National Watermelon Promotion Board Holds
February 17th, 2021 Convention to Nominate Producers and Handlers to Serve as District 3 Directors

Contact: Rebekah Dossett
NWPB Director of Operations & Industry Affairs

February 3rd, 2021

ORLANDO, FL – The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) will hold a teleconference on Wednesday, February 17th, 2021 at 2pm (EST) to nominate qualified watermelon producers and watermelon handlers to fill open positions as directors of the Board.

District 3—The States of Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina Tennessee, and Texas.

The NWPB encourages all women, minorities and persons with disabilities who qualify as watermelon producers and handlers to attend the meeting and run for nomination to the NWPB.

All watermelon producers and handlers in District 3 are encouraged to attend and vote to nominate their representatives to the NWPB. Nominations are submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Secretary of Agriculture makes the final appointments to the NWPB. The newly appointed Board members term of office will begin on January 1, 2022, and end December 31, 2024.

The Board members administer promotion and research programs for watermelon. The NWPB works to increase consumer demand for watermelon and expand domestic and foreign markets through its marketing, consumer public relations and education programs. The non-profit Board works with an administrative staff to enact retail, foodservice and media promotions and research programs.

All Board members are required to attend two meetings each year to become familiar with and develop the Board’s variety of marketing, research and education programs.

(More)
The NWPB represents about 900 commercial watermelon producers, handlers and importers that finance all of the Board’s programs through assessments on watermelons as authorized by the Watermelon Research and Promotion Act. The 30-member Board is currently comprised of 10 producers, 10 handlers, 9 importers, and a member who represents the public.

Board members are nominated by their peers, and nominations are submitted to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, who makes final appointments to the Board. These board members oversee all aspects of the Board, including setting policies and deciding how the Board’s budget is invested in promotion, research and education programs. The USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service monitors the Board’s operations.

To be eligible for nomination, producers must grow 10 or more acres of watermelon, and handlers must be the first handler of watermelon, according to §1210.306 and §1210.308 of the Watermelon Research and Promotion Plan.

Consistent with §1210.306, the NWPB will allow proxy voting for Board nominees. Individuals wishing to vote by proxy should prepare signed, dated statements, including the proxy voter’s printed name, address, telephone number, identity as a producer or handler, and the name of the individual authorized to cast the proxy vote. These statements should be given to those authorized to cast the proxy vote, who will then provide the statements to the NWPB no later than February 16th, 2021.

The producers and handlers appointed to the Board will represent the NWPB’s interests throughout the district in meetings and other forums, and should be dedicated to supporting the Board’s marketing, promotion, research and education programs.

Additional information regarding the elections and nomination procedures may be obtained by contacting NWPB Director of Operations & Industry Affairs Rebekah Dossett (407) 605-5984 or Industry Affairs Manager Andrea Smith (407) 613-2972. Also, there is a USDA flyer attached regarding Shaping the Future of Agriculture by being a voice for your industry.

Individuals with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations and or alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, LEP, etc.) should contact: Rebekah Dossett within 7 days of event.
PROXY TO VOTE

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

Certified that I, ______________________________________________________, am a

_________ Producer of 10 or more acres
_________ First Handler

of watermelons, and do hereby nominate, constitute and appoint

__________________________

__________________________

to be my representative (a peer or NWPB Staff), for me and in my name and stead, to vote in the National Watermelon Promotion Board District Convention to be held via teleconference on Wednesday, February 17th, 2021 at 11:00AM, and all and any adjournments thereof, and to do and perform all and any act or things in my name and stead that I could do as a Producer or First Handler at said meeting or meetings.

I would like to nominate: ____________________________________________________________

WITNESS my hand and seal this _______ day of _________________________, 20____.

Executed in the presence of:

______________________________  ________________________________
Witness  Name

______________________________  ________________________________
Witness  Company or Firm

______________________________  ________________________________
Address  City

______________________________  ________________________________
State  Zip

______________________________  ________________________________
Phone
Teleconference Call Information

Dial-In Number: (267) 930-4000
Participant Access: 132 049 880

To join the conference on your iOS Device, click this link: http://rcconf.net/2lXHcoY

Conferencing Tips:
Additional dial-in numbers: https://ringcentr.al/2L14jqL
To mute your line, press *#6 on your keypad.

Click here to add this event to your calendar

Current Board Members for District 3:

Producer - James Sharp (1st Term - eligible for nomination)
Producer - Luke Brown (2nd Term - ineligible for nomination)
Handler - Matthew Sonana (1st Term - eligible for nomination)
Handler - Cody Buckley - (1st Term - eligible for nomination)

We need two names per position which will result in a total of eight names for each district.

Producer 1: A)______________  B)______________
Producer 2:  A)______________  B)______________
Handler 1: A)______________  B)______________
Handler 2: A)______________  B)______________