughout the legislative calendar, we have those times when a legislative action, or public comment on a rule, or other action requires us to contact our U.S. Congress (or the Federal Register) to vote this way or that way, or re-write a rule to better reflect what will make sense for the business.

When those times arise, you (and every other member) can get involved by calling, emailing, writing, or tweeting your legislator directly. They hear the communications loud and clear, and in many cases those communications have a strong bearing on how the legislator will vote. Please join us, when those times arise.

Creating a Viable, Workable Immigration Policy

The last immigration bill that became law was in 1986, signed by then president Ronald Reagan. Since that time, immigration in our country has taken on an entirely new meaning with both sides of the debate digging in deep with their needs, values, and deepening the political divide that surrounds this needed policy.

Creating a sound and viable (and legal) workforce for Agriculture is Job #1: This is a must have from our federal legislators, and it should be their first and foremost priority -- not a political football. Without a viable workforce, literally nothing in the business matters. Not food safety, not trucking, not varieties, not suppliers, not anything. Labor is the key to it all. A legal, viable workforce is what matters. Without it, there is no planting, no growing, no harvesting, no packing, no shipping, NO FOOD!

Take notice of this issue, and make it a top priority of yours. Every member that is involved in the watermelon business is affected by this issue either directly or indirectly. Let’s push this envelope more than we ever have before right after the election and get it done – Finally!

‘A Day of Watermelon’ is an effort to connect our federal representatives with our members in their home state, congressional district, city or town, and on their own turf -- the shed or farm. We created a comprehensive toolkit that will help a member to schedule, invite, plan, and implement a day with their representative.

With a strong majority of our U.S. Congress being NEW to Washington, it is incumbent on us to educate them about us: What do we do each day? What do we need from Washington to do that job better? More efficiently? With less regulations? With less government intervention? What does Washington need to do

Labor Audits and Raids

Let’s say that you are in full speed ahead mode harvesting, packing and shipping watermelons, and one of the government agencies shows up to ask questions, inspect records, interview you and your employees, etc. It may be the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), or Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE), or the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), or the Wage & Hour Division from your own state.

If and when they visit your business, they may bring up wage rates, hours worked per day, overtime pay, hiring documentation, employer-employee relationships, and more. As an employer of migrant workers (or hiring a labor contractor), employers have to meet requirements under two different laws:

- Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA)
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

What rights do you have if they arrive unannounced? The answer is you do have rights. But first, contact your attorney if this situation should occur on your business premise(s). And, familiarize yourself with the documents and legal advice that is offered at www.watermelon.ag.



Employer/Contractor Responsibility of Migrant Workers

Do you directly employ migrant workers regularly or for a short period of time, or do you hire a third party company that provides the workers to your business? If you hire a third party company (sometimes known as a labor contractor), do you know that you may have as much responsibility for those workers as the third party company does?

This development is commonly referred to as ‘Joint Employment’.

Our website has some key information available to you that specifically discusses joint employment, to include:

- Your Liability
- The Ruling
- Employment Relationship under FLSA
- AG Employers under FLSA
- Independent Contractors
- New Minimum Wage Rates

For additional information, or counsel, you are recommended to contact your attorney for legal advice. All growers and packers/shippers should be well informed about the laws.

to encourage farmers and the younger generations to become farmers? Lobbying is not a spectator sport -- We should all be involved at least at the local level.

The bottom line is very simple If we do not educate them (tell them) what we need, or do not, then how can we expect them to do it? You deserve representation in Washington that understands your needs in business, and they should want to know. Take the step to invite them to your place -- talk with them -- show them around -- make a new friend in the process. The future can be bright, if we all help out and do our parts.



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National Report

What an amazing year so far for Carla Lynn Penney 2016 National Watermelon Queen. She has enjoyed so many valuable and diverse promotions in such a short period of time. We have such a limited space to cover these awesome promotional events, but certainly wish to thank the sponsors for making them possible. Carla is doing a fantastic job representing our industry promoting our product. I will highlight the events and sponsors, and let the pictures give the account of the events.

- Illiana Watermelon Association;** Convention; French Lick, Indiana
- Freddie Ellis; Sun Up Produce;** N C Watermelon Convention; Wrightsville Beach, NC
- Allen Lund Co;** St Patrick’s Day Parade; Savannah, Georgia
- South Carolina Watermelon Association;** Cooper River Bridge Run; Charleston, SC
- Melon 1; Browning & Sons;** Food Lion Grand Opening; Edenton, NC
- Queen Training;** Orlando, FL
NWPB; CPMA; Calgary Canada
- Carla Penney Day** in Vienna, GA
- Warren Produce;** Race for the Cure; Minneapolis, MN

We have so much more to share with you, next printing.

Best of the Season to you!

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Makensie and Carla and their Watermelon Teammates show us their “W”

Paul Sawyer gives Carla a Guitar, signed by Lady Antebellum he purchased at the IWA auction. Thank You Paul



Carla poses with IWA President Mike Horral



Carla poses with 2015 IWA Queen, Lindsey Hampton and 2015 National Queen Emily Brown



Carla congratulates McKenzi McClain 2016 IWA Queen



Thank you Freddie Ellis and Sun Up Produce for bringing us to the NC Convention



The Sun Up team! Thank you for your hospitality and sponsorship



Senator Brent Jackson, and long time tour sponsor at the NC Convention



Carmen and Carla tried to catch up at the Convention



Congratulations to Sarah Lemons the 2016 NC Watermelon Queen



The Allen Lund team treat us to dinner in Savannah on the eve of the St Patrick Day Parade



Special thanks to Nora Trueblood, director of Marketing & Communications for Allen Lund



What a wonderful day with this amazing group in Savannah!



Carla loved being in the St Patrick Day parade in Savannah, 2nd largest in the country!



On the air in Charleston, for Low Country Live



The Girls at the Bi Lo Expo in Charleston



A slightly rainy start at the Cooper River Bridge Run, turned into a beautiful day, over 45,000 cups of watermelon served...Success

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National Pictures



These girls worked very hard!



Food Lion in Edenton, NC a cold 7:30 AM Ribbon-Cutting, huge turn out



Carla and Sarah with Watermelon, AKA Don Hiller in Edenton



Ross Chastain, and the Watermelon Car on hand with the Food Lion, thank you Browning & Sons; Melon 1



Lunch with Mrs. Frances Bunch and Don Hiller, what a treat!



This group of girls in Orlando for Queen training



Thanks NWPB for this great event, and dinner, thanks also to Kendra and Katelyn for your part of the program



This wonderful NWPB Group made Carla's 24th Birthday very special with delicious cupcakes!



Lee Wroten gives the girls a tour and training session in their packing facility



Lee and his beautiful family in the field near Lakeland with all the young ladies attending training this year, thanks Lee and NWPB



Produce News video interview for their website in Calgary for CPMA



The Watermelon Board Booth is looking great in Calgary



Brad Brownsey NWPB Retail Rep, Carla, Juliemar and Megan at the booth at CPMA



A Quick trip up to Banff National Park, the Canadian Rockies



Carla is presented a proclamation declaring it "Carla Penny Day" in Vienna, GA, by the Mayor of Vienna, Hobby Stripling and signs to be on all entry highways into Vienna declaring it the hometown of Carla Penney, National Watermelon Queen



Another proclamation from County Commissioner Steve Sanders



Mrs. Margie Leger gives Carla a congratulatory hug and Mr. Buddy is next



Kendra Kennedy was on hand to share in "Carla Penney Day" in Vienna



Proud parents Carlene and John Penney



Dinner with this CH Robinson group in Minneapolis and sponsor Jimmy Henderson and Texas Queen Makensie Anderson



Makensie and Carla enjoyed the Race for the Cure



Thank You Warren Produce and Jimmy Henderson



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The practice of food safety has become commonplace for anyone in the produce business, and a terminology that is handled with pages and seemingly volumes of detail, due care, and time consumption. Food safety has become a mainstay and mandatory part of the produce business to assure that the crops grown, packed, shipped and sold to consumers are healthy and bacteria/pathogen free.

My, how far we have come in such a short time. Consider that just one decade ago, food safety was something we automatically did, naturally. It was something far different than what is required today by our own government, and by a number of your customers who resell the crop to consumers. Well, reminiscing is fine, but it's time to move on to current day business.

The National Watermelon Association has been intimately involved with food safety since 2007, and continues to provide guidance, interpretation, support, and even debate when needed. Helping our members to understand the new regulations; challenging the auditors and audit expectations to be sensible and consistent with other practices; leading our watermelon industry to implement effective programs such as these; and encouraging education and preparedness in all aspects of food safety, traceability, recalls and outbreak responses to minimize any potential damage to the association's members and the industry These are all part of the cornerstone program that we call Food Safety. This is one of the major priorities that we stand for - - doing the right thing, effectively.

The National Watermelon Association website has a plethora of information related to food safety that you can refer to on an ongoing basis. On this page of The Vineline is a snippet of what is available to you.



Food Safety Modernization Act

We all know well enough that the world of produce has changed in the past few years, especially as it related to food safety. What once was a normal, relatively easier process has now become the Food Safety Modernization Act, commonly referred to as FSMA.

