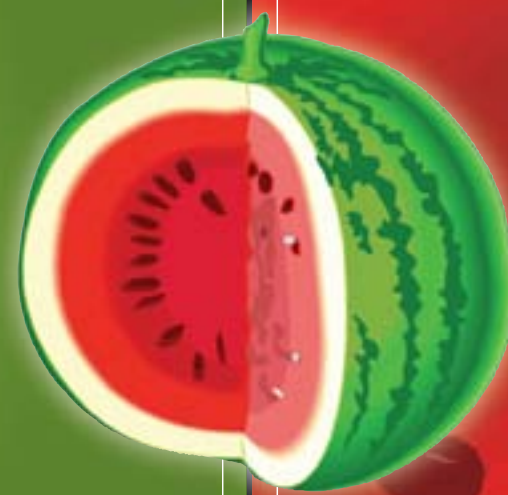


the vine line

Summer 2012

Official Newsletter of the NATIONAL WATERMELON ASSOCIATION



California has a Watermelon Queen!



Liz Heller was chosen by her fellow students to reign as the first Watermelon queen of the University of California, San Diego. In early June she leaned out over the railing on the seventh floor stairwell to look at the cement plaza far below. A cheer went up from her colleagues assembled below, followed by a chant, "Throw it."

But a Watermelon Queen can't be hasty. After all, she was the first Watermelon queen ever elected at UCSD and she was to be instrumental in the very first watermelon toss. First, pictures had to be taken. Then, it was on to the task at hand – breaking a watermelon splat record set in 1974.

If a watermelon drops from seven stories, how far will it splat? Thanks to researchers at the University of California - San Diego at La Jolla – you don't have to try this experiment yourself. The goal of the 48th annual Watermelon Drop was to break the splat record: 167 feet, 4 inches. Hundreds of students witnessed the annual ritual and tried to predict where the farthest piece would land.

The event began in 1965, when a physics professor asked students to find out the terminal velocity of a watermelon when it hits the ground. From this physics-can-be-fun beginning has evolved an annual event that signals the end of spring quarter and the commencement of final exams. It's a release and one final moment of fun before the crunch hits.

The chant went up again from below and this time, Queen Liz waved to the crowd below, gathered the 20.6 pound watermelon, hoisted it like a shot putter with her right arm, and gave a mighty heave toward open space. The melon sailed seven stories down and suddenly exploded with a loud "POP" in the cement plaza like a firecracker. Thousands of tiny pieces of watermelon flew in every direction. The measuring tape found the piece which traveled the farthest. It was a seed found 91 feet from the impact area.

Next spring, perhaps following another physics test, the new freshman class will select a new Watermelon Queen, pick out a new watermelon, and try to break the record. Everyone on hand for this year's drop agreed that Miss Liz Heller had done an expert job for the first time. After all, where does one get experience in watermelon tossing?

Congratulations Buddy Leger, Georgia Agriculture Hall of Fame

Atlanta, Georgia in September will be a special place of honor for one of our own when Buddy Leger of Cordele, GA is inducted into the Georgia Agriculture Hall of Fame.



The documents that supported his nomination (along with a very strong resume) seem to be enough for someone to run for the House or Senate, maybe even the Governor's office. Two very complimentary letters signed and written by Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black and former Governor Sonny Perdue emphasized his dedication to volunteerism and agriculture.

Commissioner Black said, "Observe who listens when a person speaks and you can rapidly determine what I refer to as the coefficient of influence. The wise listen to Buddy. The foolish decline or ignore at their peril. He has advised three generations of presidents, senators, congressmen and deans. My hope is that this commissioner will continue to benefit from his guidance and counsel for many years to come."

Former Governor Sonny Perdue, a long time friend of Mr. Buddy, shared his personal thoughts. "He is a man of his word and strong conviction that has worked relentlessly to better agriculture and agribusiness." Mr. Perdue also said, "The selflessness with which he approaches every situation exemplifies a volunteer spirit." Mr. Buddy, Congratulations! Well deserved. Very much earned. Thank you for your service and dedication to our industry, and in advance for what you will no doubt continue to do in the future.

Beyond Baseball's Guest Workers

By TOM NASSIF,
CEO & President,
Western Growers
Association



People who harvest our food are as important as those who swing a bat.

Miguel Cabrera, third baseman for the Detroit Tigers, is a six-time All-Star and the reigning American League batting champion. He's about to play in his 10th season. During the off-season, Cabrera resides with his wife and daughter in Maracay, Venezuela. That makes Mr. Cabrera a guest worker.

He is one in a huge labor force welcomed into America for seasonal labor. But while baseball players enjoy spe-

2012 WASHINGTON PUBLIC POLICY CONFERENCE

This coming October will mark a critical time in our industry, and an opportunity for us all. It is time to gather with other fruit & vegetable crop industries, companies and executives when we converge on Washington, D.C. Yes, it is the Washington Public Policy Conference, presented by the United Fresh Produce Association.

The 2012 event will stand out amongst all others from the past, especially during this critical election cycle just one month later. It will be very timely for us to meet with our legislators on both sides of Capitol Hill to discuss the issues that are important to us, and should be important to them as most of them will be asking for our votes about 30 days later.

