



# Watermelon Update

NATIONAL WATERMELON PROMOTION BOARD



## Retail Merchandising Contest Winners Announced

### Powell's Supermarket Takes Grand Prize

NWPB announced winners in its annual Retail Merchandising Contest which garnered 220 entries from various retail chains, independent retailers and commissaries throughout the U.S. and Canada. This year's iteration of the contest – the 12<sup>th</sup> since its' inception – was reimagined to

incorporate social media and marketing efforts in addition to in-store displays. The contest started in July to honor National Watermelon Month and ran throughout the month of August to encourage and identify retailers who are showcasing watermelon's benefits including health, value and versatility.

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## Retail Merchandising Contest Continued

Marketing efforts considered in judging included category visibility, point-of-sale materials, good visual merchandising, messaging nutritional benefits, recipes and/or selection education and use of print, online and/or digital platforms. This year's winners used mixed marketing tactics ranging from time-lapsed social posts to eye-catching in-store displays to virtual store tours.

This year's winners included:

- Grand Prize:** Powell's Supermarket - Bay Roberts NL, Canada
- Second Place – Two!:** Chuck's Produce & Street Market Stores – Salmon Creek and Mill Plain locations - Vancouver, WA
- Third Place:** Schnuck's Hampton Village - St. Louis, MO
- Honorable Mentions:** Fort Sam Houston - San Antonio, TX, Mandela Grocery Cooperative - Oakland, CA, Lowes Food Store #245 - Hickory, NC, United Grocery Outlet #30 – Brevard, NC

"The entries we received this year went above and beyond. Powell's Supermarket – this year's grand prize winner – really explored every avenue of promotion and merchandising, using in-store optics and collateral materials and extending health messaging online and in their social media," said Juliemar Rosado, Director of Retail and International Marketing for the NWPB. "It was great to see all the unique spins on merchandising across the stores."

"At Powell's Supermarket, we pride ourselves in being fresh, friendly and local and it was a tremendous amount of fun to get creative with fresh watermelon – a customer favorite! Our team not only put together an eye-catching watermelon display, but we included fun and educational information to accompany it both in store and online as well. We are thrilled to be recognized as first place winners - but perhaps the biggest prize of all was watching how this display put a smile on our customers' faces as they entered our store," said Valerie Morgan, Public Relations and Marketing Coordinator.

More than \$10,000 in cash and prizes will be awarded to winners, including \$5,000 for Powell's Supermarket as the grand prize for winner. The second place winners split \$2,500, third place will receive \$1,000 and each of the four honorable mentions will receive \$500.

A complete list of the winning displays can be found [here](#).



2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Chuck's Produce & Street Market Stores



3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Schnuck's Hampton Village



Honorable Mentions

## National Watermelon Promotion Board Meeting with Strategic Planning



On Friday, October 23, 2020, the Watermelon Board held its first virtual Board meeting. The main focus of the Board meeting was **strategic planning for 2021-2023**. Every three years the Board conducts a strategic planning session to gain essential direction from the Board on macro and micro topics. The current mission statement of the Board is "To increase consumer demand for watermelon through promotion, research and education." On a scale of 1-10, the Board agreed by a score of 9.6 that the mission

accurately represents the charge of the Board. Each committee (Communications, Marketing, Foodservice and Research) provided an update from 2020, was assessed and direction was shared for the future. Other high level topics included COVID-19 and other concerns facing the industry in addition to positive trends and critical success factors for the Board. The next NWPB Board meeting, where staff will recommend marketing programs and the Board will vote on a budget for the 2021-2022 year, will take place virtually on Saturday, March 6, 2021.

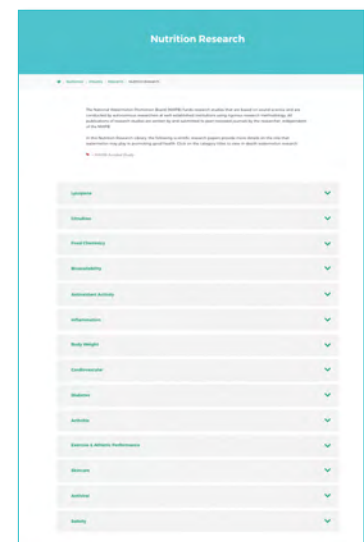


## Nutrition Research Library Launched

NWPB funds research studies that are based on sound science and are conducted by autonomous researchers at well-established institutions using rigorous research methodology. All publications of research studies are written by and submitted to peer-reviewed journals by the researcher, independent of the NWPB.

