

United Fresh Food Safety & Traceability Update – July 2016



United Fresh
New Zealand Incorporated

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Food Safety & Traceability Committee Update

In May 2016 the United Fresh Food Safety & Traceability Committee submitted a “Strategic Assessment in the New Zealand Domestic Fresh Produce Industry” to the United Fresh Executive Committee. The Assessment proposed that “United Fresh adopts GS1 Food Safety Traceability methodology as the traceability standard for the domestic fresh produce industry.”

The Committee further recommended that “United Fresh commissions a traceability trial that builds on the strawberry pilot and is based on:

- One or more vegetable crops
- Involves a larger number of growers
- Seeks financial support from MPI
- Uses real time GS1 GTIN numbers, scanning equipment and reports
- Prepares the domestic industry for implementing the recommendation to adopt GS1 Food Safety Traceability methodology.”

Two Traceability Points for Consideration:

Food Safety Traceability is not an area where we should be engaging in competition. The objective has to be transparency of movement through the value chain in order to ensure food safety regulations can be complied with, particularly when it comes to having to implement emergency recalls and trace back potentially hazardous products.

The commitment to traceability must be industry wide and include all supply channels to the consumer and not just the traditional retail channels. This will require three paradigm shifts.

Firstly, producers need to accept accountability for ensuring their produce can be traced. Secondly, wholesalers, market operators and sellers of all types and sizes need to accept responsibility for ensuring produce is traceable based on the “one up/one down” principle along the entire chain. Thirdly, MPI must be prepared to regulate and verify compliance effectively.

Meeting with MPI

We met with Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) staff in June to discuss the United Fresh traceability position and the proposed trial. The MPI team was led by Food Safety Director Peter Thompson and included managers from the food safety policy, operations and recall teams. The hour long meeting was very constructive.

MPI suggested that United Fresh should approach its Sustainable Farming Fund in the first instance for financial support for the proposed trial and an application will be lodged accordingly.

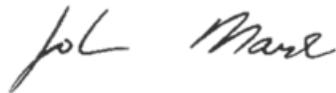
Members of the MPI Food Policy team are keen to engage with United Fresh and work towards finding pragmatic and effective food safety traceability solutions for the domestic fresh produce industry.

MPI Food Policy team members have been invited to present to and engage with both the United Fresh Executive and Food Safety & Traceability committee.

Fresh Produce Safety Centre Australia & New Zealand

The Centre will hold its Annual Conference on 10 August in Sydney. Check out [this link](#). It is not too late to register. We will publish another newsletter covering this event later in August.

Best wishes



Hans Maurer

Chair – Food Safety & Traceability Committee

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