

CPMA TRACEABILITY UPDATE TO THE UNECE – May 2003

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In mid-November, the Canadian Produce Marketing Association and the Produce Marketing Association (U.S.) formed the joint CPMA/PMA Traceability Task Force (CPTTF) to continue the work begun by the former CPMA Traceability Task Force. The task force consists of grower-shippers, retailers, foodservice operators, wholesalers, distributors, and grower associations.

Task Force Objectives:

- Identify and document key best practices that facilitate enhanced traceability of fresh produce in the North American produce industry
- Conduct a pilot project in the produce industry to demonstrate the application of these best practices and affirm their validity
- Educate the produce industry on the benefits of enhanced traceability

The best practices document will include:

- ◆ Identification of information requirements for traceability, considering vast array of technology sophistication utilized by individual companies;
- ◆ Identification of key processes throughout the supply chain;
- ◆ Identification of the roles and responsibilities of each major industry business segment;
- ◆ Reference to PMA's Pallet and Case Coding Best Practices and the EAN Fresh Produce Traceability Guidelines;
- ◆ Recommendations on data responsibilities which will articulate who keeps what data and for how long; and
- ◆ In the future, recommendations regarding the potential use of the Advance Shipment Notice (ASN) for accurate communication of data between business partners.

The co-chairs of the Task Force will represent two important segments of the produce industry. Doug Grant, The Oppenheimer Group, Vancouver, British Columbia and Steve Junqueiro, Save Mart Supermarkets, Modesto, California will ensure representation from both the grower/packer/shipper sector and the retail sector, two critical points in the supply chain. The task force has 14 members and includes 6 Canadians and 8 Americans. An observer representative from Mexico will join the Task Force at the next meeting to be held June 6th. At that time it is hoped that the final draft of the CPTTF Traceability Best Practices will be approved and planning can begin for the pilot of the document as a proof of concept.

Within Canada there has been much activity in the past year relative to traceability including various government sponsored meetings and forums which CPMA consistently participates in. Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada has taken an active role in this issue and CPMA have formed a strong alliance with this government body to ensure industry solutions that are feasible for all industry segments.