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Agricultural Outlook Forum

Presented: February 17, 2006

**BUILDING COALITIONS TO DEVELOP MARKETS**

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# **Building Coalitions to Develop Markets**

**USDA Outlook Conference**

**February 16-17, 2006**

# Agenda

- **Who We Are**
- **Our Approach & How It Works**
- **What Sets Protected Harvest Apart**



# Who We Are

- **A non-profit certification organization that:**
  - **Advances environmental and economic sustainability by certifying farm and food company practices**
  - **Promotes practices that are based upon stringent, transparent and quantifiable standards**
  - **Provides third party credible verification of those stringent standards**
  - **Features incentive-based eco-labeling in the marketplace!**

[www.protectedharvest.org](http://www.protectedharvest.org)



# **A model of cooperation for a mutual interest**

**In 1996, an exciting collaboration came together to pioneer a new agricultural standard.**



- **WI Potato & Vegetable Assoc.**
- **University of Wisconsin**
- **World Wildlife Fund**



# What Makes a Good Eco-Label?

## We score the top Consumer Union Rating!



- Meaningful and Verifiable
- Consistent and Clear
- Transparent
- Independent and Protection from Conflict of Interest
- Opportunities for Public Comment



# **Making the Case for the Marketplace**

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- **Most growers do not want subsidy payments**
- **Continued economic viability is the key for growers and must come from the market**
- **Growers who do more to protect the environment deserve consumer recognition**
- **An eco-label can spark that recognition**



# Accountability is *the* Key

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- The public must know that growers are doing what they say they are doing
- To get recognition growers must do more
- Growers must distinguish their products in order to compete
- Third-party certification validates environmental practices & provides credibility



# **Accountability is NOT Self-Certification**

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- **Only a certification program that is reviewed by the scientific and environmental communities can truly be accountable to the consumer**
- **Blowing your own horn never works!**



# **What do consumers think?**

**In a recent supermarket intercept of 500 consumers,**

- 80-92% of respondents were likely to purchase Protected Harvest certified product.**
- More than 90% are willing to pay a premium for the product.**
- More that 80% of those surveyed cited the importance of certification.**



# **What do consumers like?**

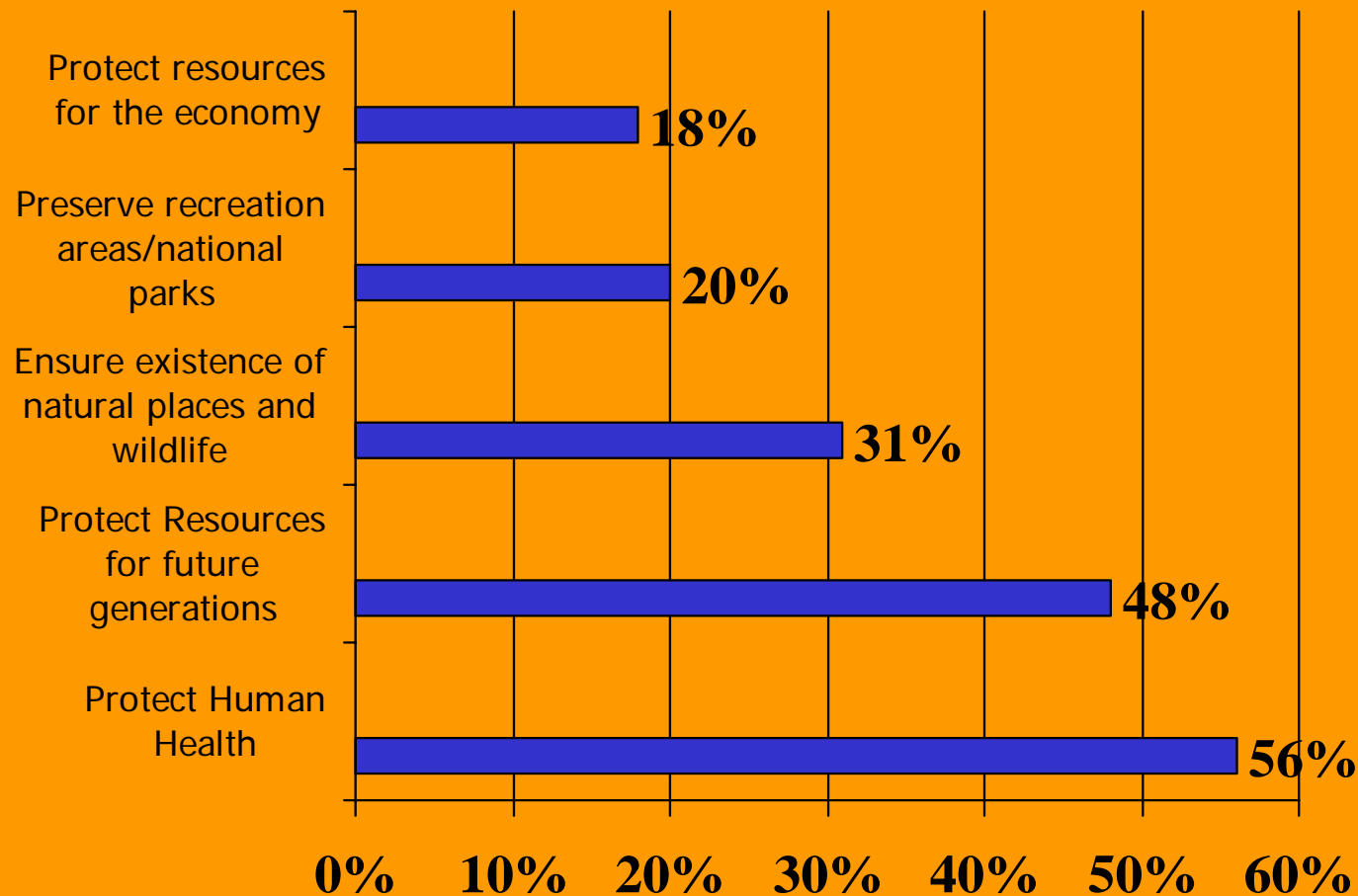
**When asked what aspect of the product appealed to them, respondents listed:**

