

THE PRODUCE NEWS

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Melon 1 and Borders Melon now utilizing HarvestMark

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By Joel Gebet, The Produce News

CHARLESTON, SC -- Two of the larger firms in the watermelon industry - Borders Melon Co. Inc. and Melon 1 Inc. - are now utilizing YottaMark Inc.'s HarvestMark solution for traceability.

Redwood City, CA-based YottaMark made the announcements during the National Watermelon Convention, held here Feb. 18-22 at the Francis Marion Hotel.

According to a press release by YottaMark, Hargill, TX-based Borders Melon Co. "is the largest grower and distributor of watermelons in North America, providing a year-round supply from farms in Texas and Mexico, while Brooklyn, NY-based Melon 1 ships over 5,000 loads each year to major chainstores and retailers in the U.S. and Canada."

The release said that "HarvestMark is the leading traceability platform for fresh produce. Compliant with GS1 standards and the Produce Traceability Initiative, HarvestMark delivers item- and case-level traceability that provides instant access to harvest, distribution, quality and food-safety information, when and where it's needed. HarvestMark is in use today by dozens of produce shippers across the U.S. and Mexico, which have chosen the platform to easily deploy effective traceability across a wide range of produce products. Today, nearly 150 million produce products have been enabled with HarvestMark traceability, from watermelons, berries, tomatoes, peppers and more."

Elliott Grant, YottaMark's chief marketing officer and founder, told The Produce News Feb. 19 that "the industry has embraced HarvestMark, which gives so much more than traceability, as it is also a way to promote a brand and tell a story. We're thrilled at the response we received from the watermelon industry, and it will be interesting to see which commodities are next" to utilize HarvestMark.

Mr. Grant and J. Scott Carr, YottaMark's president and chief executive officer, gave a presentation about HarvestMark at the food safety and traceability seminar held Feb. 19 during the NWA convention.

Bob Morrissey, executive director of the association, said in a statement that "HarvestMark is quickly becoming a major traceability solution of choice for the watermelon industry, already providing trace-back capabilities to 25 percent of the total volume of watermelons expected to be shipped for 2009. We support HarvestMark's efforts and look forward to seeing our growers and shippers utilize this technology to share their stories, connect with consumers and help reinforce the entire industry's commitment to safety and quality."