

September 8, 2009

To: Produce Suppliers

The purpose of this letter is to update the produce supplier community of our collective support and endorsement of the Produce Traceability Initiative (PTI).

As key trading partners within the produce industry, our expectation is that you, our valued suppliers, adhere to the milestones and timelines of the PTI. We, ourselves, are committed to these same timelines and milestones and are not able to achieve them without your conformance and active participation. The management of our companies has committed to make the investment and have their full support as we move forward together. We look forward to a comprehensive, standardized case level traceability system to be fully implemented.

Those suppliers that do not conform and provide the necessary information required by the milestones of the PTI will ultimately put us and our consumers at risk. Achieving whole-chain traceability and enabling the FDA to rapidly identify, isolate and remove tainted product from the supply chain is a shared responsibility of both industry and government. We take this responsibility very seriously as buyers, and strongly urge and expect you to do the same. We understand the costs involved in this, as we too have changes and major investments to make. However, this underscores the importance of the need to do this now, rather than waiting for the government to tell us how to do this tomorrow. Demonstrating cohesive industry leadership to our elected officials and the FDA regarding whole chain produce traceability is paramount.

The first three of seven milestones are already upon us:

Milestone #1: Obtain your GS1-issued Company Prefix (Complete By: 1st qtr 2009)

Milestone #2: Assign GTINs to your case configurations (Complete By: 1st qtr 2009)

Milestone #3: Communicate GTINs to your trading partners (Complete By: 3rd qtr 2009)

The balance of the milestones and timelines part of the PTI can be found on the official PTI website at www.producetraceability.org. If you have any questions, please contact your trade association representative at PMA, UFPA or CPMA.

Let us work together as an industry to learn from the challenges of the past and address full chain produce traceability as we move forward to maintain consumer confidence and expand fresh produce consumption.

Yours in Produce



America's Produce Specialist

