

# THE PRODUCE NEWS

Vol. 113, No. 26

COVERING FRESH PRODUCE AROUND THE GLOBE SINCE 1897

Week of July 5, 2010

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## Price fixing alleged against potato co-ops

By RAND GREEN

Two antitrust cases have been filed against the United Potato Growers of America and others, but a spokesperson for United has termed the allegations "unfounded."

Barb Shelley, chief communications officer for UPGA, said in a written statement June 29 that "two antitrust cases have been filed against United Potato Growers of America and 23 other entities alleging that United and its members do not qualify for the limited antitrust protection accorded cooperatives by the Capper-Volstead Act."

"The allegations are unfounded," Ms. Shelley continued in the statement. "We are careful and diligent to ensure that we are in full compliance with the law."

Also named in the suit were United Potato Growers of Idaho and 22 other individuals and companies, mostly in Idaho, involved in potato production.

Phone calls to UPGI were referred to UPGA.

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## Fancy Food Show



Samuel Morgante (right), a former White House military chef from 1999 to 2005 under Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, stopped at Rosa Secilia Gourmet Inc.'s booth June 27 at the Summer Fancy Food Show at the Jacob Javits Center in New York to speak with Gerard Trudeau and Ralph Slo-movits about the St-Mathieu de Beloeil, QC-based firm's line of 10 crushed fresh herbs and seasonings and three fresh pestos, which are now available in newly released foodservice-sized packaging. Additional photos appear on page 16. (Photo by Joel Gebet)

## 'Ogres and onions' make media waves

By CHIP CARTER

Wendy Brannen suspected that she might have a hit on her hands with the Vidalia onion industry's latest promotional effort: An unlikely pairing of sweet Georgia onions and one of Hollywood's more iconic figures, the animated ogre Shrek.

The campaign — "Ogres and Onions" — rolled out in May along with the premiere of the fourth Shrek movie, "Shrek Forever After," and it has been an unqualified success.

"Shrek"-logoed Vidalia onions are flying off store shelves as consumers are responding to contests and a Shrek-Vidalia onion web site ([www.vidaliaonion.org](http://www.vidaliaonion.org)) by the thousands, and the campaign has been featured in *The Wall*

*Street Journal*, where a story about it ran on the front page June 28.

Later that same day, the campaign was the subject of a two-minute feature that closed the *ABC Evening News*. The following day, the campaign completed an impressive trifecta as the subject of a Fox Business television news feature.

The campaign has also been featured on CNN and made headlines in the *Los Angeles Times* and in 400 other publications in 23 states since *The Produce News* first reported on the promotion earlier this year.

"This is a day of celebration for the Vidalia industry — and indeed the produce industry," said Ms. Brannen, who is executive director of the Vidalia Onion Committee in Vidalia, GA. "We

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Wendy Brannen, executive director of the Vidalia Onion Committee, and an ABC News producer flash a 'V' and an 'O' to symbolize 'Vidalia Onions' following Ms. Brannen's interview with ABC News June 28.

(Photo courtesy of Wendy Brannen)

## DNE's early Australian citrus larger and sweeter than usual

By CHIP CARTER

Fort Pierce, FL-based DNE World Fruit Sales' first 2010 shipment of Australian citrus arrived June 18 at the port of Long Beach, CA, carrying some pleasant surprises.

A heat wave after the Australian trees blossomed caused a bloom drop, and subsequent heavy rains resulted in

huge, sweet fruit and a "surprisingly pretty strong crop," Stu Monaghan, national sales manager for DNE, told *The Produce News* June 28.

Last year's Australian citrus was sweet and plentiful, but the fruit was small. This year's fruit is so large — Navels and tangerines are running "one to two sizes larger" than usual, Mr. Monaghan said

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James Martin, director of packing operations in Florida for DNE World Fruit Sales, and Stacey Register, West Coast operations manager for DNE, inspecting Australian citrus June 30 at KPC Cold Storage in Wilmington, CA.

(Photo courtesy of DNE)

## INSIDE

### Acquisition gives Crunch Pak means to grow

Crunch Pak LLC, headquartered in Cashmere, WA, is looking to grow its sliced-apple business, and the recent acquisition of Stemilt Growers' 'AppleSweets' line is expected to reinforce Crunch Pak's growing volume. **Page 8**



### Maine broccoli off to early start

Fresh from the Start, a division of Riverhead, NY-based ADS Management LLC, was set to kick off its Maine broccoli deal July 6 — 10 days earlier than normal, owing to the favorable weather in the Northeast. In addition to the anticipated high quality of the



product, the company is touting the significant freight advantage for eastern receivers vs. product coming from the West Coast

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### Produce joins the club at A&P

Some produce companies have referred to fresh fruits and vegetables as the best medicine there is, and it appears as if the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. Inc., better known simply as A&P, just might agree. The retailer, one of the older chainstores in the nation, has added a fresh produce component to its "Live Better! Wellness Club."