Watermelon.org has a new Nutrition Research Library that sources scientific research papers providing more details on the role that watermelon may play in promoting good health. When browsing the library, note that studies with a watermelon emoji 🍉 indicate they were funded by NWPB. Categories of research topics are organized into the following: Lycopene, Citrulline, Food Chemistry, Bioavailability, Antioxidant Activity, Inflammation, Body Weight, Cardiovascular, Diabetes, Arthritis, Exercise & Athletic Performance, Skincare, Antiviral and Satiety. You can view the library here:

<https://www.watermelon.org/audiences/industry/research/nutrition-research/>





## International Foodservice Editorial Council Annual Conference



The International Foodservice Editorial Council (IFEC) is an organization whose members are **editors from foodservice publications** across the U.S. The Board speaks directly to chefs through these influential publications. IFEC's annual conference scheduled this month in Santa Barbara, CA, was moved to a virtual format. The conference included trend presentations and an industry panel where the Watermelon Board sponsored Chef Jason Knoll from Another Broken Egg. Chef Jason spoke to current industry opportunities and trends and highlighted watermelon in his remarks. Additionally, programming wrapped up with an editor panel that was very valuable to the Board as **pitching continues to gain coverage** in these publications. The days following were virtual Office Hours. The Board had **13, 15-minute meetings with editors to pitch story ideas for 2021**. Finally, Megan McKenna, senior director of marketing and foodservice, serves on the IFEC Board to better keep in touch with editors throughout the year. Although not the same as the in-person event, the virtual event will lead to strong coverage in 2021.

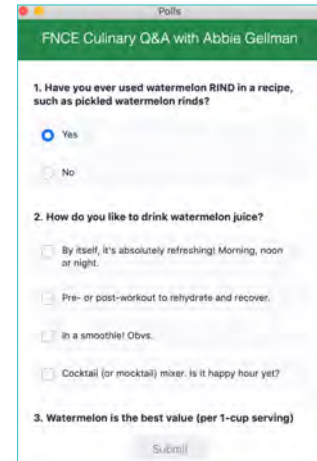
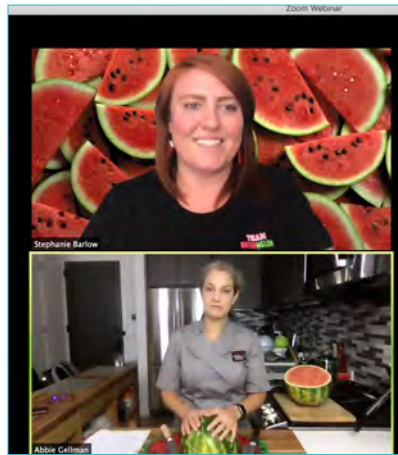
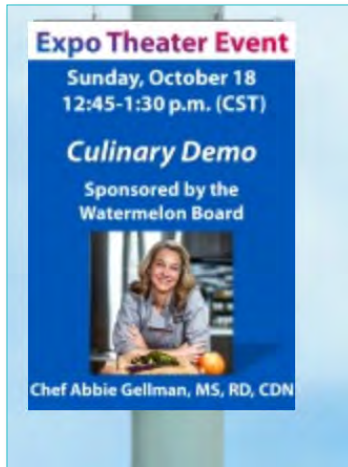


## Produce for Kids/Healthy Family Project

A **Fall/Winter partnership** has launched with Produce for Kids, newly named the Healthy Family Project. Check out this great email marketing and blog post for Watermelon Halloween Carvings. There will be **monthly content** in the form of blog posts with social amplification across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest, as well as a Food RX video demo.



# Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo



In mid-October, the Watermelon Board participated in the Virtual FNCE conference reaching dietitian nutritionists, a very highly trusted and important influencer group for **consumer education and information on food and health**. The Food and Nutrition Conference & Expo put on by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the single largest event of its kind in the US. Being virtual, the event had a historic **13,775** attendees, all earning continuing education credits through presentations, lectures and spending time in the Expo Hall. The Watermelon Board sponsored Chef Abbie Gellman for a culinary watermelon demo, a 45-minute video followed by a Zoom Q&A in our booth. Sharing the new Registered Dietitian Toolkit to these important influencers was our main goal in participating in this event, which normally overlaps PMA Fresh Summit. The Watermelon Board booth offered resources including recipes, videos, zero food waste, watermelon flavor pairings and a Pop Quiz, gaining 1,000 names for our *What About Watermelon?* e-newsletter.

The event will be live until summer 2021, so attendees will have the opportunity to revisit learning sessions and research reviews, view our culinary demo video and explore exhibitor booths of resources. This was one of the new events NWPB pivoted to in lieu of in-person promotion events to reach dietitians in 2020.



