

## **eProduce Responds to News About The Potential Criminal Prosecution of the Executive Officers of PCA**

*Next Version Software, LLC, developer of eProduce, fresh produce business process management, tracking and tracing software CEO Anderson Grogen Sr., expressed disappointment over the continued need for product recalls due to the peanut product salmonella contamination. NVS also hopes that these incidents will provide reason for more companies to explore alternative record keeping methods to help protect the public.*

February 12, 2009 (FPRC) -- NEW MEXICO, DEMING - This week, PCA executives appeared before a Congressional Committee however refused to answer any questions, invoking their Fifth Amendment Rights under the Constitution of the United States. Peanut butter became the latest in a long string of foods pulled off shelves due to potential food contamination.

In response to concerns that the peanuts and other ingredients had been stored incorrectly, causing bacteria to grow, a number of major peanut butter suppliers ordered recalls on their products. Peanut butter and products containing peanut butter and/or derivatives of peanut products was taken off the shelves in grocery stores around the country, including in such major chains as Wal-Mart, Kroger, Whole Foods, and Albertsons.

With nine people dead, including war heroes and cancer survivors, and hundreds of others sickened, their concern is clearly warranted. At the same time that the peanut butter was being pulled from shelves, lawyer Bill Maler was called on to represent the family of a young child who became sick as a direct result of eating a contaminated peanut butter product. The child consumed the contaminated food in November of 2008.

Unfortunately, this week's contamination of the nation's food supply isn't confined to peanut butter. These same stores also pulled mushrooms off the shelves, fearing that the produce may have become contaminated due to improper harvesting or storage at some point during transport. Many products containing mushrooms were also removed out of concern for the mushroom ingredients.

"It's a tragedy that the consumers have to suffer, not to mention the many manufacturers of different products which contain the possible contaminated ingredients or the lost sales revenue of peanut butter products that are completely safe to eat. Skippy peanut butter -- which is manufactured by a completely different peanut supplier -- reported a 54% drop in sales this week, Peter Pan reported a 45% drop," said Anderson Grogen Sr., CEO of Next Version Software, LLC. (eProduce) (<http://www.eproduce.biz>)

"What is even more tragic is that all of this could have been prevented. If these companies had taken advantage of technology and used a food tracking software program to track and trace growers and suppliers of fresh produce products -- including what brand name the produce was packaged as and to whom the product was shipped to -- it would not have taken months to identify the source of the contaminated products. Thus significantly reducing the lost revenue of hundreds of manufacturers, retailers, growers, packing and processing facilities and possibly eliminating all deaths and ill children," Grogen continued.

In July of 2008, recalls began with concerns over tomatoes, causing the industry hundreds of millions of dollars in losses -- only to discover the culprit was jalapeno peppers combined with tomatoes which was to be used in making salsa. Apparently, poor handling in Mexico caused the salmonella in the chili peppers, which when combined with other fresh produce ingredients to produce salsa, led to illness when consumed. As a result, multiple fresh produce products came under scrutiny creating various 'false positive' batches of tomatoes, spinach, scallions, cilantro, and bulb onions that needed to be investigated.

eProduce is a web-based fresh produce 'Business Process Management' software solution providing a monitoring, tracking and tracing system designed to bring focus and operational clarity to high volume fresh produce production environments -- where food safety and product tracking is a concern. eProduce is able to track the exact product shipped to the customer, including lot number, date of production, grower and field data.

"In essence, if produce from a particular field or plant is compromised, with the use of eProduce fresh produce business process management software, a company would be able to determine if their products contained the contaminated food. If a fresh produce supplier can 'quickly' identify their fresh produce product and show regulatory officials their fresh produce product was not involved, it would save millions of dollars in lost revenue and would eliminate a fresh produce product category recall," said Grogen.

"If fresh produce growers, packing and distribution companies were using ISO GS1 standardized tracking and tracing software to aid in harvesting, packing, monitoring, shipping and quality control, the problems with the contaminated produce would have a much higher chance of rapid detection," said Grogen. "Using RFID, Barcodes, GTIN, SSCC and GS1 data bars on fresh produce, retail, trade and logistic units provide a uniform international standard which enable fresh produce suppliers to quickly identify and supply regulatory officials with required information that not only eliminates a product category recall, but reduces the company's risk exposure -- and more importantly eliminates deaths of the elderly and children exposed to contaminated food products."

About eProduce: eProduce (<http://www.eproduce.biz>) was developed by Next Version Software, LLC in response to the US Bioterrorism Act 2002, which mandates protection of the nation's food supply. eProduce has mastered fresh produce traceability, country of origin labeling, carton and retail product level labeling and tracking, utilizing ISO GS1 traceability standards that use Global Trade Item Numbers, Serialized Shipping Container Codes and GS1 Data Bars -- enabling users of eProduce to perform fresh produce product trace-back to the farm, grower or supplier, literally within seconds. 'Farm-to-Fork Tracking in Minutes, Not Days!'

### **Contact Information**

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### **Keywords**

[food contamination](#)

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