



The Produce Traceability Initiative

Working to achieve standardized, electronic (computerized) traceability across the supply chain.

Benefits for Trading Partners

Enhances and maintains the confidence of consumers and government, supporting commitment to food safety

- Limits the scope and cost of recalls to suspect product only
- Improves traceability – quicker and more accurate recalls/product withdrawal
- Full visibility/transparency
 - Field to cooler, crop management
 - Improves inventory management
- Speeds delivery of orders to retailers and foodservice distributors/operators
- Better business intelligence regarding customer needs
- Business process improvements in the packing shed and administratively with information flow; finished case sorting; overall streamline of processes
- Reduction/Elimination of costs (pre-printed cases)

What the PTI is About:

- Use of GS1 System standards for standardized product information
- Case level tracking
- Electronic recordkeeping
- Farm to Store

The Produce Traceability Initiative is a voluntary, industry-wide effort designed to help the industry maximize the effectiveness of current track and trace procedures, while developing a standardized industry approach to enhance the speed and efficiency of traceability systems for the future. Industry participants cover every segment of the produce supply chain. The PTI is an industry-led, supply chain-wide Initiative governed by a 34-member Leadership Council. The work is carried out by volunteer-led working groups in the areas of Implementation, Master Data, Technology, and Communications and is administered by Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA), GS1 US, Produce Marketing Association (PMA) and United Fresh Produce Association (UFPA).

Now is the Time to Get Involved and Participate

Are you waiting for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to finalize traceability regulations to implement the **Food Safety Modernization Act** before you begin implementing the Produce Traceability Initiative?

That may put you behind the curve. Michael Taylor, FDA Deputy Commissioner for Foods, recently told the PTI Leadership Council, “we know we are going to need to build on and embrace the work that industry has done.” When informed that some industry members are delaying implementing the PTI until FDA regulations are finalized, Taylor discouraged that notion, responding, “When real progress is being made, we encourage that and don’t want our process to be an obstacle.” In other words: **Don’t wait, begin implementing the PTI now.**

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“The produce industry must move forward as one through PTI. Full traceability will help earn the highest levels of confidence in the safety of our products.”

*Jim DiMenna, President & CEO
JemD International Greenhouse Vegetables*

"When fresh produce leaves our fields, we should be accountable and responsible for the food we put into commerce. With this system, we know where it came from and we know where it goes."

Jamie Strachan, CEO, Growers Express



Why Do We Need the PTI?

The produce industry handles an estimated 6 billion cases of produce in the United States each year. However, industry leaders have recognized that a more systematic, industry-wide approach would enhance overall supply chain traceability in speed and efficiency. The use of standards in the supply chain across the industry will significantly enhance the ability to narrow the impact of potential recalls or similar problems, protecting both consumers and industry members.

Benefits of the GS1 System

- **GS1 Company Prefix** uniquely identifies a single company. A GS1 Company prefix is required to create GS1 identification numbers such as the GTIN, to ensure the number is globally unique.
- **Global Trade Item Number (GTIN)** is used for uniquely identifying trade items, which includes products and/or services that are sold, delivered and invoiced at any point in the supply chain. The GTIN allows organizations to identify trade items at all levels of packaging (item, case, and pallet) as well as accurate machine reading of those trade items when placed into GS1 barcodes.
- **GS1-128 Barcode** is a case level barcode that allows companies to encode additional information with the GTIN, such as lot number and best-before dates.

PTI Milestone(s)	Date
M1: Obtain a GS1 Company Prefix	Q1' 2009
M2: Assign GTIN Numbers Brand owners will assign 14-digit GTINs to every case configuration.	Q1' 2009
M3: Provide GTIN Information to Buyers Brand owners will provide their GTINs (and corresponding data) to their buyers.	Q3' 2009
M4: Show Human Readable Information on Cases Packers are responsible for providing human-readable information on each case.	2011
M5: Encode Information in a Barcode Packers are responsible for encoding the GTIN and Batch/Lot Number.	2011
M6: Read and Store Information on Inbound Cases Each subsequent handler of the case will have the systems and capability to read and store the GTIN and lot number from each case of produce received.	2011
M7: Read and Store Information on Outbound Cases	2012

Produce Traceability Leaders

Dozens of visionary North American food companies, ranging from small farms and global fruit growers to international retailers and restaurant chains, are taking leadership roles by participating in working groups in the PTI. For a full list, please visit www.producetraceability.org/companies/

For more information, visit the PTI website at www.producetraceability.org



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