



Produce World Pioneers Internal Defect Detection in Onions

July 2012

Produce World Rustler will be the first company in the UK to install Near Infra-Red (NIR) technology for detecting internal defects in onions. Working in conjunction with MAF, the company which provided its grader, Produce World Rustler will be trialing the ground-breaking detection system as part of its ongoing continuous improvement campaign.

Andrew Holding, Business Unit Director for Produce World Rustler said: "This is an exciting development that has the potential to further improve the quality of the onions which we supply to our retail customers. We are always looking for ways to improve performance, and over the past few years the Produce World Group has made a number of substantial capital investments designed to increase efficiency and sustainability.



"We have been monitoring the progress of this technology for some time, and it was always our intention to retrofit such a system to our MAF grader. However, we want to be sure that it would perform under day-to-day operating conditions and make commercial sense.

"NIR technology has been used for many years to detect internal defects in fruit, and Produce World Rustler was involved in trials on onions as long ago as 2007. Most recently we sent samples for testing in France on a prototype of the machine which we are installing and we were impressed with the results.

"By definition internal defects are impossible to detect. As a result of using the very best growers, such defects only occur on a small percentage of the crop. However, a reduction in this figure will enable us to further improve quality and customer satisfaction."

Produce World Rustler is one of the UK's leading suppliers of onions and other alliums. The company works with leading growers in the UK and overseas to ensure year round supply to its customers.

Ends

Notes for Editors

Produce World is one of the largest expert growers and suppliers of high quality fresh vegetables in Europe. It is a privately owned business, founded by the Burgess family in 1898, and the family ethos and values remain in place. The Produce World business is customer and category focused and it is an industry leader in sustainable and responsible agronomy, growing and lean supply chain management. Its sourcing is a combination of produce from its own farms, joint-ventures, and collaborative working with dedicated grower groups, supplying a variety of root vegetables, potatoes, brassicas, alliums, and organic produce to leading retailers, food service and manufacturing customers.

Produce World Group companies include Produce World Solanum Ltd, Produce World IFP Ltd, Produce World RBO Ltd, Produce World Rustler Ltd, Produce World Marshalls Ltd and Growing Trust with Las Lomas (joint venture).

The company received the Waitrose Technical Excellence Award in June 2011, as well as the re:fresh Innovation of the Year and Packer of the Year awards in May 2011. Its Growing Trust CSR programme, established in 2007, prioritises Responsible Sourcing, along with Environmental Stewardship, Community Impact and Workplace Culture.

Media Enquiries:

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