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### Ontario field crops out of the gate early

Ontario field produce growers have seen their crops planted and harvested a week to in some cases 10 days earlier than normal, and according to Brian Gilroy, chairman of the Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Growers' Association, that makes this year's deal one for the history books. "It's a funny year that's for sure. It's the earliest year in history that growers have planted and harvested product as far as Ontario is concerned."

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### Late start for California pears

While preliminary reports call for a good-quality crop that is similar in volume to last season, a wet spring has delayed the start of the California pear deal by up to two weeks on some varieties. **Page 30**



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# Sun World promoting local produce with building signage



The Sun World International headquarters in Bakersfield, CA, was recently adorned with banners to highlight the variety of produce items grown in Kern County, where the firm is located.

Sun World International recently put the finishing touches on a building refresh project that it said will both capture the eye of road travelers on Highway 99 and promote the variety of produce items grown in Kern County, where the firm's Bakersfield, CA, headquarters are located.

Sun World has turned the east-facing wall of its production facility on Driver Road into what is likely one of the larger ad campaigns in the county. The company has installed nine extra-large banners featuring the "Sun World" logo and appetizing images of

grapes, citrus, peppers and plums. The canvas containing the banners is most visible to travelers driving south toward Bakersfield and spans approximately 521 feet.

"There's a great view of our facility from Highway 99, so we've turned the space into a tool to educate people about the fresh products that Sun World grows — and to hopefully give local residents some pride in the fact that our county produces some of the healthiest, freshest produce enjoyed worldwide," Sun World Chief Executive Officer Al Vangelos said in a June 28 press release.

## New Boston facility gives Jacobs Farm presence on East Coast

PESCADERO, CA — Jacobs Farm expanded its operations in June to include a new facility in Boston. This new HAACP-approved packing and warehouse facility, the first on the East Coast for the organic grower and distributor, will allow more timely distribution of organic culinary herbs and edible flowers throughout the region.

Currently, the company operates two California warehouse, packing and distribution facilities — one in Vernon, near Los Angeles, and one in South San Francisco.

"We're pleased, as we mark our 30th year growing organi-

cally, to be able to further solidify our presence on the East Coast," Kurt Jacobsen, vice president of Jacobs Farm, said in a June 21 press release. "Extending operations to Boston, Jacobs Farm is now ideally located to facilitate same-day order and delivery for our customers throughout the Eastern region."

Securing the new facility is the latest move by Jacobs Farm to increase production and distribution of high-quality, fresh organic culinary herbs throughout the United States. Responding to increasing demand for year-round availability of fresh herbs, Jacobs

Farm recently expanded greenhouse production to 22 acres to supplement its open-field production.

"We're excited to launch an East Coast presence," Erica Putnam, the company's East Coast sales manager, said in the release. "Having a warehouse and packing facility in Boston means we will be able to quickly serve our East Coast customers while retaining the high-quality organic herb line we're known for. Operating out of this new location will be a tremendous benefit during the holidays; customers can order fresh organic herbs every day in response to increases in

demand."

Joining the company as warehouse manager at the new location will be David Yelmokas, whose industry experience includes a decade with Whole Foods Market as well as his most recent appointment as receiving supervisor at Kettle Cuisine.

Founded by Larry Jacobs and Sandra Belin in 1980, Jacobs Farm grows more than 60 organic fresh herbs and edible flower varieties on pristine farmland tucked in the verdant hills along the Northern California coastline. The farm has pioneered organic growing practices and never used toxic,

persistent chemicals, the release noted.

In addition to more than 250 acres of open field and 22 acres of protected environment production in California, Mr. Jacobs and Ms. Belin oversee the Del Cabo organic farming collective in Baja California.

Companywide, over 3,700 certified organic acres are available for production. Del Cabo farmers produce an expanding line of organic produce year round, including specialty cherry tomatoes, fresh basil, vegetables and fruits, which are distributed to stores throughout the United States and Canada.

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2. Lighter Green - Elm & Wood  
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