



# Watermelon Update

NATIONAL WATERMELON PROMOTION BOARD



## Watermelon Marketing Goes Global: NWPB Presents at Melon Conference Australia

NWPB's Juliemar Rosado traveled to Brisbane to speak to Melons Australia Conference, where she shared her expertise on watermelon marketing with growers, shippers, and industry members from across the region. Held in conjunction with the International Fresh Produce Association Australia & New Zealand's Hort Connections, the event brought together more than 150 participants from the Australian melon industry for two days of learning, collaboration, and celebration.

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## Melon Conference Continued

As the conference's keynote speaker, **Juliemar provided valuable marketing insights from a U.S. perspective, including strategies for promotion, consumer engagement, and brand storytelling that have helped drive watermelon sales and visibility in the American market.** Her presentation set the tone for a day that also featured sessions on food safety, innovation, and emerging megatrends in agriculture.



In addition to her keynote, Juliemar took part in a lively panel discussion focused on the future of melon marketing in Australia. Together with local leaders, she explored how industry organizations can work collaboratively to elevate the category and connect with consumers in fresh, meaningful ways.

The event also marked the 30th anniversary of Melons Australia, celebrated with a networking reception that continued the conversation well into the evening. The excitement carried into the broader Hort Connections conference, where attendees engaged with new ideas and technologies shaping the produce world.

While in Brisbane, Juliemar also had the chance to visit local retail stores, gaining a firsthand look at how watermelons are merchandised and marketed in the Australian marketplace.

From thoughtful presentations to valuable networking and retail insights, the trip proved to be both productive and inspiring — a true testament to the power of global collaboration in the produce industry.



## Watermelon Industry Leaders Recognized in Produce Business's 40 Under 40

We're excited to share that **Jordan Carter, Rob Gibson, and Trey Miller have recently been named to Produce Business magazine's 2025 40 Under 40 list.** This annual recognition highlights the next generation of entrepreneurs and leaders who are making meaningful contributions to the produce industry. We love seeing watermelon talent spotlighted on a national stage, and we're proud to celebrate these rising leaders. They each represent the dedication and forward-thinking approach that continue to strengthen the watermelon category. Congratulations Jordan, Rob, and Trey!







## Industry Spotlight – Get to Know Renee Goodwin

**Company:** Frey Farms

**Time in the Industry:** 20 years

**Time on the Board:** 3 years

**What's your favorite thing about the Watermelon Industry?** The people behind the produce, who work tirelessly, always on a deadline, to ensure delicious, healthy watermelons are *always* available at your favorite grocery store.

**What's your favorite item on your bucket list?** If I had a Bucket List, my first "to do" would be learning to play the bass guitar.

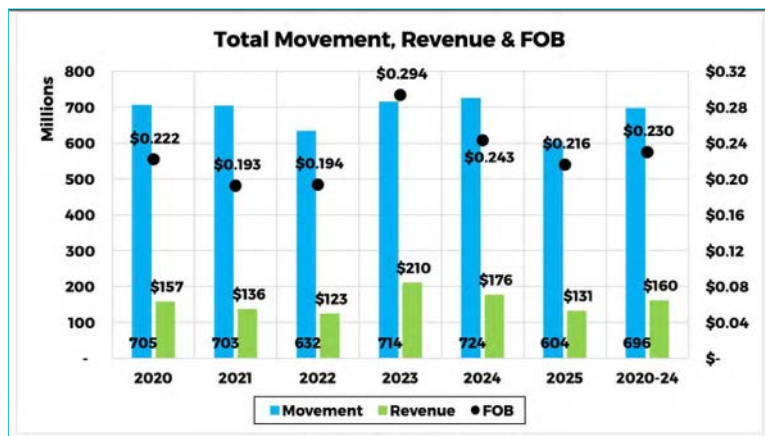


## Memorial Day Market Analysis

Memorial Day features **the second largest buildup of watermelon each year** trailing only the Fourth of July. During the two weeks prior and one week following the holiday, volume has averaged 696 million pounds from 2020 through 2024. In 2025, volume was down 13% at 604 million pounds, while seedless FOB prices were also down roughly 6% at \$0.216 per pound. This left revenue estimates 18.5% below average with larger gaps to past two years.

Florida contributed 45% of the total with 269 million pounds, roughly 23% below their established average, while Mexico provided similar volume (269 million, up 22%). Texas placed third (52 million, down 44%). Per pound prices were a couple of cents higher in Florida, and all regions saw prices similar to three or four years ago more so than the past two.

