

THE PACKER

October 15, 2007

Dulcinea offers new melons, fresh-cut item

By Lance Jungmeyer

HOUSTON — For Dulcinea Farms LLC, 2008 will bring shouts of “May day! May day!”

And that’s in a good way.

Next May the Ladera Ranch, Calif.-based marketer will begin three initiatives:

Commercial launch of the new Sweet ‘n Crisp melon, an orange-flesh variety with brix of 14-16;
Year-round distribution of fresh-cut melons, co-branded under the Garden Highway umbrella of Renaissance Food Group LLC, Rancho Cordova, Calif.; and

Pre-commercial trials of organic PureHeart melons.

For Keith Kato, co-founder and general manager of Dulcinea, the Sweet ‘n Crisp holds great promise, both for bulk and fresh-cut, and because volume will be year-round.

“Because it’s a firm product, it will be great for fresh-cut,” Kato said. “It has excellent shelf life of 15-21 days, about double that of regular melons.”

Director of operations Justin Schmidt described the melon as having the “kick of flavor of Juicy Fruit gum, with crisp flesh and a good finishing bouquet.”

The company expects the melon to be priced at \$2.99-3.99 , with ad specials of two for \$5.