



Produce Traceability Initiative Best Practices for Communicating GTINs to Your Customers

Objectives

The following Best Practices are designed to assist brand owners and their customers in establishing standardized practices for communicating your Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs) and their corresponding information to your customers, as defined in Produce Traceability Initiative (PTI) Milestone 3. The Data Synchronization Template referenced here, and the related “Description of Fields Included in the Data Synchronization Template Worksheet”, can be found on the PTI Web site.

We recommend that you review all related materials – these best practices, the template, examples and descriptions – in their entirety prior to beginning to implement the best practices in your operation.

Best Practices for Data Synchronization

1. Assign responsibility for conveying GTIN information.

The seller – and specifically those person(s) who fulfill buyers’ orders – is responsible for providing information for each GTIN shipped to buyers, using the PTI-developed Data Synchronization Template (DST) to develop your company’s customized Data Synchronization Spreadsheet; this includes both product procured internally and externally. As the entity primarily responsible for order fulfillment, the seller has the responsibility to ensure what is shipped to the buyer has been previously approved and is set up in the buyers’ receiving systems for receipt well in advance.

2. Convey your Data Synchronization Spreadsheet electronically well in advance before shipping product.

Your Data Synchronization Spreadsheet listing each GTIN should be emailed to each buyer customer. To ensure the buyer has sufficient time to enter the information into their receiving systems, the spreadsheet should be sent well in advance before product is shipped to the buyer.

If there is an urgent need to establish a new GTIN, the brand owner’s responsible party should contact buyer(s) by phone, in addition to emailing an updated spreadsheet. It will then be a decision between trading partners as to whether a last-minute communication

can be accepted. Remember, the intent is to have your GTINs set up well in advance of a shipment.

3. Integrate third-party service providers.

When using a third-party service provider, if they have an existing utility to (1) upload GTIN information and (2) alert the buyer for approval, then that utility can be used to convey GTIN information to customers on the seller's behalf. If a third party service provider does not have such a utility, then provide them with the PTI-developed Data Synchronization Template.

In this scenario, it is incumbent on the buyer to provide the supplier with their buyers' email contact information, so that the third-party service provider can convey the spreadsheet on the brand owner's behalf.

4. Provide buyers with spreadsheets for only those products that you ship to them.

Your customized Data Synchronization Spreadsheet should be used only to communicate GTINs for the products that you are shipping to a particular buyer customer. It is not intended to be used to provide your entire product line; in other words, do not send a buyer GTIN- data for products that you do not ship to that buyer.

5. Provide buyers with spreadsheets for products you procure from an alternate source.

If you procure product from another grower in order to fulfill a buyer order, it is your responsibility to ensure that the corresponding GTIN is communicated to the buyer. As with your own GTINs in Best Practice #1 above, this information should be provided well in advance of product shipments, to ensure the buyer has sufficient time to enter the GTIN into their receiving systems.