WPPC is the event of the year; a time when we represent the NWA, our chapters, and our industry with the largest crop group in our nation's capitol. This year, the Congressional visits have been split into two days to allow for visits on both sides of the Hill. Key speakers such as former Senator Fred Thompson (and television/movie actor) will share important topics with us.

We have much to discuss; much to do; much to share; much to tell our legislators what we expect of them. If we do not tell them what we expect, then how can we expect anything less than more regulations and laws that potentially hinder our businesses and industry?

Plan to come to Washington in October. Join our Watermelon Team. Help us to make a difference for your business, chapter and the NWA.

HOTELS

Hyatt Regency Washington
on Capitol Hill - (main
WPPC convention hotel)
400 New Jersey Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-737-1234

The Liaison Capitol Hill
415 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. USA 20001
Phone: 202-661-5997



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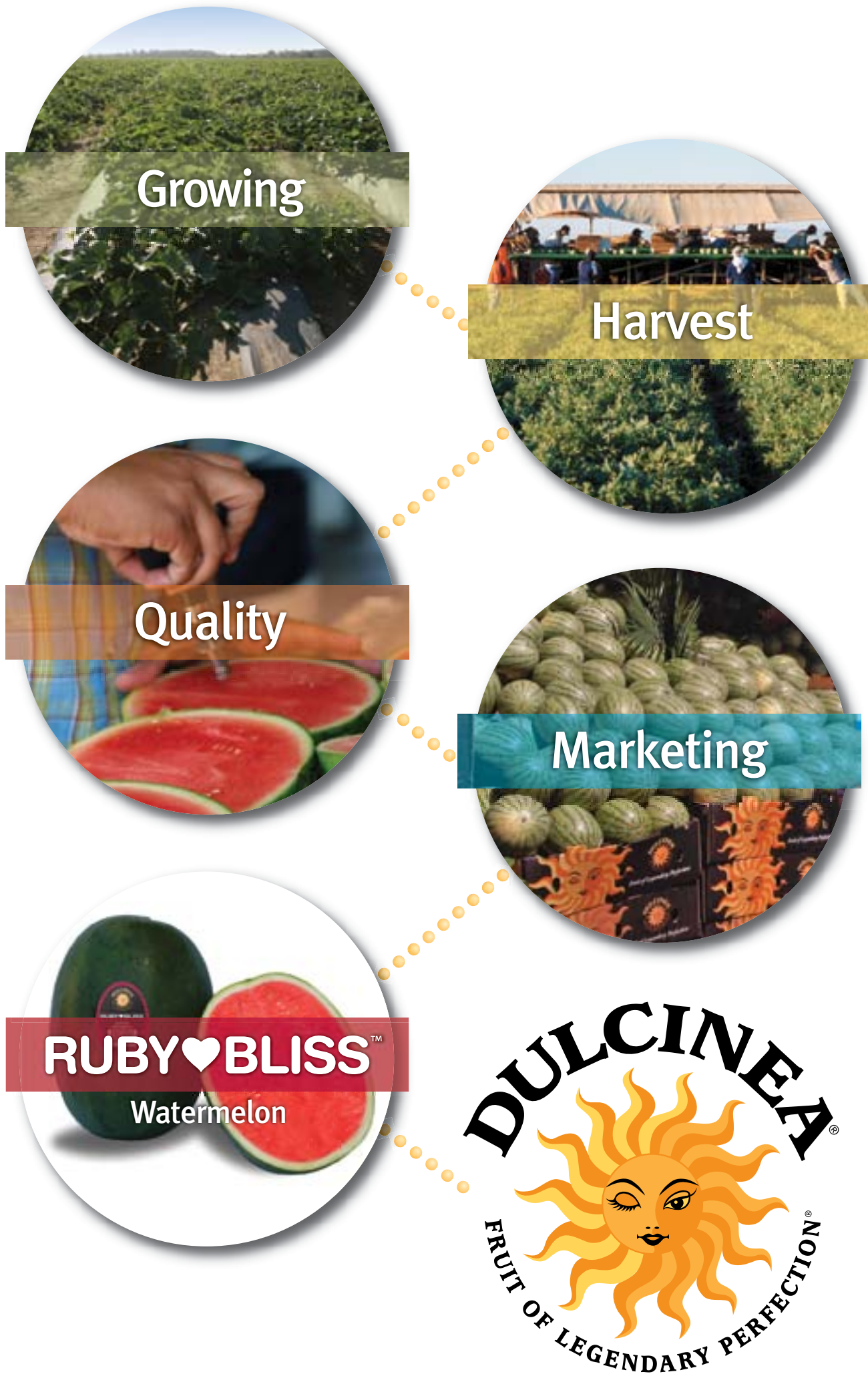
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Delivering flavor and value year-round



Dulcinea Farms™ shines when it comes to delivering a premium line of high quality produce. Our consumers love the convenience and irresistible flavor of PureHeart® Minis and Ruby Bliss™ Watermelons.

We are committed to researching the best varietal selections, growing locations, shortened supply and cold chain to bring quality products to market.

