

Durand-Wayland, Inc.
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Introducing Produce Laser Coding Technology



Durand-Wayland, Inc. demonstrated its revolutionary new laser coding machinery on Wednesday, April 14, 2004, at its facility located at 101 Durand Road, LaGrange, GA. In addition to local officials, the event was attended by US Representatives Mac Collins and Phil Gingrey and Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tommy Irvin. Gilbert Pedraza from Sunkist Growers Association was present to explain that their organization will be marketing the DW produce laser coding exclusively in the citrus industry.

The Company Product

Durand-Wayland, Inc., a manufacturer of fresh fruit and vegetable grading equipment has been in business since 1934. The company has a history of providing innovative equipment to meet the changing needs in the marketplace. The new produce laser coding system will not only meet the needs of the grower and packinghouse industry but the consumer and the public policy requirements of traceability of produce. This patented laser coding process was in the development phase for nine years. It has been tested in two commercial applications, and also tested for product sustainability and consumer acceptance. The system is ready for the market. Company officials demonstrated the process and explained how this all natural, edible label can be used effectively at an affordable cost.



How Produce Laser Coding Works

The Produce Laser System has been specifically designed to easily integrate into and interface with the customer's current packinghouse equipment. Our patented application of laser technology facilitates printing on produce with precise control without degradation to the product. This precise control of emitted light removes the pigment layer from the surface of the produce to reveal a contrasting sub-layer. Because this removal process has been designed not to penetrate the surface or "skin" of the produce, it therefore, does not promote decay. Product Look-up Code (PLU), Country of Origin Labeling (COOL), Grower Lot Numbers and any other requested security information can be implemented. Not only is each piece of produce permanently coded but the specific information can be stored electronically for any period of time. The laser light printing process is earth-friendly by using no consumables to label the produce. Other direct benefits include being an all-natural process that never has contact with the produce.



Features and Benefits

- Instant PLU change-over
- Eliminates the high cost of adhesive labels.
- Eliminates the consumer's complaints with adhesive labels
- No waste and very low energy cost
- A "Green Product". Favorable to the environment and consumer health
- Capable of lot tracking, traceability, information gathering, etc.
- No consumables
- Very, very low operational maintenance costs.
- Only one laser head per lane is required to meet information requirements
- Requires no additional personnel to maintain constant operation
- Packers no longer have to deal with inventory overhead, operational and maintenance costs that are associated with adhesive labels
- Capable of marking produce that adhesive labels could not, i.e. cucumbers
- Capable of Country of origin marking
- Capable of programming in multiple languages
- Can be used with a customer's existing equipment
- Speed up to 14 pieces per second
- All natural process that never comes into contact with the produce

Consumer Research Results

A major consumer research study was conducted in four geographically dispersed US markets by Clark & Company, Inc. Clark & Company is a certified, national, independent research firm headquartered in Atlanta, GA. Participants in the study were frequent consumers of one or more hand-held, edible skin fruits and also consumed non-edible skin fruit. The study found that the "laser/controlled light" labeling process is preferred because it eliminates the negatives of the stickers and it can provide much useful information about the origin of the produce. Most consumers want to have as much information as possible concerning where their fruit comes from. The study revealed that consumers see many shortcomings in "stickers" currently being used. These include hard to remove even to the point of removing some of the produce. The glue residue is also seen as a problem.

Implications for implementation of Country of Origin Labeling and record keeping

The 2002 Farm Bill legislated Country of Origin Labeling and record keeping. The enforcement has been delayed to allow for study time. With laser labeling technology now available, a major barrier has been erased for implementation. This new technology should be considered in the discussions that affect the US food supply and ultimately the US consumer. Whether or not COOL is made mandatory or not, the technology is still an alternative to gummed labels.

Marketing of the equipment

Citrus: Durand-Wayland, Inc has signed an exclusive contract with Sunkist Growers to market all lasers for marking citrus. Contact information is as follows:
Gilbert Pedraza, Sales Manager, Tel 805-677-2550, Cell 805-217-2470, Fax 805-677-2552, e-mail gpedraza@sunkistgrowers.com.

All other Produce: Durand-Wayland, Inc will be marketing via leasing domestically and through agents internationally. Contact information is as follows: Ray Perry, Vice President of Sales by phone at 1-800-241-2308, ext 127, e-mail rayp@durand-wayland.com or fax 706-884-3268.