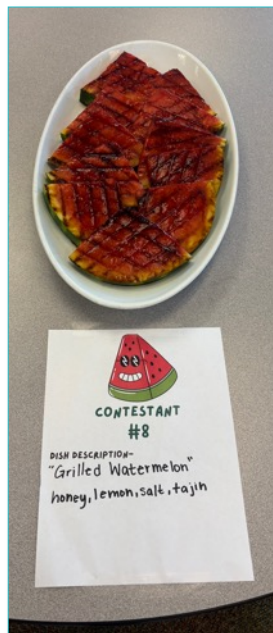
**Download the FULL WORKBOOK [here](#)** to gain insight regarding this critical time of year for each of the regions mentioned above from a production perspective. Additionally, you will find retail ad analysis to get a sense for promotional volume as well as ad pricing. Lastly, utilizing Circana Retail Scan data you will find how watermelon performed at retail relative to past years using a similar timeframe as above. It also shows 50 different nationwide markets and looks at how many Total, Whole, Mini and Cut pounds were sold and how that compares to the prior five years.



## Reaching Future Chefs

New this year, the Watermelon Board launched direct outreach to culinary students, starting with a collaboration with the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) across multiple campuses.

The week of May 19 was **Watermelon Week at CIA San Antonio, with watermelon featured throughout campus**. The festivities kicked off with a carving competition and continued on Tuesday with a presentation by Megan McKenna, Senior Director of Marketing and Foodservice, who spoke to students about watermelon, from cultivation and cutting to culinary applications. The week concluded with a cooking and baking competition. Each day during “Family Meal,” the midday gathering when all students dine together, watermelon was served in a variety of creative dishes.



On June 1, the Board co-sponsored a new Beverage Competition at *CIA New York*. Watermelon was featured at an interactive aqua fresca station that offered giveaways and educational materials to both participants and the hundreds of attendees.

Next up, the Board is working on activations at *CIA at Greystone* and Johnson & Wales University. At every stop so far, students have been inspired by watermelon’s versatility and excited to experiment with it in the kitchen.



## National Media TV Segment: Summer Hydration Made Delicious

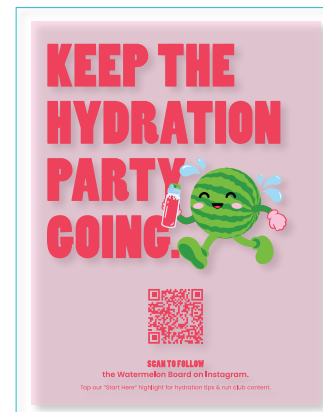
On June 21st, Board partner and Registered Dietitian Maggie Moon was featured in *Coffee with America*, a nationally syndicated TV show reaching an audience of 2.85M including network stations in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Atlanta. This segment starred watermelon and focused on summertime hydration, health and happiness. The “Summer Hydration Made Delicious” segment included watermelon slice popsicles, mocktails and prosciutto skewers on set for the 2-minute show. It **aired 503 times on TV stations across the country**.



## Watermelon Partners with Run Clubs to Champion Hydration Nationwide

This month, **watermelon is hitting the pavement with run clubs across the country!** In select cities and on designated days, NWPB is teaming up with local run clubs to offer a refreshing post-run treat - fresh-cut watermelon! Each participating run club will receive complimentary watermelon for their members to enjoy after their run, along with educational messaging highlighting watermelon's hydration benefits.

- Minneapolis, MN – Monday July 28
- Denver, CO – Tuesday, July 29
- Seattle, WA – Tuesday, July 29
- Boston, MA – Wednesday, July 30
- Colorado Springs – Wednesday, July 30
- New York City, NY – Wednesday, July 30
- Austin, TX – Wednesday, July 30
- Chicago, IL – Wednesday, July 30
- Nashville, TN – Thursday, July 31
- Los Angeles, CA – Thursday, July 31
- Dallas, TX – Thursday, July 31
- Atlanta, GA – Thursday, July 31



## Dietitian Event: Culinary Nutrition Collaborative

On June 8, the Watermelon Board participated in a virtual event designed to help registered dietitians translate nutrition science into realistic, food-focused strategies for their clients. Sponsored by the Board, RD Jessi Holden led an engaging educational session and cook-along demo titled *Meal Planning with Families*.

Holden showcased how to create nutritious, approachable meals by preparing watermelon salsa with black bean quesadillas and slaw—demonstrating simple ways to incorporate watermelon into everyday family meals. During the session, she shared valuable insights on the health and sustainability benefits of using the whole watermelon, along with tips on how to select the best watermelon, as featured on the Board's website.

The event reached 500 registrants, both live and on demand, equipping **dietitians with tools and inspiration to promote family-friendly, produce-forward meal planning while keeping watermelon top-of-mind.**





## NWA Nook: From Texas Fields to Capitol Hill

The National Watermelon Association has been on the road this season, with Executive Director George Szczepanski and the team representing growers and partners where it matters most—both in the field and in D.C.