## Watermelon on the Menu

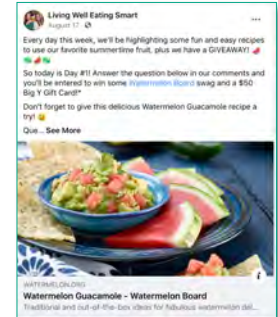
AVOW, an upscale restaurant and bar in Downtown Napa, features watermelon in **two dishes** on both lunch and dinner menus. The Burrata salad (pictured right) includes heirloom tomato, peaches and **smoked watermelon** with a golden balsamic vinaigrette; the Hoke Poke starter features **roasted watermelon**, pine nuts, shallot, dried fruits, sesame seeds and wonton crisps.



## Retail Highlights

### Big Y

Big Y held a weeklong watermelon celebration through their Living Well Eating Smart wellness program. The promotion ran from August 17<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> and included daily watermelon recipe posts encouraging watermelon consumption. Each day, participants were encouraged to answer a question, which tied to the recipe posted. Every answer counted as an entry to win one of three prize packs.



### Safeway/Albertsons

Safeway/Albertsons partnered with NWPB on an extensive watermelon promotion that included social media outreach, Facebook Live, viewable demos in eight regions and a live event with health influencer and registered dietitian Manuel Villacorta.



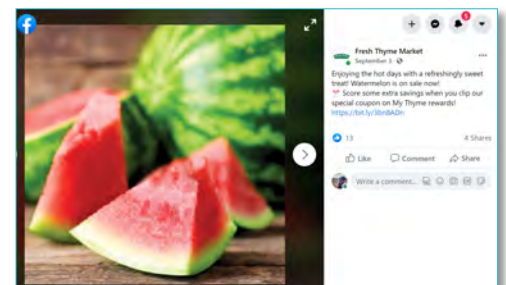
### Tops Markets

Tops Markets held an 8-week "Summer Sale-A-bration" that included displays encouraging health and fruit and vegetable consumption. The engagement was well received by customers and associates.



### Fresh Thyme

Fresh Thyme held a week-long Labor Day sales contest that was supported by increased and secondary displays.





# Marine Corps Marathon



Marine Corps Marathon is our **industry's flagship promotion**, but it is much more than a consumer event: it is an honor and a privilege to provide watermelon to runners, fans and friends among the Marines in our Nation's capital. While we cannot give watermelon to all of the virtual runners this year, the 45th Marine Corps Marathon, we are partnering in other ways.

- Queen Paige Huntington recorded cheer messages that will be programmed in the official app, so runners will hear her words of support at different mile markers on their runs
- A watermelon carving time lapse video of the 45th MCM logo will be premiered and promoted MCM weekend and beyond
- Several pre- and post-workout watermelon recipes shared on the MCM social media channels
- Digital event bag promotes watermelon “at the finish line” for all runners to refresh and rehydrate after completing their race

In a late September tweet by MCM asking followers ‘What’s your favorite post-marathon recovery tip?’ one person tweeted back a reply: “Take 2 containers of watermelon at the finish line!”

# Help Buyers Find Watermelon!

Be a part of the more than 50 companies present - opt in to the Supplier Database! Each year the Board reaches retail and foodservice buyers through marketing programs and the new opt-in only Supplier Database is the resource for retail and foodservice buyers looking for watermelon. In addition to growers and shippers, the Supplier Database is an opportunity for transportation, seed, and bin/carton partners. Visit the Supplier Database at [watermelon.org/supplierdatabase](http://watermelon.org/supplierdatabase) and submit the Database entry form, email [supplierdatabase@watermelon.org](mailto:supplierdatabase@watermelon.org) or call 407- 657-0261 for more information.



The image shows a screenshot of a 'Supplier Form' with the following fields and sections:

- Business Name \*** (text input)
- Contact First Name \*** and **Contact Last Name \*** (text inputs)
- Phone \*** and **Fax** (text inputs)
- Email** (text input)
- Address** and **Website** (text inputs)
- Role in Industry (check all that apply) \*** with checkboxes for: Grower, Shipper, Processor, Distributor, Retailer, Importer, Exporter, and others.
- Area of Origin (check all that apply) \*** with checkboxes for: South America, Mexico, Central America, Caribbean, and others.
- Volume \*** with checkboxes for: Less than 2M lbs, 2M to 5M lbs, 5M to 10M lbs, 10M to 25M lbs, 25M to 50M lbs, 50M to 100M lbs, and 100M to 250M lbs.



## Upcoming NWPB Connections

United Fresh Marketing Meet-Up Sponsor - November 4

West Coast Produce Virtual Expo - November 10 - 13

CIA Worlds of Flavor - November 10 - 12

USAEDC Virtual Conference - November 17 - 20

Communications Coaching for NWPB Leadership and Staff - November 18

Flavor Experience - December 1 and 2