FSMA is the most comprehensive overhaul of food security and food safety law in our nation's history, and with it has come extensive regulations, audits, audit requirements and procedures, and high costs - - all to assure the safeness of the produce food supply.

The FDA has now completed the writing, review and issuing of all seven rules that make up FSMA. The details of each rule, who is responsible for each rule, and when FDA will begin enforcement of them is detailed out on the National Watermelon Association website.

The seven final rules are in place, and we now await the numerous guidance documents that will complete FDA's writing task to interpret the Congressional intent of the law. They are:

- Produce Safety rule
- Preventive Controls – Human Food
- Preventive Controls – Animal Food
- Foreign Supplier (Import) Verification rule
- Sanitary transportation rule
- Accredited Third Party Certification
- Intentional Adulteration rule

What to Do In Case of a Crisis

None of us ever want to experience first-hand (or even hear about) a recall or outbreak in the watermelon industry, but unfortunately that is a possibility that we cannot take for granted or simply avoid. The key for all of us is to be prepared, to do what we must do to avoid that from occurring in our businesses, and in turn to help lessen the burdens that always accompany such a major issue.

A number of years ago, the National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) created an effective crisis communications plan and put it into place to assist their staff and the industry to be prepared to address a crisis

Watermelon Food Safety Guidance

In 2007 the Executive Committee of the National Watermelon Association directed staff to assemble, write and create our own commodity-specific food safety program that could become a model for our industry. In cooperation with the academic community, government officials, associated produce executives, retailers, foodservice operators and members from our membership, we unveiled the first edition in 2008, followed by an update in 2009.

We are beginning a review of the guidance and accompanying documents to create a third issue in 2017. The guidance is extensive, and covers many details of a typical audit without retailer riders:

- Farm Self Audit
- Packer Self Audit
- Worker Hygiene
- Recordkeeping
- Carrier Monitor Log
- Visitor Log
- Water Source Testing
- Rodent & Insect Control
- Field Environment
- Worker Education
- Equipment Sanitation
- Restroom Sanitation
- Much more

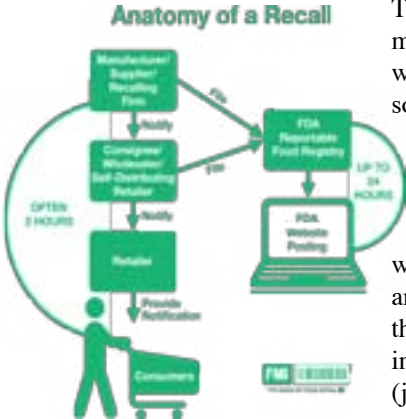
The release of our Watermelon-specific food safety program for farmers and packers, called the “Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for the Fresh Watermelon Supply Chain”, is available in both English and Spanish languages. Each section of the lengthy document is printable and downloadable on the National Watermelon Association website.

“Food safety has become a standard expectation of any produce industry to maintain and build consumer confidence. With the advent of produce outbreaks due to food safety issues, there has never been a more important time for our industry to build on our growing and handling practices to provide a safe, healthy watermelon supply. Although these guidelines are voluntary, they in large part mirror the new final rules of the Food Safety Modernization Act. We look forward to supporting your efforts to implement these standards into your operation, to help you to protect our industry and your operation, to continue to provide a safe and healthy crop, and to continue to build consumer confidence. Together, we can make a difference.” - - Bob Morrissey

Please do yourself a huge favor do not assume that your business is responsible for all of most of the rules until you have reviewed the materials, asked questions, and gain the verification that you should have. The rules are specific to certain businesses, environments and practices, and are not subject to all as a one-size-fits-all scenario.

that the watermelon industry may face. The plan has a number of resources in place to ensure that the industry is prepared. Priority-issue positions and messages have been developed, and a crisis team has been designated that includes industry members, staff, and third-party experts, along with contact databases that have been created for key industry members, media and third-party resources.

NWPB conducts annual crisis communications training for its staff and board members, and audits its crisis plan annually to ensure that it is consistent with new technology and trends. Staying ahead of this issue is a vital key to protecting the industry of (or when) such an occurrence should darken our industry's door.



The National Watermelon Association website contains some key information surrounding this topic. Please refer to the key information at www.watermelon.ag, and be sure to keep the contact information handy (just in case).

Implementing FSMA Rules

For years the Association has worked in concert with produce industry members, regulators, and stakeholders to analyze the FDA's proposed regulations under the Food Safety Modernization Act. Following the public comment periods and public hearings, the final rules have been released, and will follow with numerous guidance documents.

Our efforts now shift to the implementation (and watchful eye) phases:

1. The Association will continue to work with the FDA to analyze the guidance documents as they are written and released to assure that they are based on sound science, consistent with Congressional intent of FSMA, and appropriate for our industry.
2. While the final FSMA rules are released, as we await the release of the accompanying guidance documents, and the efforts to understand the rules begin to take shape prior to the enforcement phase by FDA, the Association will work with our produce industry partners to make the appropriate education tools available to our members. We will also work with FDA's enforcement division to seek education opportunities ahead of enforcement.
3. The Association has serious concerns about exemptions based on farm size. We firmly believe that any farm that sells their crop into the commercial market should be subject to the same food safety laws as those that are larger. Pathogens do not select their farm victims by size of sales volume.

As we come across any of these new developments, we will ask Congress to remain vigilant to assure that the original Congressional intent of FSMA is realized. We will request that Congress consider 'fixes' to FSMA when those needs arise. And, we will implore Congress to create a legislative fix to eliminate the small farm size exemption. When those times and opportunities arise, we will ask you to make contact with your representatives to push our agenda forward. Until that time(s) arise, we thank you for implementing the rules of the Food Safety Modernization Act, and for doing your part to provide a wholesome, healthy summer favorite to consumers Watermelon!

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Alabama Report

Greetings from Alabama,

Watermelon season is here and Queen Madison has been busy learning about the watermelon industry from start to finish. The 2016 Queen Tour started with the annual National Watermelon Promotion Board Queen Training in Orlando, Florida. Queen Madison and our 1st runner up Paige left training prepared and ready to start their promotions.

Next we were off to Charleston, SC to the Cooper River Bridge Run. Queen Madison and many other state queens helped the South Carolina Watermelon Association pass out watermelon to thousands of runners. This run is ranked as the 3rd largest 10k in America.

Memorial Day was kicked off by a great visit to Ohio. We were welcomed by Buehler's shoppers and employees with open arms in Wooster and Canton Ohio. We handed out lots of watermelon and watermelon smiles. Thank you James Scarborough with Continental Produce and the staff at Buehler's for making this a wonderful promotion.

With watermelon season in full swing comes watermelon festivals. Queen Madison attended the Chiefland Watermelon Festivals where she rode in the parade, visited the festivals and welcomed the newly crowned festival queens. While in Florida, we were able to visit a few special people and see them in action this season. Thank you for taking the time to visit with us: Mr. Billy and Mrs. Corliss Smith with Billy Smith Watermelons, Mr. Jeff and Mrs. Bobbie Jo Garrett with Clifton Seed, Mr. Trey and Mrs. Amber Smith, Mr. Terry Parrish with Clifton Seed, Mr. Rantz and Mrs. Stephanie Smith with Smith Farms, and Mr. Dan and Mrs. Carrie Thomas with Diamond 99. Thank you all for your hospitality and support!

Queen Madison was invited to speak at the annual Alabama Ag in the Classroom convention. She spoke to over 100 teachers on how to use watermelon in their classroom. Alabama Ag in the Classroom provides teachers with the tools needed to educate students on the importance of agriculture and how it affects their daily lives.

We have covered a lot of ground already and have much more to cover. The next few months will be filled with farm tours, grocery store promotions, watermelon festivals visits, farmers' market visits, and media interviews. We hope to see you soon in our travels!

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



Queen Madison with Scott Davis of Military Produce Group at the Maxwell AFB Commissary



The Newberry Watermelon Festival Queens with the Chiefland Festival Queen, Queen Madison and the FL Watermelon Queen during the Chiefland Watermelon Festival.



Mr. Billy Smith with Billy Smith Watermelons and Queen Madison.



Queen Madison with some of the 5th graders at Hillcrest Elementary School.



James Scarborough with Continental Produce, Buehler's produce staff, and Queen Madison ready to hand out watermelon at Buehler's Stores in Ohio.



Queen Madison with participants at Alabama Ag in the Classroom.



Dan and Carrie Thomas with Diamond 99 giving Madison a quick tour.



It is always more fun to go grocery shopping when you get watermelon.



Watermelon is the smile fruit!



Low Country Live morning interview in Charleston South Carolina.



Madison touring Smith Farms with Rantz and Stephanie Smith and their daughters Makenzie and Kylie.



A slice of watermelon is the best way to cool off at the Chiefland Watermelon Festival.



Watermelon fuels athletes at the Cooper River Bridge Run! Madison and SC Queen Laura handed out many, many cups of watermelon.



The Watermelon Queens walking the floors at the Bi-Lo Expo.



