

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Sweet Onion Trading Company Takes a Stand To Define A Sweet Onion

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Barry Rogers, president of Sweet Onion Trading Company, announced today that his company is taking steps to dispel the confusion about what constitutes a “sweet” onion. Rogers is proposing a definition that he believes should be embraced by the industry to help protect the consumer against “onion fraud.” Key to the company’s 2011 Global Certification Initiative is National Onion Labs, Inc. (NOL), which has been selected to test and certify Sweet Onion Trading Company’s products.

Rogers founded Sweet Onion Trading Company in 2001, after serving 12 years as a sales manager for other national sales organizations in the produce industry. Today, the family-owned business is based in Melbourne, Florida and continues its mission to bring to market the highest quality sweet onions available from all supply sources—domestic and imported.

“We have always worked closely with our growers and shippers, and strive to provide onions that have mild and pleasant flavors that leave an impression of sweetness. Sweet onions should be free from pungent, bitter, metallic or other “off” flavors which interfere with the experience of mild, sweet flavors” comments Rogers. “This initiative with NOL will hold the bar high for us and other shippers. What we want is to maintain a consistently sweet onion which tastes fantastic. That is what our customers want!”

“I have known about methods used to validate the sweetness of onions for a long time. I have visited different labs across the country and I am confident in the methods and integrity of NOL. Relying on a

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pungency test alone would be like taking a step backwards; we need to test what our consumers actually taste, which is what NOL is testing," says Rogers.

David Burrell, president of National Onion Labs, Inc. appreciates that Sweet Onion Trading selected his company for their sweet onion testing. "We believe we are on the cutting edge of onion flavor technology. It is refreshing to find a company like Sweet Onion Trading that understands the value of knowing the flavor qualities of the sweet onions they sell, has a definition of what a sweet onion is, and takes a stand against the onslaught of baseless sweet onion claims."

Burrell went on to say, "Since there are no standards in labeling an onion as sweet, there are many 'imposters' in the market place. Over the past seven years, our testing of random onions purchased from retailers shows that 52 percent of the "sweet" onions tested would not pass a simple pungency test for sweetness."

"NOL has raised the bar, because even if an onion passes the pungency test, it still has to pass the other measures of taste. If it doesn't taste sweet, it's not sweet," says Burrell. He is looking forward to the day when other grower/shippers adopt and promote an industry standard definition that can be used as a reference from which buyers may evaluate sweet onions being offered.

Established in 1998, NOL, based in Collins, GA, has a global scope, servicing clients and conducting field surveys in more than 12 US states and 14 countries.

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