



### Sweet Onion Trading Co.



Sweet Onion Trading Company was founded in 2001 by Barry Rogers, a produce-industry veteran whose business model was to sell sweet onions year-round. The Melbourne, Fla.-based company now grows sweet onions throughout the U.S. and South America.

To further the company's dedication to personalized service that Barry Rogers, president, insists on, Sweet Onion Trading designed new packaging. "We have developed a distinct selection of consumer packaging that includes our two major brands Longboard Sweet Onions and Sunbrero Sweet Onions," says Rogers. "We have 2- and 3-pound "D-pack" bags with high-graphic poly in the front and recipes on the back with mesh sides, 2- and 3-pound mesh bags with wineglass tags and 5- and 10-lb. drawstring bags. We are also packing in bulk in 40-lb cartons with GS1 barcoded PLU (price look up) stickers." For more information, visit [www.sweetoniontrading.com](http://www.sweetoniontrading.com).

### Vidalia Onion Committee



Building on the momentum from its 2010 kid-targeted promotion with Dreamworks, the Vidalia Onion Committee (VOC), based in Vidalia, Ga., plans to continue reaching out to younger shoppers. "We always try to present retailers with a marketing campaign that they can sink their teeth into, one that will help boost sales and attract more customers," says Wendy Brannen, executive director. "Last year we were able to quantify the increase in sales and we are looking to accomplish that goal again this year by focusing on young adults and continuing to entice parents."

Founded in 1989, the VOC handles the national marketing, including paid advertising, for all Vidalia growers and packers. "We do anything from in store materials to consumer magazines to radio and television," says Brannen. Elements of the latest campaign, including new point-of-sale and packaging materials, will be on display at Southern Exposure.

For more information, visit [www.vidaliaonion.org](http://www.vidaliaonion.org).

### Wayne E. Bailey Produce Co.



Chadbourn, N.C.-based sweet potato grower/shipper Wayne E. Bailey Produce is now shipping fresh steamable sweet potatoes under the Green Giant brand. The 1.5-pound bag contains four to five sweet potatoes and takes about eight minutes to cook. "We are dedicated to making sweet potatoes more available to consumers," says George Wooten, president. "Green Giant one of the top labels and brands in the nation with customer loyalty."

In response to an increased demand for sweet potatoes across all categories, Wayne E. Bailey officials plan to expand its acreage to accommodate an increase in production volume for the 2011 crop. "We are going to have to put in new facilities and have just added

140-square-feet into our building mix which increased storage capacity by 20%," says Wooten.

For more information, visit [www.sweetpotatoes.com](http://www.sweetpotatoes.com).

### Wilcox Fresh



Wilcox Fresh, the Rexford, Idaho-based grower/shipper of potatoes, onions and sweet potatoes, has been keeping busy. The family-owned farm is introducing a 1-pound tray of specialty gourmet-size red, yellow and fingerling potatoes at Southern Exposure. "It's our first venture into specialty potatoes," says Jim Richter, executive vice president of sales and marketing. "The trend continues to be cooking and entertaining at home; this provides consumers with a restaurant quality experience at home."

Food safety continues to be a priority for Wilcox. "We are moving towards higher standards in 2011 so our agricultural program becomes engrained with food safety," says Richter. "It's a way to give consumers confidence. If you have strong food safety practices at your operation, it carries throughout your whole organization."

Richter believes there is a need in the industry to make customers more aware of the food safety programs that products are subjected to at point of purchase. "You only have about five to 10 seconds to influence a customer," he says. "We as growers and shippers need to work with our retail partners on how we can bring this to life at point of purchase."

For more information, visit [www.wilcoxfresh.com](http://www.wilcoxfresh.com).

### Wishnatzki Farms



For the third season, Wishnatzki Farms is using a traceability program that tracks strawberries from the block where they were picked all the way to the carton sitting on the grocery store's shelf. The Plant City, Fla.-based company developed the patented program, Fresh QC, in house and is now marketing it to other shippers under its subsidiary company, VirtualOne.

"We were scanning pickers' badges for hourly work or piece rate. So we took it a step further and put a unique barcode on each box that is scanned and married to the information from the scan of the picker's badge. It documents both the block in the field and the time the strawberries were picked," says Gary Wishnatzki, president. Wishnatzki Farms then places a label on each clamshell that directs consumers to a website to provide feedback. According to Wishnatzki, the company went from receiving 40 to 50 emails/letters a season to more than 2,000 pieces of feedback. "The system has helped us reduce our rejection rate from 2% to 5% two years before it was implemented to 1%," he adds. "It has also created a sense of pride in the organization—from top to bottom. Being able to see consumers' comments inspires them to work harder."

For more information, visit [www.wishfarms.com](http://www.wishfarms.com). □