

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Gabrielle Easter

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Edible ink offers new label solution

Digital Ink Technologies has launched its edible UV invisible ink for use on fresh produce



The disappointment of cutting into a good-looking piece of fruit only to find it rotten inside could soon be a thing of the past.

Michael Mahoney, managing director of Melbourne-based Digital Ink Technologies, told Produce Plus that its Polytrust edible ink – a low cost inkjet technology developed by the Melbourne-based company – could be the answer.

“Polytrust edible UV invisible and visible inks offer new options never thought possible. Now, growers or wholesalers can print with HACCP-certified edible inks that can either be invisible or visible to the consumer,” he explained.

This means growers or packers can label each piece of fruit with a ‘best before’ or ‘picked on’ dates.

“The question my family constantly asks is ‘how old is this fruit?’ In Australia, apples can face months of storage, bananas three days of truck travel, and stonefruit must withstand the

consumers’ squeezing hands,” Mahoney said.

“Behind the facade of the supermarket fresh food section are many tricks of the trade that supermarkets often say are done in the consumer’s name. Now, there’s a way that wholesalers, growers and retailers can really check to see if the fruit they have is fresh before it gets to the consumer.”

The ink and Polymer thermal inkjet technology, sold under the brand Polytij, was showcased at the Auspack trade event in Sydney in February, with Digital Ink Technologies using the event to show first-hand how difficult it can be to tell how fresh a piece of fruit is. Digital Technologies had a bucket of apples, all printed with ‘picked dates’ using invisible ink, and had visitors attempt to pick the freshest apple.

“The interest in the technology was high, with genuine interest from the industry,” Mahoney said. “What is clear from the growers that we have spoken to is that

they need identification and marketing tools to help them sell more of their produce.”

Mahoney sees the combination of biodegradable barcode stickers and Polytrust edible UV invisible and visible inks as being able to offer growers and retailers the ability to provide the consumer with information about the fruit’s freshness, provenance and nutrition.

“A key element of our identification solution is the low cost of our technology. The Polytij HP thermal printers capital cost is up to 75 per cent lower than other technologies such as Continuous Inkjet.

“The cost per code printing a ‘Best Before’ date or even a logo is less than 10 cents per thousands codes.”

This article was originally published in the winter edition of [Produce Plus](#), available now.

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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