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Florida Report

Greetings from the Sunshine State of Florida!

Florida Watermelon season is here!! The week after Nationals, our newly crowned 2016 Florida Watermelon Queen Katy Mae Harrison and I were on the road to promote watermelons at the Southeast Produce Council Southern Exposure event held in Hollywood, Florida. The trade show saw a record-breaker attendance this year. Thanks to Borders Melon East for having us in your booth that day and sponsoring us. Our next promotion took us north to South Carolina for the 39th Annual Cooper River Run event. Over 40,000 participants ran this year. Queen Katy Mae, National Queen Carla, and other state queens handed out over 48,000 cups of watermelons for this run. All the runners enjoyed a cup of cold watermelon at the end of the race.

Queen Katy Mae and I started out in April. We joined with Chef Justin Timmeri of the Dept. of Ag Fresh from Florida along with Sydney Brown to hand out slices of watermelon at the Orange-Blue Spring Football Game. Chef Justin fixed one of his many recipes in which you can find on his website, Fresh from Florida. Everyone enjoyed a slice of watermelon and Barbeque Chicken Nachos. From there Katy Mae and I along with our first runner Hailey Bason headed to Orlando for the NWPB Annual Queen Training. A weekend of training consisting of Carmine & Vanessa Gallo, with media & coaching training, Kendra Tomlinson-Kennedy – role of a watermelon queen, and the importance of a watermelon queen in our watermelon industry at a retail impact, as well as visiting Global Produce Packing House and their watermelon field. Thanks to everyone who helped out that weekend of queen training. A special thanks to NWPB for doing this every year for not only our queens but the coordinators as well.

The following Friday Queen Katy Mae and Heather Raulerson traveled to Ocala to visit the Queen of Peace Montessori and Dr. NH Jones Elementary School. They handed out slices of watermelons and talked to kids about all the vitamins in a watermelon. The kids loved her being there. Thanks Heather for not only sponsoring her but for being her chaperone. Then on Saturday we headed to Branford, Florida for the Florida Braham Field Day & Heifer Sale. It was a beautiful day with over 250 attendees present. A day filled with a lot of learning things for our young adults on Braham’s and Heifer’s. Everyone attending enjoyed a slice of Florida Watermelon. Thanks to Adrian Land and his family for having us that day at their L2 Ranch and sponsoring us.

The months of April and May Queen Katy Mae and our first runner-up Hailey Bason visited many schools reading and educating our kids about the nutrients of watermelons. They handed out slices of watermelons, stickers, handed out coloring books, read them stories about watermelons, taught them on how to pick a watermelon out in a grocery stories, shared fun-facts with them on watermelons, handed out activity sheets, played lots of games and spent the day with them on their Career Day Activities. From Kindergarten to 8th grade they educated over thousands of kids during these months. Special thanks to all of our sponsors who made this all possible. We ended the month of April at the Flower and Garden Festival in Epcot with Melissa Hunt with the Florida Dept. of Agriculture (Fresh from Florida). Our local farmers educated everyone throughout the day about the different recipes that you can do with our Florida fruit and vegetables to create delicious meals. Queen Katy Mae handed out brochures which were provided by the National Watermelon Promotion Board and Fresh from Florida on this event.

Queen Katy Mae and I have been busy these last several months, if you haven’t been on our Facebook page please go on and like it! Every week all of our promotions and pictures are uploaded on what our Queen Katy Mae is doing next to promote watermelons. Our past Florida and National Queen Brandi Harrison is doing an awesome job helping us keep up with sharing picture’s and promotions with everyone.

In our next month’s edition I’ll be sharing with you our events we did from May to July with our local farm tour visits, packing shed’s, Cares Dinner, festival events, TV promotions with Fox 4 Morning Blend, grocery stores, and our Moffitt Cancer Run.

If you are interested in sponsoring our Florida Watermelon Queen Katy Mae to an event, please contact me by email or phone.

Until next issue,
Debra Harrison
Florida Watermelon Promotions Coordinator
Cell: (863) 633-8306
Home: (863) 494-1163
Email: debra@flfw.com



Enjoyed the day at “Southern Exposure” with the gang at Borders Melon East. Thanks for having us!



Congratulations “Fresh from Florida” for winning the booth contest at the Southern Exposure Show.



A beautifully decorated colorful booth at Melon 1. Great job Katelyn and Rachel.



Headed to “Low Country Live” in South Carolina.



Queen Katy Mae along with the national and other state queens taking a picture at the Expo in front of the Cooper River Bridge Run.



At the Orange-Blue Game debut, Queen Katy Mae handed out slices of watermelons donated by Gulfshore Produce. Thanks Jimmy Shepherd.



Thanks to the staff of “NWPB” for everything you do!



From the “Packing Shed”.



To the “Watermelon Field”. Thanks Global Produce for showing us around.



Studying up on their watermelon facts at “Queen Training in Orlando”.



A fun day at the “Queen of Peace Montessori School!”



Queen Katy Mae and the students at Dr. NH Jones Elementary School showing their W



Queen Katy Mae visiting the day with Mr. Raymond Land and his grandson's, Adrian and Joseph.



Queen Katy Mae with Laura Land handing out slices of watermelons at the Florida Braham Field Day.



Spending the day with Melissa Hunt at “Epcot”.



Thanks Seagrest Farms for the Beta Fish!



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Georgia Report

Greetings from Georgia!

It’s watermelon time in Georgia and the 2016 Queen Promotions program is in full gear. Queen Andi has hit the ground running and has been covering a lot of territory across our state promoting our favorite fruit.

Since early March Queen Andi has been partnering with schools all over the state to help them promote ‘Feed My School’ week. Queen Andi has been visiting classrooms meeting with students of all ages to talk about the nutritional and health benefits of watermelon.

April began with a visit to Charleston, SC to join the other state queens, along with National Queen Carla, for the Annual Cooper River Bridge Run to hand out lots of watermelon samples. The runners were very excited to see the ‘watermelon queen team’ return for this event! During the weekend the queens had the opportunity to be interviewed on Low Country Live, a local TV station, where they shared with the viewers how watermelon fuels athletes along with many other health benefits. Big shout out to Ann Bryant for organizing this weekend event! Thank you Ann for all of your hard work! The following weekend, Queen Andi attended the annual Queen Training Seminar and Workshop in Orlando, FL for Watermelon 101 Training. The girls had the opportunity to spend time with media coaches, Carmine and Vanessa Gallo of Gallo Communications who taught them how to tell the watermelon story and how to perfect their communication skills. The queens spent a half-day session on media training exercises and evaluation. We would also like to thank Global Produce, Al and Lee Wroten, for their hospitality on Sunday morning as they welcomed the queens for a field tour and visit at their packing house. We appreciate this learning experience and the knowledge the Wroten’s shared with our group! Thank you to NWPB for your support and coordination of this special weekend.

Continuing into the month of May, Queen Andi represented GWA at Sutherland’s Food Show at the Atlanta State Farmers Market where she handed out samples and shared the watermelon message with the attendees. The remainder of May was spent with educational visits with students at schools across the state. Thank you to Bibb County, Pearson Elementary, Thomson-McDuffie Middle School, Claxton Elementary, Cook Elementary, and North Brooks Elementary for hosting us and allowing us to help promote watermelon and the importance of agriculture! Last but not least, Queen Andi was invited by Publix to participate in a South GA blitz weekend promoting their BOGO fresh cut containers in Tifton and 2 stores in Valdosta, GA. What’s a picnic without watermelon? With the upcoming Memorial Day holiday approaching, consumers were not going to be without this sweet treat! Queen Andi was a huge influence in helping boost sales in the fresh cut watermelon department. Containers were flying off the shelves in these Publix stores! THANK YOU to Borders Melons East for sponsoring us and for securing these promotional events! THANK YOU to Publix for the opportunity to help boost sales in your produce departments!

The months of June and July will be very busy, as Queen Andi continues to celebrate the summer with the sweet taste of Georgia watermelon. She will be featured in several media spots on two local TV stations to promote the 67th Annual Cordele Watermelon Festival and Parade. Thank you to our 1st Runner Up, Savannah Hartley, who will be representing GWA at the Cordele Watermelon Festival Parade and seed spitting contest. Andi will also be featured on ATL & Co.’s week day segment on July 1st to talk about her role as a watermelon queen and to share a recipe with the viewers followed by an in-store promotion that afternoon at Fresh Market. Toronto, Canada will be Andi’s destination for the annual Longo’s retail promotion. Queen Andi, Florida Queen Katy Mae and National Queen, Carla will be on hand to pass out samples during the Longo’s watermelon-eating contests at several stores. We are excited to be representing GWA at Moody AFB, Fort Stewart, Hunter AFB and Kings Bay Commissaries for promotions around the 4th of July holiday.

The end of July and into the Fall Queen Andi will be attending promotional events at the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library, Decatur/DeKalb 4-Miler Road Race, MarDel Queen Tour, PMA in Orlando and the Marine Corps Marathon as we continue our efforts to move more watermelon. Wow! What a busy year our promotions tour has been already!

