

Complying with the Food and Produce Traceability Initiative

A White Paper by Alan Shipman



Introduction

The Produce Traceability Initiative (PTI) is an industry-led effort to enhance traceability throughout the entire produce supply chain. The Initiative's sponsor associations include United Fresh Produce Association (United Fresh), Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) and Produce Marketing Association (PMA). The PTI Action Plan outlines the steps for achieving traceability at the case level by 2012, and the Produce Traceability Initiative website provides an industry resource for open discussion and exchange of information (www.producetraceability.org).

ID Technology can provide support for this initiative with a range of labeling, coding and marking solutions, from Label Printer Applicators, to High Resolution Inkjet printing to Laser Coding. Each of these technologies offer solutions for labeling and marking cases and pallets to meet the requirements of the Produce Traceability Initiative.

One of the main requirements of PTI is the use of the GS1-128 barcode symbology. Some of the specifications of the symbology are:

- Starts with an Application Identifier (AI) of "01".
- Implementation guide references labels.
- Includes a GTIN (Global Trade Identification Number) which is a total of 14 characters long. The first two characters are the AI of "01", the next character is an indicator for packaging level and the next twelve characters are the manufacturer number and the product number. The last character "5" is the check digit.
- Includes an AI of "10", which signifies lot code and the next nine characters "022208ABC" are the actual lot code.
- GS1 specification for a GS1-128 bar code is a minimum of an ANSI C barcode grade.
- The maximum width of the bar code inclusive of quiet zones is 6.5".

PTI Carton Compliance - Labels

Label Printer Applicators use a thermal transfer printer to print variable information onto a label and then applies it to the case, carton or pallet. The ID Technology Model 250 Label Printer Applicator prints crisp, clear barcodes as well as human readable alphanumeric text to meet the PTI requirements.

Label Printer Applicators printing on a white background with dark print, provide the highest contrast and consequently the most reliable scan of the GS1-128 barcodes required by the Produce Traceability Initiative.



PTI Carton Compliance - Inkjet Technology

The ProSeries inkjet systems from ID Technology are capable of printing a four-inch high block of information and graphics, including the GS1-128 barcodes required by the Produce Traceability Initiative. The industrial inkjet systems can be specified with multiple print heads for printing on multiple sides of the case. Like the printer applicators or laser coders for case marking, inkjet printers give packagers the ability to eliminate or reduce the number of pre-printed secondary cases, which cuts material, transportation, warehousing, and material handling costs.



PTI Carton Compliance - Laser Technology

The application of laser marking on a carton requires a special coating to be placed in specific areas on the shipper. The laser then burns barcodes, like the GS1-128 required by the Produce Traceability Initiative, as well as, graphics and text into the coating to create a visual contrast. Laser coding does not require Laser coding does not require consumables on the packaging line and therefore the production line does not need to be stopped for replenishment.



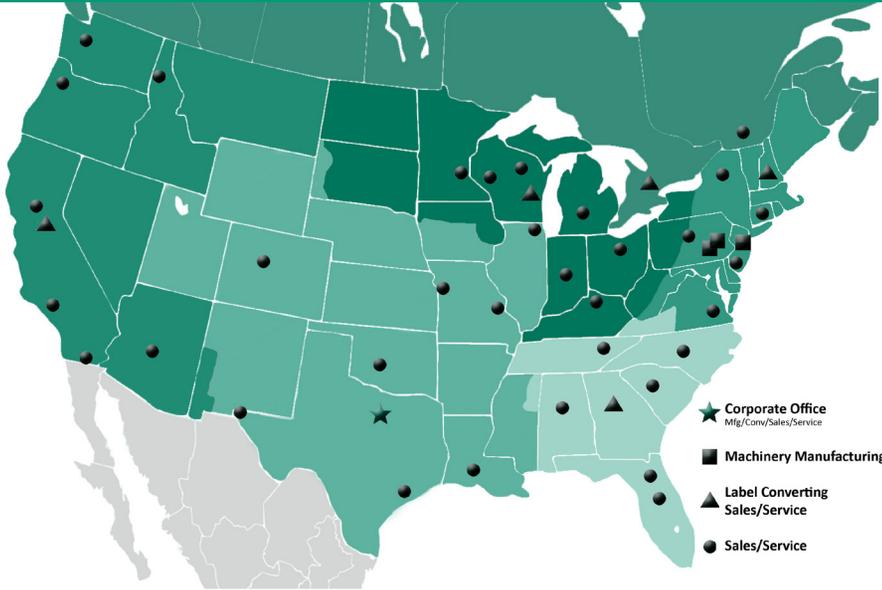
PTI Pallet Compliance - Labels

For pallets, labels are the only alternative. The Produce Traceability Initiative requires the use of SSCC (Serialized Shipping Container Code) when labeling pallets.

- SSCC is a GS1-128 bar code (contains the manufacturer number and a unique number to identify the pallet for a total of 18 characters).
- SSCC always starts with Application Identifier (AI) of "00".

There are pros and cons for each technology. A site survey should be performed to evaluate product handling, barcode quality objectives, capital costs, operating costs and required production line speeds. After analysis of the above, the best technology for the specific application can be chosen.





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ID Technology technicians are PMMI Certified Trainers to ensure the highest standards of quality training are being met and unparalleled value is being given to the customer.

Our field service personnel are factory trained to service and support our full range of labeling, coding and marking equipment.

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