

Testimony for L. G. 'Bo' Herndon
Before the Agricultural Marketing Service, US Dept of Agriculture
Docket No. FV09-970-1
Leafy Green Vegetables Handled in the US
September 30, 2009

My name is L.G. 'Bo' Herndon. I currently serve as President of the Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association. I am a producer/packer/shipper of 1,850 acres of fresh produce in Lyons, Georgia, including Vidalia onions, sweet corn and 500 acres of leafy greens. According to SBA business definitions my total operation would be classified as a large grower. My leafy greens operation, including only the products covered by the marketing agreement, would classify me as a small grower and small handler.

As a grower, packer/shipper I support the National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement. I believe it will be beneficial to our growers and handlers because it is a voluntary program that allows for regionally specific food safety audit metrics for all participants.

Currently, my operation under goes 3 audits a year. With a nationally recognized marketing agreement, I am optimistic this agreement could reduce the number of audits and potentially save my operation and other farm operations money and time. At the same time this type of program could reduce the incidences of food borne pathogens on leafy green vegetables.

I believe this marketing agreement is in the best interest of the leafy greens industry, but more importantly I believe it is in the best interest of our U.S. consumers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement.

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