In May, George joined Texas Watermelon Association President Kristin Story for a tour across key regions of Texas. The visit offered a full look at the supply chain—from seed trials and soil testing, to meetings with field scouts and the Texas International Produce Association—highlighting both the challenges and innovations shaping the 2025 season.



Later in June, NWA brought a 20-person delegation to the IFPA Washington Conference, including growers, coordinators, queens, and even harvesters. They advocated for ag labor reform in Congressional meetings and served slices of watermelon at the “Joy of Fresh” event on Capitol Hill, which helped drive a surge in traffic to the Association’s website.

The NWA remains focused on **amplifying industry voices and strengthening partnerships** through active engagement across the country.



## July is National Watermelon Month!

To celebrate National Watermelon Month, the Board is giving away prize packs on Instagram and Facebook. The contest is **open to all watermelon fans** and will run weekly throughout the month of July.





## Center for Advancement of Foodservice Educators Annual Conference

At the end of June, the Watermelon Board sponsored the Center for the Advancement of Foodservice Education (CAFE) Annual Conference, the premier organization for **reaching culinary educators**. After all, they can't teach what they don't know. This year, the Board had a presence at both the Deans & Directors Retreat and the Leadership Conference. Megan McKenna participated in a panel discussion on partnerships during the retreat and presented "What's New and What's Next" at the Leadership Conference.



Watermelon was featured throughout the event, but one standout dish at the reception stole the show: a Compressed Watermelon Poke Bowl with Watermelon Rind Kimchi (pictured, top), Pickled Watermelon Rind, and Toasted Watermelon Seeds. The onsite chef described the toasted seeds as a labor of love, and attendees raved about the flavor-packed bite that showcased multiple watermelon applications.

The InfoFair provided an opportunity to distribute materials from the "What's New and What's Next" session and reinforce watermelon's place in culinary classrooms. **Megan, with longstanding support from the Board, was honored to receive the CAFE Champion Award**, an unexpected and meaningful recognition.



## Board Launches Paid Google Search to Boost Summer Awareness

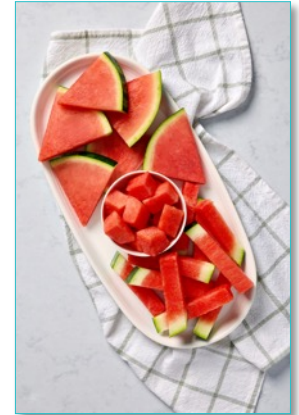
This summer, NWPB is leveraging the power of paid Google Search ads to connect with consumers right when they're searching for seasonal inspiration. The campaign targets high-intent keywords related to summer snacks, hydration, recipes, and healthy eating—ensuring watermelon appears front and center at peak moments of decision-making. By **meeting consumers where they are online**, this strategy is designed to increase website traffic to Watermelon.org, drive deeper engagement with health and recipe content, and ultimately position watermelon as the go-to fruit for summer enjoyment.





## National Media News Story: Summer Eats & Staples

NWPB is partnering with Talker News on a summertime **watermelon survey-led news story for the purposes of news generation resulting in earned media coverage**. The story is themed “Summer Eats and Staples” and the survey is in distribution, focusing on summertime sustainability, hydration and easy meals/no cook food prep. The goal is for the final national distribution to go out post-July 4th to invigorate and inspire repeat watermelon purchases after the holiday, throughout the summer and beyond.

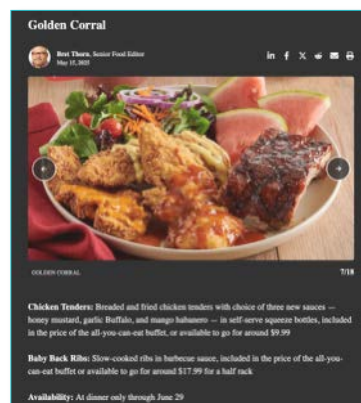


The news generation project includes: question writing, online polling, news copywriting and distribution and is guaranteed to **reach a collective audience of 50M** (audience views tabulated via Critical Mention media platform).