- **Fewer pesticides**
- **Environmentally friendly**
- **Good for me**



# Health is key motivation to protect the environment

*Percent of American adults who name the following items among their top 1 or 2 reasons to protect the environment*



**Protected  
Harvest  
links health &  
environment**

*-Green Gauge Report 2000  
Roper Starch Worldwide*

# **Our Approach & How It Works**

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- **Go for maximum environmental impact by working with mainstream conventional agriculture**
- **Partner with grower groups or food companies to achieve a critical mass for change**
- **Establish a performance continuum & make annual progress on a 3-5 year plan**



# **Production standards divided into two main components:**

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- 1. Field Practices to support air and water quality**
- 2. Pesticide Use (Environmental Impact Unit Score)**

**Chain-of-custody also required for handlers and processors**





# **A Case Study– Lodi Winegrapes**

- **Experts and growers collaborated to created an environmental program that gives the growers a means to distinguish and market their region.**
- **Six wingrape growers certified in January**
- **The certification program adds credibility and accountability to the market claim.**



# Protected Harvest Partnerships

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- **Partnerships in progress**
  - **Wisconsin Potatoes**
  - **Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission**
  - **California Tree Fruit**
  - **California Processed Tomatoes**
  - **California Strawberries**
  - **NEXT: California Citrus**



# **Keys to Strong Partnerships**

- **Let the growers & experts design the plan & then peer review it**
- **Engage leaders and early adopters; resist temptation to engage whole commodity community**
- **Use 3-5 year plan to engage ownership of progress pathway and goals**
- **Solicit in-kind contributions to solidify buy-in**



# Media Notices Partnerships, too!

Coverage of a project announcement included:

- 94** National and Local Print Media reports in Newspapers or on the Internet
- 22** Environmental Publications
- 34** Regional and Local TV and Radio station reports in the news or on their web sites

Most notably, the event generated coverage in many top-tier media outlets including:



# **What about “It Ain’t Organic”?**

- **The product can be priced close to the conventional product**
- **Organic is & will continue to be niche market**
- **We offer a gateway to the conventional grower who wants to “green” his system**
- **These producers need incentives and market recognition to make this transition**
- **Certification & eco-label creates opportunity for the consumer to support these producers**



# What sets Protected Harvest apart?

- **Transparency of Process**
  - Standards developed cooperatively
  - Available for anyone to review
- **Measurable Goals**
  - Verifiable performance measures validate the commitment of food companies to protecting the environment
- **Credibility**
  - Collaboration with internationally recognized scientists, good partners, our Board



# Why **This** Green Label Works

- Our label has content; we can measure environmental impact
- We know that the environment is *one* element of a successful product
- We work collaboratively with our partners to show progress towards established goals
- We make it easy for producers & consumers to “do the right thing”