Would you like to schedule a date for our Georgia Watermelon Queen to visit your location? Please call Dawn Cheplick at 706-845-8575 or dcheplick@asginfo.net to book the queen.

We hope everyone is having a fantastic season and we look forward to seeing you all this summer!

Sincerely,
Dawn Cheplick, Promotions Coordinator
706-845-8575
dcheplick@asginfo.net



They love a queen, crown and banner but they REALLY love watermelon!



Mock interview training and role playing with Carmine.



Feed My School Program - Partnering with schools to stress the importance of agriculture.



With other state queens learning how it's done with Lee Wroten.



Look, lift and turn!



Queen Andi at the Low Country Live TV studio in Charleston, SC.



Serving up sweet treats at Sutherland’s Food Show.



Cooper River Bridge Run – Runners love running for watermelon!



With the Publix produce team....check out their awesome display!



At Global Produce for a field tour.



– Boosting sales - BOGO fresh cut watermelon at the Publix Tifton store.



With media coach, Carmine Gallo at queen training.





A Winning Line-up!

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NWPB UPDATE



watermelon.org

Contests, Apps, and More! Watermelon Board Spreads the Juicy News



Watermelon Popping Up on Menus

With the summer months here, there is more and more watermelon on menus! Everything from salads, to salsas, to cocktails; foodservice is starting to embrace their customer’s desire for watermelon. Some of the menu items the NWPB had a hand in!

The National Watermelon Promotion Board is partnering with California Pizza Kitchen to promote their limited time offer, California Fields Salad, made with fresh watermelon. The menu item is available in all CPK locations, June 1 - August 30, 2016. In addition to a table tent in restaurants, CPK is also featuring the fun NWPB website logo on their social media cover photos for Facebook and Twitter. The NWPB Menu-Trends Research highlighted watermelon as one of the fastest growing fruits on salad menus, up 50% 2010 to 2014, and CPK is an example of this kind of menu growth. We hope to increase interest in the salad and visitors to www.watermelon.org through this visual promotion.

#100DaysofWatermelon

The consumer social media campaign called 100 Days of Watermelon kicked off on Memorial Day weekend and will run through the day after Labor Day in September. Hosted on Instagram but promoted across Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat, watermelon fans make an Instagram post with anything watermelon and the hashtag #100DaysofWatermelon for a chance to win a weekly watermelon prize. Prizes range from watermelon backpacks and beach balls to watermelon sunglasses and flipflop sandals. This promotion will help stimulate and capture the popularity and summertime love of watermelon while also helping to make influencers out of every watermelon fan.



NWPB Sponsors Two Events at the National Restaurant Association Show

The Watermelon Board Connects with Foodservice Operators and Media

The National Restaurant Association (NRA) is a huge show encompassing everything that goes into running a restaurant. The NWPB focused on two events to get watermelon in front of foodservice operators and media.

The Marketing Executive Group (MEG), is an executive study group of the NRA. MEG brings together marketing professionals from chains, franchisees, etc. for a couple days of networking and learning before the NRA Show kicks off. Some chains represented include Darden, HMS Host, Noodles & Company, Pei Wei, and many more.

With more than 100 different operators represented, the NWPB wanted to showcase the diversity of watermelon during the Friday morning break by sampling the Watermelon Breakfast Sandwich which includes watermelon in the batter, whipped cream and a slice on the sandwich, as well as the on-trend Stacked Watermelon Chicken Salad. Follow up is ongoing to get more watermelon on menus and help marketing professional promote it to their customers. The NWPB also sponsored the 60th Anniversary Reception for the International Foodservice Editorial Council (IFEC). This is an organization dedicated to connecting editors and publicists to help fill foodservice publications with material and content operators want to read. The NWPB worked with Death Door Spirits and John Stanton, Head Bartender, Sable Kitchen & Bar, Hotel Palomar Chicago to create the cocktail, A Tall Glass of Water(melon) to help foodservice editors toast IFEC’s 60th. There were more than 20 publications represented and outreach is ongoing to achieve more coverage for watermelon in foodservice media.



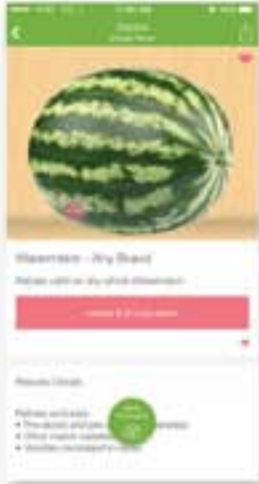
WATERMELON FOR HEALTH Lifestyle Guide Launch



The new healthy lifestyle destination and resource for consumers and the health and fitness communities launched in May at <http://www.watermelon.org/WatermelonForHealth>. This healthy lifestyle guide was debuted to the Today's Dietitian audience of registered dietitians and nutritionists and then shared to the IDEA World Expo of fitness professionals, personal trainers and lifestyle influencers. The resource operates like a decision tree, helping you determine your lifestyle and then curating custom watermelon content in the form of health information, recipe suggestions and training videos for an active lifestyle. Fans can stay connected on social media through the new hashtag #WatermelonForHealth.

NWPB Partners with Ibotta for a 2nd Year

Last year, NWPB partnered with the mobile “app that pays you back” Ibotta in an effort to promote fresh-cut watermelon in the fall. As a result, more than 5 million brand impressions and 200,000 completed engagements were garnered in a three week time span. This year, NWPB will create a consumer incentive program geared towards selection education on whole watermelon. Six and a half million people have downloaded the app with over half of them active on it daily. Ibotta users engage in a mobile experience that replaces couponing with fun game-like interactions, giving consumers what they actually want: rebates redeemable in all major retailers, and real cash rewards instead of credit or points.



The Ibotta retail app sponsorship heavily targets the Millennial generation and shoppers who prefer their mobile device as their main avenue of internet usage. The app will provide targeted and specific key messaging incentivizing watermelon purchases. The offer is slated to begin in mid-July and will run until the \$45,000 budget is depleted.



Retail Display Contest Press Release

The NWPB, in partnership with the National Watermelon Association (NWA), invite all retail chains, independent retailers and commissaries

with watermelons of U.S. origin to submit entries to the Retail Display Contest. Originally established to honor National Watermelon Month in July, the retail display contest is now accepting submissions throughout July and August.

In its 8th year, the contest is used by NWPB to encourage retailers to create displays showcasing the health, value and versatility benefits of watermelon. The Watermelon Board provides free resources including an informational retail kit, point-of-sale materials, cutting and usage ideas, and tips for creating effective displays.

One Grand Prizewinner – \$1,000 and an opportunity for two to attend the NWA's Annual Convention in Lake Tahoe, February 2017. **Nine Regional 1st Place Winners – \$250 each.** **Nine 2nd Place Winners – \$100 each.** **Nine Regional 3rd Place Winners – \$75 each.**

Displays can be based on whole watermelon, fresh-cut watermelon, mini watermelon or any mix. Judges will look at a display's overall appearance, creativity, shop-ability and use of point-of-sale materials. Retailers can submit their retail display entry via an online contest form at watermelon.org/retailers. All entries must be submitted by September 9, 2016. For more information, including official contest rules, visit watermelon.org/retailers or contact Juliemar Rosado at jrosado@watermelon.org.

New Recipe Videos in Production

NWPB just wrapped filming on 21 new watermelon recipe videos at Hoffman Media Studios out of Birmingham. The new big batch of recipe videos follows the trend away from the hosted recipe video to a more zoomed in, hands-only style. Ideal for sharing, the completed videos are all available at Watermelon.org, @WatermelonBoard's YouTube channel and promoted across social media.



- Pomegranate Sangria
- Layered Watermelon Popsicles
- Lemony Quinoa Watermelon Salad
- Soda Float
- Breakfast Six Layer Trifle
- Halibut with Watermelon Tzatziki
- Agua Fresca
- Watermelon Rind Pickles
- Red, White and Blue Cheese Sliders
- Spiked Watermelon Balls
- Flag Kebobs
- Chipotle Maple Citrus Wings
- Ancient Grain Salad
- Frozen Frosted Watermelon Bites
- Lemonade Cream Pie Shooters
- Frozen Watermelon Daiquiri
- Watermelon Granita Lime Cups
- How to Remove Watermelon Rind
- Creamy Watermelon Sherbet
- Watermelon Feta Bruschetta
- How to Use a Melon Baller

Student Art & Writing Contest

From January 1 to March 1, 2016, more than 300 watermelon-inspired artwork and slogan entries, created by elementary students from around the country, were submitted to the Student Art & Slogan Writing Contest, hosted by the NWPB and Learning Magazine.

The Watermelon Board encouraged teachers to utilize a toolkit of resources including a classroom watermelon lesson, investigation project (grades K-2) and research project (grades 3-5). Slogan and art starter guides were also provided to teachers to help introduce students to slogans and how to create effective artwork.

Grand Prize Art Winner – Stephanie Brinson from Humble, TX (5th Grade)
Grand Prize Slogan Winner – Rachel Zeitner from Bath, PA (5th Grade) for **“When life gives you watermelons, give a smile.”**

“Stephanie’s winning artwork was unique and intuitively spoke to the incredible benefits of watermelon including hydration and versatility,” said Stephanie Barlow, NWPB Senior Director of Communications. “Rachel’s slogan was upbeat and perfectly captured the idea that watermelon brings about happiness.”



