



WG and CPMA Join Forces to Develop Sustainable Produce Packaging Guidelines by December 2025

A new working group spearheaded by the organizations will create guidelines to unify North American supply chain protocols.

IRVINE, CALIF. and OTTAWA (JUNE 27, 2024) - Western Growers (WG) and the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) today launched a working group to address the evolving landscape of packaging requirements imposed by both governments and retailers throughout North America.

Dozens of grower associations from across North America convened to discuss the current state of produce packaging and outline goals for the Sustainable Produce Packaging Alignment for North America (SPPA). SPPA will develop unified guidelines for use across the North American fresh produce supply chain, with a target completion date of December 2025.

“Packaging is key to ensuring the quality, affordability and safety of fresh produce,” said Western Growers President and CEO Dave Puglia. “Consumers are requesting high-quality fresh produce from our growers and changes in packaging. As such, the industry is facing new and aggressive demands from both the public and private sector – demands that are often in conflict with each other, and don’t fully recognize industry realities and progress. The intersection of sustainability with packaging must be addressed for the continued trade with our most important partners and continued availability of nutritious foods for consumers.”

“Packaging plays a critical role in enabling the sustainability of North American and global fresh produce supply chains – from ensuring food safety and minimizing food waste to mitigating packaging waste,” said Ron Lemaire, CPMA President. “The trend of diverging market and regulatory packaging requirements is a significant risk to fresh produce supply chains, hence the strategic importance of developing and adopting North American guidelines for fresh produce packaging.”

The challenges the industry faces are numerous. WG and the CPMA are actively engaged on the Environment and Climate Change Canada's (ECCC) pre-proposal to constrain allowable fresh produce packaging in Canadian grocery stores. The ECCC is currently advocating for a significant reduction in produce plastic packaging, demanding that 75 percent of all produce be sold in bulk or non-plastic packaging by 2026, increasing to 95 percent by 2028.

The SPPA project plans to develop industry-focused analysis, white papers and web tools on fresh produce packaging technology for U.S. specialty crop growers; host workshops to educate and align stakeholders; organize technical working group meetings to leverage industry expertise to craft the tools above; and launch a public-facing resource to inform stakeholders on how to use the guide once it becomes available.



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About Western Growers:

Founded in 1926, [Western Growers](#) represents local and regional family farmers growing fresh produce in California, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico. Western Growers' members and their workers provide over half the nation's fresh fruits, vegetables and tree nuts, including half of America's fresh organic produce. Connect and learn more about Western Growers on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

About Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA):

Based in Ottawa, Ontario, CPMA is a not-for-profit organization that represents a diverse membership made up of every segment of the produce industry supply chain who are responsible for 90% of the fresh fruit and vegetable sales in Canada. CPMA is fortunate to represent a sector that is both a significant economic driver for communities and that also improves the health and productivity of Canadians.