



# Produce Traceability Initiative 2012 Implementation Survey Results

April 2012

## Executive Summary

The four administering organizations of the Produce Traceability Initiative (Canadian Produce Marketing Association, GS1 US, Produce Marketing Association and United Fresh Produce Association) conducted an online survey in April 2012 to gauge adoption of the seven Produce Traceability Initiative (PTI) milestones within the produce industry. The survey was also made available in paper form to ensure maximum participation. The information gathered from the survey will aid the PTI Leadership Council and the PTI administering organizations not only in evaluating the industry's implementation progress of PTI recommendations, but also in identifying additional support needs to help the industry continue to make progress toward whole-chain traceability.

## Respondent Demographics

The survey was open to all produce companies, regardless of whether or no they are actively involved in PTI activities.

A diverse group of 228 respondents representing all produce supply chain roles and a broad array of company sizes (by revenue) completed the survey.

- Companies with annual revenues of \$10 million to \$100 million represented 37 percent of respondents. 35 percent of respondents were from companies with annual revenues of \$100 million or more and 27 percent were under \$10 million.
- 77 percent of respondents were supply-side organizations, led by growers, packers/repackers, shippers, and distributors respectively. Demand-side organizations, comprising distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, and wholesalers or terminal markets, constituted 23 percent of the respondents.

## Industry Implementation Progress Highlights

- 84 percent of responding suppliers reported they are communicating GS1 Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs) to receivers.
- 77 percent of all brand owners said that they have assigned GTINs to some or all of their produce cases.
- 88 percent of receivers report they are receiving cases with incoming GTINs

- 75 percent of receivers report they are reading or planning on reading PTI recommended data on some or all inbound cases.

Receivers lag suppliers on implementations, but are making headway, with 43 percent of receivers reporting they are totally or partially equipped for reading inbound PTI-recommended data, and 40 percent of receivers storing all or some data on inbound cases.

Relatively few companies declared an unwillingness to participate in the initiative, with only 7 percent of brand owners saying they do not plan to meet the entry-level milestone.

## **Implementation Milestone Progress**

### **Milestone 2 (Assign GTIN Numbers)**

- 78 percent of survey respondents report they are brand owners. Of those, 93 percent report they are assigning or planning to assign GTINs.
- This is a 29 percent increase from the 2009 Benchmarking Survey where 64 percent of brand owners reported assigning GTINs. Only 7 percent of brand owners are not planning to assign GTINs.

### **Milestone 3 (Provide GTIN Information to Buyers)**

- 84 percent of brand owners report they are communicating GTINs to some or all of their trading partners.
- This is a 42 percent increase from the 2009 Benchmarking Survey where 42 percent of brand owners established a process to communicate GTINs to their buyers.
- Survey respondents still indicate that if more retailers and receivers communicated specific requirements to provide GTINs, it would strengthen PTI implementation.

### **Milestone 4 and Beyond**

- Industry adoption of Milestone 6 has increased since the 2009 Industry Benchmarking Survey with 75 percent of PTI-compliant companies reporting they are reading or planning on reading data on some or all inbound cases.
- Of those 75 percent, 43 percent of receivers report they are totally or partially equipped for reading inbound PTI-recommended data. This is a 10 percent increase from the 2009 Benchmarking Survey where 33 percent of receivers were working on Milestone 6.
- Implementation for Milestone 7 is also underway with 84 percent of receivers reporting reading data on some or all outbound cases or planning to do so compared to just 40 percent in 2009.

## **Industry Concerns and Comments**

The top concern regarding implementation of the PTI is suppliers expressing the need for more adoption from receivers (buyer requests for GTINs.) Respondents also indicate that they want the PTI administering organizations – Canadian Produce Marketing Association, GS1 US, Produce Marketing Association and United Fresh – to continue providing education and communications support on PTI issues beyond 2012 (final milestone deadline). Companies will continue implementing milestones in coming years, which makes ongoing support needed for continued success in implementing PTI best practices.

## **Methodology**

The survey was designed to gauge adoption of the seven PTI milestones within the produce industry. The online survey was publicized to the industry through the administering organizations', the PTI Leadership Council, working groups and media outreach. Respondents were given the option of providing their employers' names. The survey was live for three weeks and closed on April 12, 2012.