Grand Prize Art Winner – Stephanie Brinson



Honorable Mention

Both grand prize winners received \$100 gift cards, in addition to \$100 to go towards a “watermelon party” for their entire class.

Although not originally planned, judges were so impressed with the quality of entries that seven additional students were awarded Honorable Mentions (five in the art category and two in the slogan category) and \$25 Amazon gift cards.

To view some of the incredible artwork submitted by students, visit watermelon.org or @WatermelonBoard on Facebook.



Honorable Mention

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For more information, visit sakatavegetables.com

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WATERMELON by Sakata



Kingman

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- Nice round-oval shape
- Excellent main season choice

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Early Maturing

Charismatic
45-count / Dark rind

Secretariat
45-count / Traditional rind

Mid Maturing

Belmont NEW
Mini / Dark rind

Kingman
36/45-count / Traditional rind

Unbridled
36/45-count / Dark rind

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NEW and Noteworthy! University of Delaware Trial Results			
Sow Date	Variety	Location	Comments
5/19/2015	Charismatic	Delaware	Ranked #1 in first harvest yield. Early; Over 10,000 lbs. of fruit produced at first harvest! Ranked #3 in overall yield.
5/19/2015	Secretariat	Delaware	Ranked #2 in first harvest yield. Early; Over 10,000 lbs. of fruit produced at first (early) harvest.
5/19/2015	Unbridled	Delaware	Ranked #10 in overall yield!



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\$12



Coasters



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Free with \$100 Purchase



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Garden Flag



House Flag

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USB



Note Cards

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Biological Synergistic enables a low rate of application at only 1/10th of an ounce per acre.

Cruzin™ Fungicide

Cruzin™ is a proven, effective Fungicide that controls White Mold, Botrytis, Powdery and Downy Mildew, and more. Cruzin™ changes the environment to one in which diseases cannot survive and utilizes both protective and curative disease control. Made with pharmaceutical grade ingredients, Cruzin™ offers zero re-entry after application.

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Illiana Report

Here we go again. Farmers have a spring in their steps, tractors become an everyday presence and the work days become longer. Springtime in Illiana started with rain and mild temperatures but the forecast heats up quickly.

Queen McKenzi and 1st runner up, Queen Ashley, were eager to learn more about this watermelon industry as they started their training in sunny Orlando. The National Watermelon Promotion Board once again did an excellent job transforming these beautiful ladies into watermelon industry ambassadors. McKenzi and Ashley enjoyed getting to know the other queens from other states.

Queen Ashley made her debut at the ‘Day on the Farm’. She interacted with all area 3rd graders. From inside a greenhouse the kids learned about how watermelons grow, the nutritional value, fun facts and they even got to take a plant home to grow on their own. Ashley did a terrific job and special thank you to Melon Acres for sponsoring this educational opportunity for kids.

Queen McKenzi celebrated the 40th Annual Spirit of Vincennes Rendezvous, over Memorial Day weekend. The rendezvous takes us back to the 18th century in to the US revolutionary war with sights, smells, sounds and tastes with watermelon being a part of that. The weekend is fun filled with a lot of hard work as 35,000 visitors go back in time. This event takes a lot of planning and dedication by individuals to make the weekend work as a whole. Thank you to David Mayhue at Schmieding Produce for donating three bins of watermelons! Philip McGovern at Caito Foods for supplying the cut service and delivery! Barry Hines and Wabash Foods for receiving, holding and delivering to sight! Carrie Smith and her helpers for working the weekend! Queen McKenzi for serving with a smile. Each of you are truly appreciated.

Our event calendar seems to get fuller each week and we look forward to a busy and prosperous summer.

Sweet regards,
Lorrinda Ellermann
IWA Coordinator
812-887-8400



1st runner up Queen Ashley & Queen McKenzi with Bestselling author Carmine Gallo



3rd graders enjoying time with Queen Ashley



A blast at Queen training



Pick me, pick me, Miss Ashley



We love to eat



Queen McKenzi at Spirit of Vincennes Rendezvous



Happy 49th Birthday Miss Eleanor



Queen McKenzi takes a step back to the 18th century



Fun day making promotional videos



Day on the farm with Queen Ashley



Mmmmmmm



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*Delivering a complete package of
seed, knowledge and service*

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Quality Seeds, Quality Service

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- Proven yields of 36 count fruit, 19 - 22 lbs
- Dark rind with stripe
- High lycopene promotes deep red internal color
- Strong vine vigor & exceptional sweet flavor
- 90 days

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Mar-Del Report

Greetings from the MAR-DEL Watermelon Association!

We are very excited for you to see what we have been up to in Maryland and Delaware since the Spring! We crowned our new 2016 Watermelon Queen, Amy Wigglesworth, in February at our annual Convention and she has been full of energy since day one! She is so ambitious and eager to promote our product and we are pleased to have her as our spokeswomen this year for our association!

Queen Amy has been to training in Orlando, served thousands of cups of watermelon to runners in Charleston, South Carolina, learned the germination and planting process, rode on the watermelon planter, danced to the “Watermelon Crawl,” spit seeds for hours, spoken on live radio, diced up Watermelon Salsa, worked in a grocery store selling watermelons, been on Pit Road at a Nascar Race and served watermelon to drivers and crew...SHEW!! What else is next for her?! LOTS! And we will share it all with you in the next edition of the Vine-line!

Until next time, we hope everyone has a wonderful watermelon season and we are looking forward to promoting your product this summer!

Watermelon Wishes,
Caitlin Givens
Promotions Coordinator
MAR-DEL Watermelon Association
mardelqueencoord@aol.com



The girls are dressed and ready for the Cooper River Bridge Expo on the banks of Folly Beach, SC. Thank you to SC Watermelon Association, Miss Ann, and SC Queen Sydney, for hosting us for such a fabulous and fun weekend!



Queen Amy and the other queens had an appearance on Fox 24 News for a food demo during Cooper River Bridge Run.



The Queen learns how to plant watermelons on the planter for the Givens Family in Georgetown, DE. Thank you to Scot Givens for teaching Courtney about the planting process.



The ladies serving up cups of watermelons to marathon runners.



Scot and Kendall Givens join some of the crew and Amy for a picture.



Nascar Xfinity driver, Ross Chastain, and Amy promote “Protect Your Melon, Buckle Up” Campaign with the DE Office of Highway Safety.



The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Talbot County hosted their annual “MS Bike-a-thon,” where the Watermelon Queen is always a hit at because riders enjoy the hydrating slices of watermelon during their 30, 68, or 100 mile road course!



Someone small was a big fan of Queen Amy!



Amy getting a little camera action on Pit Road!



We “Mustache” you to wear your seatbelt!



University of DE Ag Day



Milton Elementary students loved learning about seatbelt safety and having a race car driver and queen too!



Don't forget to BUCKLE UP and PROTECT YOUR MELON! Queen Amy has already had a full calendar of events and she is so eager and enthusiastic about the rest of our season promotions! Please support her and the other state queens this summer, as they will be all over the East Coast promoting your product!



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The Social Side to the Association

The National Watermelon Association strives to reach its members in every outlet available. In this technologically advanced world businesses are relying heavily on their websites to communicate with their customers. The National Watermelon Association is no different. We depend on our website to get important information and updates to our members. From our website our members can access the “Vineline”, the weekly news brief “On the Vine”, our online blog, and our social media pages. All of these outlets keep our members connected to our convention and important information that we have readily available for them.



The Vineline, our quarterly publication is available on our website. In addition to receiving the publication in the mail, our members have the option to access the magazine from our website. From the homepage members can access our most recent Vineline publication along with our previous issues. The Vineline keeps our members up to date with industry news that is important and pertaining to them. Every publication also has updates and pictures from the different chapters of the queen program. The Vineline is an informational and fun read. With our quarterly publication being accessible from our website members can read it from in the office to in the field!



A recent addition to our website, that we are excited to offer, is a link to our weekly news brief “On the Vine”. Every week we send out a news brief to our member’s emails that shares with them articles pertaining to the watermelon industry. If for some reason, a member isn’t subscribed to receive our weekly news brief they can go on the homepage of the website, click the news brief link, and subscribe from there! In addition to being able to subscribe to “One the vine” this link provides access to the most recent issue and the past issue. The page shows the most recent articles, trending articles, and most viewed articles from the publications.



