

Two Organizations Representing the Interests Of the Watermelon Industry

National Watermelon Association, Inc.

The National Watermelon Association, Inc. (NWA) is a voluntary, membership trade association dedicated to helping the watermelon industry produce and market their crops at a profit. The NWA currently has members in 38 states plus Mexico and Canada - with chapters representing Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana-Illinois, Maryland-Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and the Western U.S. Many chapters also represent members from adjoining states. The purpose of the Association is to promote the best interests of the Watermelon Industry from production to consumption. The NWA is constantly seeking improvements in the growing, grading, handling, transportation, distribution and sale of watermelon.

The NWA is the voice of watermelon farmers, packers, shippers and suppliers on issues of trade, labor, invasive pest and disease, pesticide and nutrient use, federal legislation, scientific research, farm & packer-based food safety, trucking, and many others. The NWA's goal is to assure federal legislative and regulatory decisions are made with industry's concerns in mind. The NWA is a member of the National Watermelon Promotions Board's Crisis Management contact list for any issues related to food safety, and takes the lead with issues related to labor and lobbying priorities.

The NWA is host to the annual NWA National Convention, entering its 99th year in February 2012. Our goal is to provide services that fill member needs in a cost effective manner for their families and employees alike, and helping them to achieve success in farming, packing and all supply chain levels.

The NWA supports the industry's production research needs through scientific grants to numerous universities and other organizations each year with a keen focus on the highest research priorities. Disease research (i.e. vine decline, phytophthora, gummy stem blight, etc.), farming improvement research (i.e. plant grafting) , and value-added research (i.e. ethanol) are examples of the NWA's investments that will provide answers and support to the industry's needs.

The NWA is the author of the industry's food safety and traceability program, called the "Commodity Specific Food Safety Guidelines for the Fresh Watermelon Supply Chain". After two peer reviews and translation into the Spanish language, the program has been widely adapted by our members and the industry at large.

The NWA is a supportive force on promotional activities through the National Watermelon Queen program. The National Watermelon Queen is trained as a spokesperson for the association and the industry, and is involved each year with in-store promotions, fairs, festivals,

trade shows, numerous other promotional events and an annual visit with our federal legislators; promoting the best interests of the industry. And, the NWA created “*National Watermelon Month*” through resolutions from our U.S. Congress which is producing state, regional and national promotional programs that will help to increase the consumption and sales of watermelon. Throughout the year NWPB works with NWA on various promotions to support their queen promotional program. Working with their established retail contacts, NWPB helps to bring supplemental queen promotions into various retail environments for promotional purposes.

The NWA is a respected clearinghouse of information for well over 1,000 members, publishing industry trend stories, key legislative and regulatory activities, scientific research to combat invasive pests and diseases, development of a watermelon-specific food safety program, and providing an effective means of communication that is on-going and responsive to the industry’s needs, which will help members run their businesses more efficiently and effectively. The association communicates with its members through its member-only magazine - *The Vineline*, a quarterly newsletter - *Off The Vine Bulletin*, and an effective association web site www.nationalwatermelonassociation.com

A Board of Directors referred to as the NWA Executive Committee is elected annually by our members at the national convention. This body governs the NWA. They meet twice per year (national convention and fall meeting).

The NWA is funded by donations that are generated through the annual watermelon auction at the national convention, sponsorships, exhibitors, advertisers, a nominal membership fee paid through our nine chapters, and incentive/goal oriented partnership programs with key suppliers. Anyone that has an interest in the NWA and the industry’s affairs is welcome to join through any of our chapters, which automatically enrolls a member into the NWA. The NWA continues to be the rallying point around which the industry gathers.

National Watermelon Promotions Board

The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) is a commodity promotion board organization that operates under United States Department of Agriculture oversight. At the urging of the industry, Congress passed the Watermelon Research and Promotion Act in 1995 which is the legal framework of the board. This oversight ensures that the organization is operating in the most fiscally responsible manner, is in compliance within the framework of the Act in which it operates under, and is disseminating fact-based information.

The NWPB is funded through a self-mandated industry assessment paid by the watermelon producer, handler, and importer. The NWPB is comprised of 36 elected board members who are then appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. They represent all watermelon production areas of the United States and watermelon importers. During annual meetings the NWPB's directors decide how to invest its budget in board programs under the oversight of USDA.

The Board and its committees oversee the strategic direction, allocation of budget and staff resources, and operations of the NWPB. Board meetings are held twice a year, the executive committee meets once a month via teleconference, and individual committees meet via teleconference as needed. This meeting structure allows NWPB to be governed closely and effectively by the industry at the lowest possible operating expense.

The NWPB is a multi-faceted organization with a strategic mission to make watermelon an everyday, healthy choice for consumers throughout the United States, Canada and other export markets. NWPB works to increase consumer demand for watermelon through promotions, marketing, research, communication and educational programs. It is considered the marketing and communications arm of the watermelon industry.

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