## Foodservice Media Keeps Watermelon Top-of-Mind

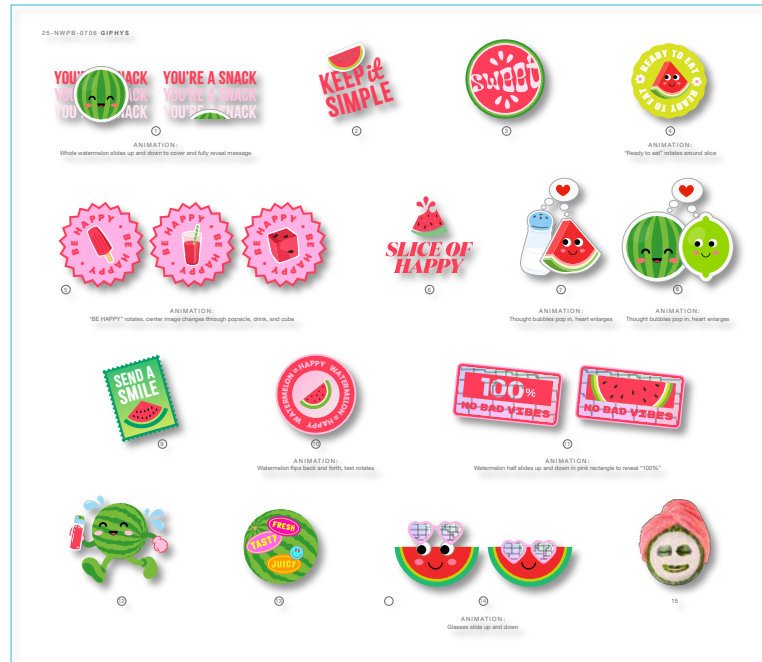
New this year, the Board is **investing in year-round paid media** with foodservice to elevate watermelon awareness. Watermelon always receives great coverage in the summer due to increased menu placements but this investment helps to reach culinarians looking for summer menu ideas now.





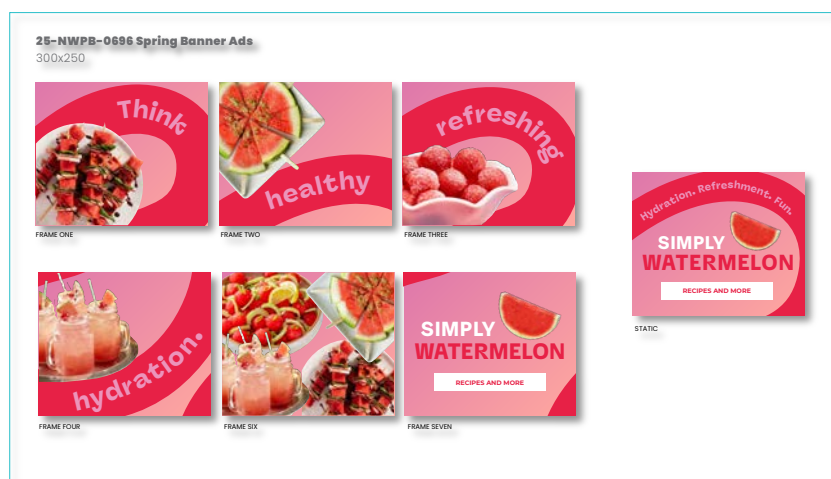
## New Giphy Stickers!

Giphy stickers – particularly owned by NWPB – are an important social asset because they are easy to use, **increase and encourage engagement, and have the potential for viral spread**. They also offer a fun way to engage with the Board, personalize their own content and express emotion. With the success of the Use the Whole Watermelon giphy creative and a need for ownable, timely and relevant social stickers, we've launched a new package of on-brand giphy stickers. [Check them out here!](#) 



## May Digital Banner Ads Full Performance Snapshot

Spring shoulder season programmatic display banners ran in May with new Simply Watermelon creative. Both prospecting and remarketing banners saw an average CTR (click through rate) of 0.37%, well above our benchmark of 0.10%. Overall, this campaign drove 378K impressions and 1.4K clicks along with 1.4K pageviews to the website. While not as "splashy" as social content, **banner ads are a vital tool in the Board's digital communications toolbox**.



## Assessment Due Dates

Please note the following due dates for 2025:

- Product handled in June, must be postmarked by July 30, and received by August 11, 2025
- Product handled in July, must be postmarked by August 30, and received by September 9, 2025
- Product handled in August, must be postmarked by September 30, and received by October 10, 2025

The full calendar can be found [here](#). At the same link handlers can file their online Handler's Report. Never used the online Handler's Report? Check out the step by step [Online Handler's Report Users Guide](#).



## Watermelon on the Menu

Back for a second year, 801 Local in St. Louis, MO is currently offering a **Watermelon Salad** with cubed watermelon, burrata cheese, balsamic glaze, watercress, red onions, cucumber and candied pistachios.



## NWPB Connections

**July Attache Seminar USAEDC** – McLean, VA – July 8 - 10

**IDEA World** – Sacramento, CA – July 16-19

**CAPTURE Studio Photoshoot** – Virtual – July 22

**CIA Digital Media Photoshoot** – San Francisco, CA – July 29

**IFPA Foodservice** – Monterey, CA – July 30 - August 1