Another awesome feature that our website has is our blog. This aspect has more of a personal touch because we write these features ourselves. We do different articles relating to Millennials in the produce industry, and we also do featured articles of our members. The articles relating to Millennials in produce are important to our association because Millennials are the up and

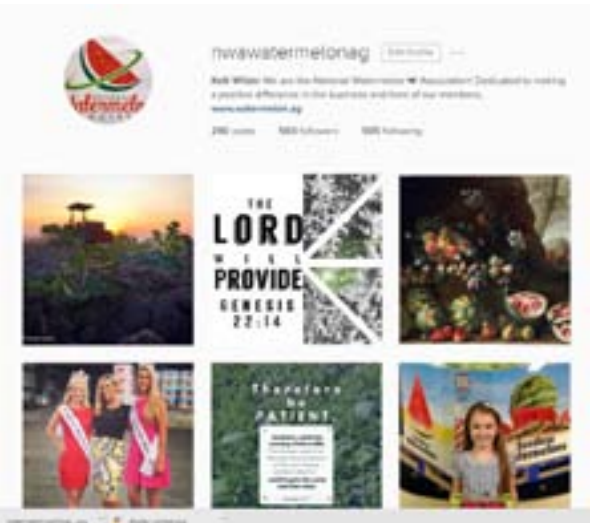
coming generation. They are the ones who will be taking over as the older generations move on. It’s important for us to know how to engage the Millennials, especially in our unique industry. The articles we write about our members feature different members in each article and they tell a little about their history and involvement with the association as well as the state chapters.



Social media plays a huge part in how the National Watermelon Association communicates with its members. With so many different platforms; Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, and even Snapchat we can stay connected with our members no matter where they are.



On Facebook we are utilizing the ability to have special groups like our “Generation Y Working Group” and our “Public Policy Forum”. The “Generation Y Working Group” is a place for our members who are Millennials to come together and discuss different issues. We also use this page as a platform to share articles we believe are good for them to read. The “Public Policy Forum” is a group where we share unbiased political articles and information. With the upcoming election it is pivotal for our members to have knowledge of the political scene. Our “Public Policy Forum” strives to do just that. In addition to these groups we have a public Facebook page called “Watermelon Ag”. Our public Facebook page posts association updates, interesting articles, and the occasional fun contest!



Instagram is a fun picture based social media app. We use this app to post many of the same updates as we do on our public Facebook page. We use Instagram because many of our members use and enjoy Instagram themselves and it’s a good way to cater to them.

Twitter is a much more fast-paced social media platform. Users have 160 characters to “tweet” their messages. Like Instagram and Facebook we use this site to send updates to our members, but on twitter we don’t use so many words. Many businesses use twitter along with our members, making it necessary for the association to have a presence.



Pinterest is a fun social media platform where we pin pictures and articles to share with our members. With different boards members can look at photos from our weekly posts to conventions and more!

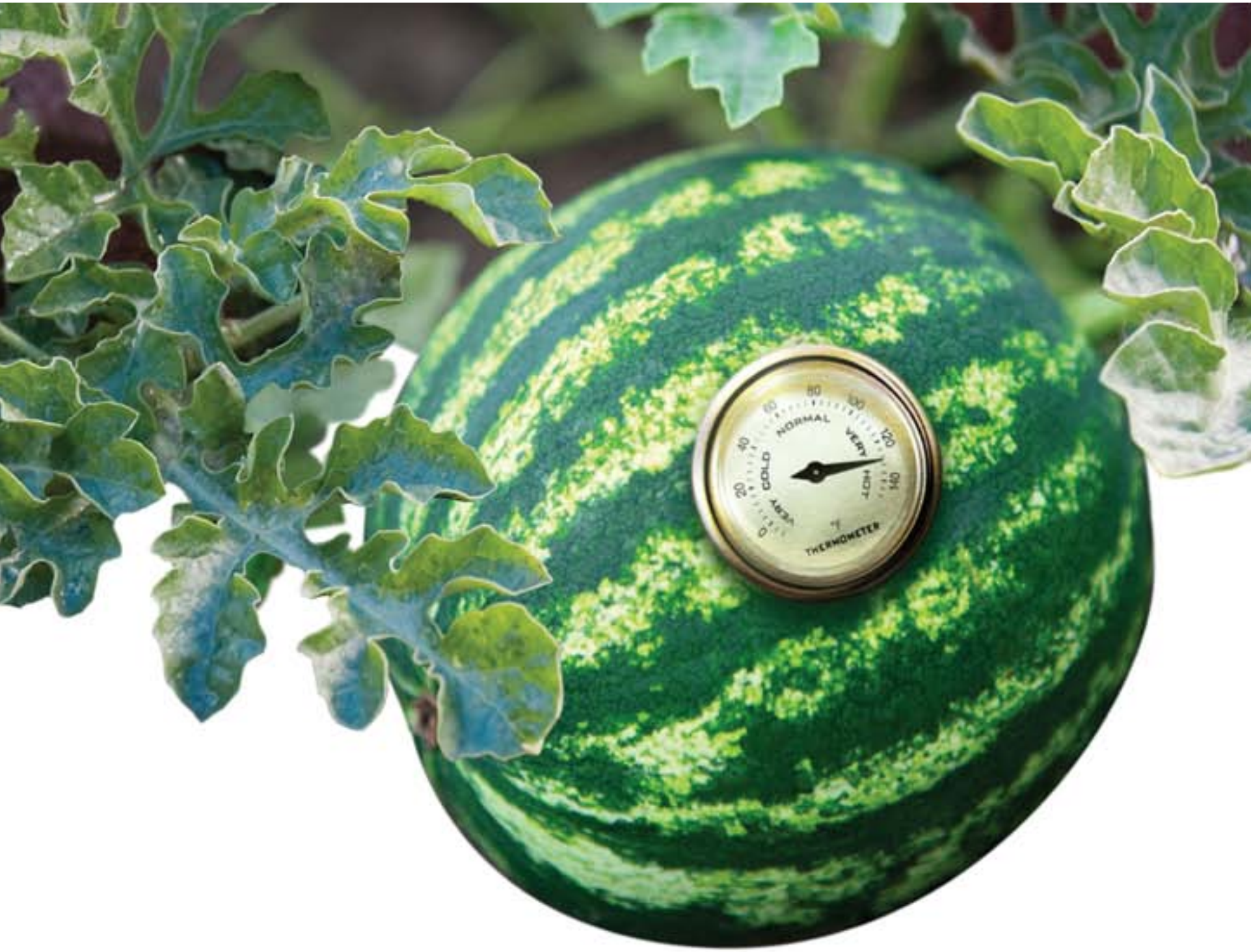


Our latest social media endeavor is the fun world of Snapchat! The majority of Snapchat users are Millennials so we are using the app as a way to outreach to these members in our association. Snapchat is a great tool for us to use because we can show members what we are doing for them with it, another portal to keep our members as up to date as possible.



The National Watermelon Association is constantly using these outlets to better reach and serve our many members. It’s our hope that our members would take advantage of these opportunities. That being said if you haven’t been on our website or checked out our many social media pages please do!

- Website:**
watermelon.ag
- Facebook:**
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- Twitter:**
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North Carolina Report

Greetings from North Carolina,

Summertime is here and the North Carolina watermelon season will soon be in full swing. Our Queen Miss Sarah Lemons has been busy since her crowning in March and lots more activities are just around the corner.

Queen Sarah and National Queen Carla had the privilege of promoting watermelons at the grand opening of a new Food Lion store in Edenton, NC. Hundreds of people came out to the store opening and enjoyed sampling and learning about watermelons from the queens. Past NWA President Mr. Don Hiller dressed up as watermelon to help the queens throughout the event. Ross Chastain also joined in the promotion by bringing his show car all the way over to eastern NC for the day.

The National Watermelon Promotion Board Queen training in Orlando, FL was a great learning experience for Sarah. The NWPB staff did an excellent job of helping the new state queens to better understand the industry and how to promote watermelons in their states. A farm tour was added to this year's schedule. The tour was lots of fun and educational for all the young ladies. Thanks to Global Produce Sales for the tour.

Queen Sarah's trip to Charleston, SC for the Cooper River Bridge Run was a huge success. The South Carolina Watermelon Association, Ann Bryant and SC Queen Laura were great hosts for the event. The threat of rainy weather did not deter the queens from rising early on the day of the run. All the young ladies worked hard sharing watermelon with all the runners at the conclusion of the race. The watermelon cups, supplied by the SC Watermelon Association, were a big hit with the runners and they were very thankful to have the hydrating value of watermelon after the event.

Queen Sarah has also been busy back home in North Carolina. She has attended Ad Day events reaching thousands of young people and education them about the benefits of watermelons. National Tourism Week found Sarah visiting NC Welcome Centers to share watermelon samples, recipes and nutrition information with travelers coming to our state.

Summer is here and Queen Sarah is excited about all the promotional events to come. We hope to see you all during the season.

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



Ross Chastain, Queen Sarah, Don Hiller and Queen Carla represented the watermelon industry well at the Food Lion store Grand Opening



Queen Carla, Eleanor and Sarah enjoyed meeting the customers at the Food Lion in Edenton, NC



Queen Sarah helped present a check to the Food Bank of Albemarle from Food Lion



Alabama, North Carolina and South Carolina Queen's enjoying the NWPB Queen Training program and gifts



Carmine Gallo shared the secrets of being a good communicator with the Queens.



All the Queens and Carmine Gallo at the NWPB Queen Training. Carmine shared a copy of his new book The Storyteller's Secret with everyone.



Farm tour at Global Produce Sales during training in Florida.



Queen Sarah sharing watermelon with runners at the conclusion of the Cooper River Bridge Run.



