



Free iPhone app lets consumers track path of produce  
by Lisa Pierce | 11.16.09

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

- As the world turns, there's a crop of watermelons, cucumbers, tomatoes and squash ready to tell the story of their lives. And these little dramas are showing up on the small(er) screen. A new iPhone app lets consumers trace the origin of coded produce — while they're in the store — using their smartphone.
- Developed by YottaMark, creator of the HarvestMark product traceability program, a free iPhone app lets shoppers snap a shot of a 2D code printed on produce labels, which connects to the HarvestMark website. There, they can see a fruit or veggie's birthplace and get facts about the farm, as well as check the food's safety status. Pending Apple store approval, the HarvestMark app expects to launch in December 2009.
- While HarvestMark can be used on many types of products, it already has a lot of fans in the produce industry as growers and sellers struggle to comply with the Produce Traceability Initiative. The Kroger Co. is one of the early adopters. Kroger's new Fresh Selections pre-washed, ready-to-serve packaged salads are the first salads using the HarvestMark technology. Each bag carries a 16-digit code that shoppers can enter at the website to learn more about the salad's origin, packing location, ingredients, date and time the product was packed (The Kroger Co. 10.28.09).

WHAT THIS MEANS TO BUSINESS

- One small mark for produce, one giant leap for reassuring mankind. Fatal food contaminations and almost-too-regular recalls have people on edge. Safe? Not safe? Companies that are transparent about their product's history help demystify the farm-to-fork process and build trust with fretful foodies.
- For Millennial Moms who are tech-native, it's a no brainer for them to expect their iPhone to connect to farmers they don't even know. Dialing for data is a high-tech way of thumping a watermelon or squeezing a zucchini.
- Lots of talk these days about consumers tapping into the third screen for entertainment. It was only a matter of time for them to remember that it's a useful tool to empower consumers to take steps to ensure the safety of their family.

RESOURCES

- [YottaMark Inc.](#), created and manages the [HarvestMark](#) product traceability program
- [The Kroger Co.](#)
- [Apple](#) owns [iPhone](#)

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VALUES

- [safety](#)
- [freshness](#)
- [authenticity](#)
- [confidence](#)
- [self-sufficiency](#)

Highlight a value to see its definition.

MARKET FACTS

**%** 80% of consumers stated that produce traceability was somewhat or extremely valuable in a study by Beyond Data sponsored by YottaMark. Eight of 10 consumers would be extremely likely to use a website, preferably operated by an independent third party, to find out where their food was grown and harvested.

YottaMark | 9.9.09

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**👁️** News about the latest food recalls is now less than a phone call away with the Michigan Department of Agriculture's new food-safety text-message alert program. Subscribers will receive information, via text message or email, about foodborne illnesses and product recalls, according to agriculture director Don Koivisto.

LansingStateJournal.com | 1.5.09

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**“”** The admonition to “know your farmer, know your food” may be mission impossible to a generation of clueless consumers. Unless we are a devotee of community supported agriculture or a seasonal customer of a farm stand, we don't know who grows our food.

Tom Karst, national editor for *The Packer*, in a blog about the USDA's new “Know