All the queens getting ready to distribute watermelon to the runners in Charleston, SC



Sarah having fun at the Cooper River Bridge Run



Sarah and Carla getting excited about sharing all those boxes of watermelon with the runners.



Queen Sarah showing off her "W" for watermelon at the Sampson County Ag Day.



These young ladies and Sarah are enjoying all the fun at the Sampson County Ag Day.



Sarah shared the watermelon message with hundreds of school aged kids during the Bandys Ag Day.



Sarah enjoyed meeting the travelers at the NC Welcome Centers



Mrs. Frances Bunch and Queen Sarah shared lots of watermelon during National Tourism Week.



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South Carolina Report

Watermelon season is now in full swing in South Carolina. Our queen, Laura Schurlknight has been a very busy young lady.

The “Watermelon Fuels Athletes” program that was initiated in South Carolina by Angela O’Neal Chappell has proven to be very beneficial to our industry. This program has been a tremendous success in schools and universities as well as 5k and 10k races across our state.

On March 31 through April 3, the South Carolina Association sponsored the annual Cooper River Bridge Run in Charleston, SC. The run proved to be as successful as in years past. Over 48,000 cups of cut watermelon was passed out to over 40,000 runners in this 10k race. National, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, MarDel and Florida were in attendance to help with this event. We want to express our sincere thanks to all who attended and for the help that you provided. Without all of you, we could not make this event happen. During the weekend, the queens and coordinators all attended the Bi-Lo Expo as well as appearing on Low Country Live, WCIV-TV, News 4 in Mt. Pleasant, SC.

Queen Laura and 1st runner-up, Blakely Johnson, attended Queen Training in Orlando, Florida on April 8 through April 10. The NWPB along with Kendra Kennedy presented a wonderful day of training. The girls were also fortunate enough to be hosted to a local field and on-site training there by Lee Worton.

On May 7th, Laura passed out watermelon slices at the annual Beaufort 5k run in Beaufort, SC. This event brought in over 300 runners and even more spectators.

Rudolph Gordon Elementary School in Fountain Inn, SC was the next stop on May 12 and May 13. Slices were served to over 1,000 students at this location.

May 27th found us at Batesburg-Leesville Elementary in Leesville, SC where 550 students were in attendance. Bookman Elementary followed on May 27th, where Laura read to the kindergarten classes, discussed bee pollination, and then served them watermelon slices.

Your Carolina, WSPA-TV, News 4 in Greenville was the Memorial Day stop on Monday, May 30. Laura prepared a recipe and talked about the upcoming season for South Carolina farmers. She also talked about the school programs that were being done throughout the state.

Memorial Day also found Dr. Gilbert Miller of the Clemson Research Center in Blackville, SC and 1st runner-up, Blakely Johnson, in Hilton Head at the Hilton Head 5k Run. The runners enjoyed the delicious watermelon slices and the helpful watermelon tips provided.

Monarch Elementary School in Simpsonville had us cutting slices on May 31 and June 1. Watermelon was served at both field days to 1,100 students, staff, faculty and parents. We are now looking forward to more upcoming TV appearances as well as festivals and summer camps. We wish everyone a very profitable and fulfilling watermelon season.

Ann Bryant
SC Promotions Coordinator
abryant028@charter.net
ann.bryant@furman.edu
864-303-3995

Laura is getting ready for her first official TV appearance as the 2016 South Carolina Watermelon Queen.



Getting ready for 1,000 students at Rudolph Gordon Elementary School in Fountain Inn, SC.



State Queens visiting with the host of Low Country Live, WCIV-TV, News 4, Mt. Pleasant, SC.



Passing out the watermelon stickers at Batesburg-Leesville Elementary School in Leesville, SC.



Visiting the Bi-Lo Expo Center in Charleston, SC.



Reading and telling about bee pollination at Bookman Elementary School in Elgin, SC.



Ready to pass out 48,000 cups of watermelon to runners at the Cooper River Bridge Run in Charleston, SC



Live on Your Carolina, WSPA-TV, News 4, Greenville, SC.



Laura at Queen Training with Carmine Gallo.



Blakely Johnson attending the 5k Race in Hilton Head, SC.



Touring the farm with Lee Worton and family in Florida.



The children loved Laura at Monarch Elementary School in Simpsonville, SC.



Working the 5k Race in Beaufort, SC.



Over 1,100 students enjoyed watermelon slices at Monarch Elementary over a two day period.



1st runner-up, Blakely Johnson, answering questions about growing watermelons in Beaufort, SC.

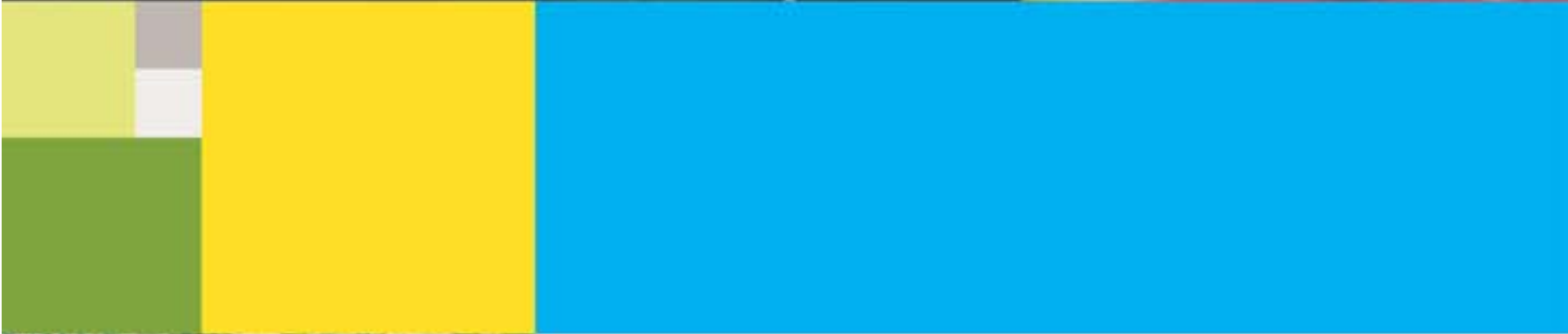


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Texas Report

Sweet Greetings from Texas!

This spring Queen Makensie began her work with the Viva Fresh Expo in San Antonio where she met some of the people involved in the produce industry throughout the state of Texas and where she got to know some of the great folks of the NWPB. Shortly after the expo Makensie and the other state queens attended queen training in Orlando, Florida where all of the ladies learned about the key messages for promoting watermelon, what the health benefits are, and social media guidelines. They had some excellent coaching from Mrs. Kendra Kennedy about how to handle themselves and the importance of their job as a watermelon promotion ambassador. They were also given information about how to handle certain questions that can come up at promotions and had practice with demonstrations, and each one got to do a role playing scenario. One extremely beneficial part of the experience was when each young lady got to have an on-camera interview with Carmine Gallo, and then each girl was able to watch the interview and was given feedback from Vanessa Gallo about what her strengths are, and what area she could work on. The next day the ladies had a tour of Global Produce Sales packing shed and watermelon farm. Our thanks to Mr. Lee Wroten and his family for taking the time to host us. Also, thank you to everyone with the National Watermelon Promotion Board, Kendra Kennedy, and Carmine and Vanessa Gallo.

Early in May, Makensie and I took a trip to Minneapolis, Minnesota for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. Mr. Jimmy Henderson of Warren Produce attended the trip along with Miss Eleanor and the 2016 National Watermelon Queen, Carla Penney. Also in attendance was Chef Joe Poon who showed off his carving skill and entertained everyone. It was a beautiful day and the runners and spectators were very appreciative to receive the fresh cut watermelon. Thank you, Warren Produce, for sponsoring the trip. We'd also like to give a big thanks to Cub Foods, Robinson Fresh, and their employees for making it pleasant and easy.

Next on Queen Makensie's agenda was the Alamo Watermelon Festival in Alamo, Texas where she visited with the people from the Rio Grande Valley and helped with the seed spit contest. Makensie also had a farm tour of the Borders' farm in Edinburg, Texas. Thank you Ranell and Dalton Borders for taking us on the tour and letting us sample your delicious watermelon.

Until the next time, have a bountiful harvest season.

Blessings to you and yours,
Barbara Duda TWA Secretary/Coordinator
bcduda62@yahoo.com



Makensie with Juliemar Rosado, Marcia Adler and CeCe Krumrine at the Viva Fresh Expo



The farm tour with Lee Wroten



Chef Poon and the gang at the Race for the Cure



Lee explaining how the beds are set on the farm



Queen Makensie and Queen Carla- "W" is for Watermelon!



Beautiful girls on a beautiful Florida day



Sponsor, Jimmy Henderson of Warren Produce, with Makensie and Carla



Makensie at Borders Farm



Race for the Cure attendees showed off their pink.



Learning how watermelons are packed



Having fun playing a game at Queen Training



Enjoying a treat straight from the field



Class is in session!



The Alamo Watermelon Festival



Watermelon royalty with Carmine Gallo



Makensie with the children's seed spit winners from the Alamo Festival



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Western Report



This season sure has started out as an exciting one! So far, shippers have experienced some major highs and lows. With Nogales’ longer season & the northern fruit coming off the vine earlier every year, we have been able to keep up with the high demand during the beginning of the season for those tasty West Coast watermelons. Once we got closer to the end of Nogales’ season we found fruit to be scarce, but still in high demand, driving the price up until some of the northern regions came into production.

We expect supply & demand to remain strong throughout the rest of the season as the weather gets warmer & the days get longer! The Western Watermelon Association would like to wish you all a happy & successful National Watermelon Month. We are continuing to work hard to bring our delicious West Coast watermelons to the hands of watermelon lovers everywhere!

Sincerely,
Danielle Cultrera
Western Watermelon Association
DanielleC@VGandSons.com

For more information on the Western Watermelon Association, be sure to check out our website at: www.westernwatermelon.org and   "like" us on facebook





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Who would have ever thought that an eight letter word could mean so many things, and so much? When you mention ‘research’ it congers up so many thoughts and ideas in our heads.

In the case of the National Watermelon Association, our research platform began to really take shape in 2006, when we began to accept proposals from the research community for careful consideration. In turn, our group selected key projects that were (are) awarded annual grants that are utilized to work specifically on key disease pressures that can make a difference for our farmer members today, and tomorrow.

We have a growing library of results from past projects on the National Watermelon Association website that is available to our members (exclusively). Making this type of information ‘exclusive’ to only our members is a huge benefit of being a member of the Association. So please, take advantage of that leg up on the competition.

Our ultimate goal with each and every research grant (project) is to seek solutions for the numerous diseases and insect pressures that inflict harm on the watermelon crop. Most times the project takes a long time, yet those periodic times we can hit a homerun and gain that knowledge on a quicker pace. Staying focused on our mission is the key. Miracles sometimes do occur.



Research Projects in 2016

During the 2016 domestic growing season, the National Watermelon Association awarded six (6) grants to the research community focused on key issues that need to be addressed. Each of the projects addresses a disease pressure that our research committee identified as a top priority to consider for the coming year.

This year, the projects were awarded to four research farms and labs in the university and government sectors. We have worked with numerous university farms and labs across the USA in past years, and anticipate that we will again in future years. Here is our 2016 lineup of research grant projects:

Fusarium Wilt:
The role of soil fertility on the severity of Fusarium wilt of watermelon - University of Georgia

Whitefly resistance:
Utilizing the Desert Watermelon Citrullus colocynthis to enhance resistance to whiteflies in watermelon - U.S. Vegetable Lab - Charleston and N.C. State University

Bacterial fruit Blotch:
Screening for Resistance to Bacterial Fruit Blotch in PI Accessions and Heirloom Varieties of Watermelon - N.C. State University

Phytophthora and Fusarium:
Will Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation (ASD) help manage Phytophthora Oospores and Fusarium Wilt in infested Fields? - U.S. Vegetable Lab - Charleston

Potyviruses:
Developing a core collection of watermelon lines resistant to potyviruses - U.S. Vegetable Lab - Charleston

Association-funded research

Since 2006 the National Watermelon Association has been funded critical research projects to investigate a variety of disease and insect pressures that have burdened our farmer members.

The list is lengthy, as the pressures are also. In addition to the growing list are some new opportunities that we have investigated, such as ethanol conversion, bee research, irrigation and grafting to mention a few. The project reports included in each research area are guides and valuable references specifically for our Association members. The list includes:

- Anthracnose
- Bacterial Fruit Blotch
- Bee Research
- Downy Mildew
- Ethanol Conversion
- Fusarium Wilt
- Grafting
- Gummy Stem Blight
- Hollow heart
- IPM Strategy
- Irrigation
- Nitrogen
- Phythophthora
- Root-Knot Nematodes
- Rootstocks
- Vine Decline
- Viruses

Our ultimate goal with each and every grant award is to learn as much as we can about the pressure, discover how it develops and spreads, and ultimately create a mitigating solution for that disease or insect pressure. Our pursuit of solutions is what we stand for, what we intend to pursue, and what we wish to ultimately achieve. We will continue to do our best to achieve those results for our farmer members.

NWPB funded Research



The National Watermelon Promotion Board has periodically funded key research with AG research universities and the USDA-ARS to study health, nutrition, phyto-nutrients and food safety aspects of watermelon. The results and data finds of their funded research provide huge advantages to the watermelon industry.

The National Watermelon Association is able to post these findings and make the results available to our

Phytophthora:
Bio-fumigation with a mustard crop for managing Phytophthora fruit rot of watermelon - Cornell University and U.S. Vegetable Lab – Charleston

The final results are expected in late 2016, and will be posted on the National Watermelon Association for our members’ review and use.



Non-GMO Seed Crops

With the advent of genetically-modified foods (and seed) on the market, consumer groups have created a bit of a stir with consumers that may be fearful of GMO products. Although many in the produce industry know that GMO products are here to stay and are already spread throughout our food system, the concerns of consumers have in some cases created a need by some retailers to shy away from GMO products.

And, the government is also involved. The State of Vermont has passed a GMO labeling law, with up to 30 other states considering similar legislation. The Vermont law (and with other states anticipated to come on line soon), has begun what we think may become a series of requests from retailers to assure them that your watermelons are produced from NON-GMO seed.

In order to help you with those requests, we contacted each seed company and asked them to verify (in writing) that their watermelon seed is in fact not genetically modified. You will find the letters posted on our website within the Public Affairs page. Please save or print the letters for your use, as you may need them.

Fresh Terminal Market Inspections

Each season the United States Department of Agriculture’s Marketing Service is called upon to conduct an inspection of produce in our country’s fresh terminal markets.

A recent webinar provided detail and shed light on the particulars of produce inspections. The two-part presentation and a question & answer form are posted on the National Watermelon Association website for your review.

Training Aids

In cooperation with a few universities and other entities, we are pleased to be able to provide some training aids that may be of interest to your business (farm or packing facility).

As we all know, training our employees is vital to completing the multitude of tasks that we face on a daily basis. We hope that this assembly of training aids (with more to come) will support your efforts.

- Worker Protection Standard for AG Pesticides
- Watermelon Spray Guide
- Reduce Compaction and Tire Slippage in the Field
- Pesticide Safety videos

members. The research can potentially make a difference on your farm or in your operation, as well as have a positive impact on food safety. We are hopeful that you will visit our website to learn about the scientific advances that may be of benefit to you. Two studies are posted:

- Rind Pathogen Study 2008
- Listeria Survival Study 2012

We look forward to making additional posts in the future for the NWPB.

Syngenta Seedless Watermelon

varieties for a season long program

VARIETY <small>*Varieties recommended for grafting</small>	VARIETY CHARACTERISTICS						FRUIT SIZE RANGE			INTERMEDIATE DISEASE RESISTANCE		KEY FEATURES
	Rind Pattern	Days to Maturity	Comparative Maturity	Fruit Shape	Plant Vigor	Fruit Weight Range (lbs)	36-count	45-count	60-count	Fusarium Wilt race 1 (Foc-1)	Anthracnose race 1 (Goc-1)	
Sweet Dawn*	Classic rind type	74	Early	Blocky	Low	16 - 20	10-20%	50-60%	25-35%	Yes	Yes	Early maturity! Large fruit size. Reduced incidence of hollow heart. Adapted well to the Eastern U.S.
Melody*	Rich, dark rind	79	Early	Round	Medium	14 - 16	5-15%	65-75%	15-25%	No	Yes	First-to-market advantage. Improved fruit set under cool conditions.
Fascination*	Rich, dark rind	83	Early-Mid	Blocky	Medium	16 - 20	20-30%	45-55%	20-30%	Yes	Yes	Industry leader. Exceptional fruit quality. Blend of 45- and 36-count fruit.
Tri-X 313*	Classic rind type	86	Early-Mid	Blocky	Medium	15 - 18	20-30%	45-55%	20-30%	No	No	Industry standard.
Captivation	Rich, dark rind	89	Early-Mid	Blocky	High	14 - 17	10-20%	65-75%	10-20%	Yes	Yes	Medium fruit size. Uniform fruit shape and size. Complements Fascination.
Exclamation	Rich, dark rind	90	Full Season	Blocky	Very High	17 - 21	45-55%	35-45%	5-15%	Yes	Yes	Large fruit size. Firm flesh. Excellent field holding ability. Strong vine vigor.
Distinction	Rich, dark rind	90	Full Season	Round	High	15 - 18	15-25%	55-65%	15-25%	Yes	Yes	Enhanced performance under warm to hot conditions. Improved fruit set.

Foc-1: Anthracnose caused by *Colletotrichum orbiculare*

Goc-1: Fusarium wilt caused by *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *ovum*

In cases where specific races or strains are not noted, the variety is resistant to some, but not necessarily all known races or strains of the pathogen. For complete disease resistance information, please visit Vegetables.Syngenta-US.com.

For more information on Syngenta vegetable offerings, visit Vegetables.Syngenta-US.com or contact your local Syngenta reseller or representative.





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