

## Novazone unveils service that boosts safety and quality of produce in transit

By JOAN MURPHY

Grower-shippers may gain added assurances that fresh produce will not deteriorate during transport if they use a new service being unveiled at the United FreshTech conference in Palm Springs, CA.

Officials at Livermore, CA-based Novazone Inc., a leading provider of ozone-based products to clean food and water, said that its PurFresh product can deliver safe levels of gaseous ozone in refrigerated shipping containers with the aim of reducing decay, control-

ling ripening and enhancing food safety.

"In the delicate business of transporting produce from the farm to the table, we've seen that as much as 30 percent of fresh food can be damaged due to microbial decay," said David Cope, president and chief executive officer of Novazone Inc.

"Our PurFresh solution significantly reduces and essentially eliminates the threat of loss due to spoilage during transport. Growers, packers, shippers and retailers will benefit from what effectively amounts to increased yield and



higher-quality produce," Mr. Cope said.

Companies lose control of the quality of fresh produce during transport, according to Mr. Cope. But the company's new service produces commodity-specific, low-dose levels of ozone that are effective in killing airborne molds, regulating ethylene levels and maintaining food safety. The service works best on produce exposed in the shipping containers but will offer some benefit to plastic-wrapped commodities.

The shipping container solution mounts into the existing evaporator fan access panel, and it is easy to operate and maintain, Mr. Cope said.

With profit margins shrinking in the industry, PurFresh can help avoid costly spoilage and, depending on the length of the trip, can offer it at a rate comparable to controlled-atmosphere packaging, he said.

Shipping companies have expressed a great deal of interest in the new service, especially those affiliated with Mexican and Chilean suppliers, said Mr. Cope.

The use of PurFresh may also reduce costly insurance rates because it would minimize losses, he added. Another market is the booming organic industry, which is much less protected by fungicides during transit. Ozone has been approved by the Food & Drug Administration as a food contact substance and is certified organic.

The company has been conducting shipping trials with a nectarine grower that ships fruit from California to Taiwan. After a week on the water and more time in and out of port, PurFresh was found to reduce decay by two-thirds. Tests on shipments of table grapes demonstrated how PurFresh prevented losses to botrytis and extended shelf life.

For the future, Novazone is hoping to protect produce from the grower to the consumer, with plans to launch services for wholesale distributors and retailers.

The company boasts 300 customers in 16 countries that use the patented ozone technologies to clean food and water, including Coca-Cola, Lucky's Tomatoes, Orchard View Farms, Paramount Farms, Safeway and Procter & Gamble.



A shipping container outfitted with Novazone's PurFresh system, which is designed to deliver safe levels of gaseous ozone to reduce decay, control ripening and enhance food safety. The Livermore, CA-based company will unveil the new product at the United FreshTech show in Palm Springs, CA.



Mixim Snap-Flap\*  
The One Piece  
Container For the Salad  
and Fresh-cut Market  
Now available  
in two sizes

### Consumer Benefits

- Visible Safety Seal
- Easy to Open and Close
- 100% recyclable



\* Patent pending

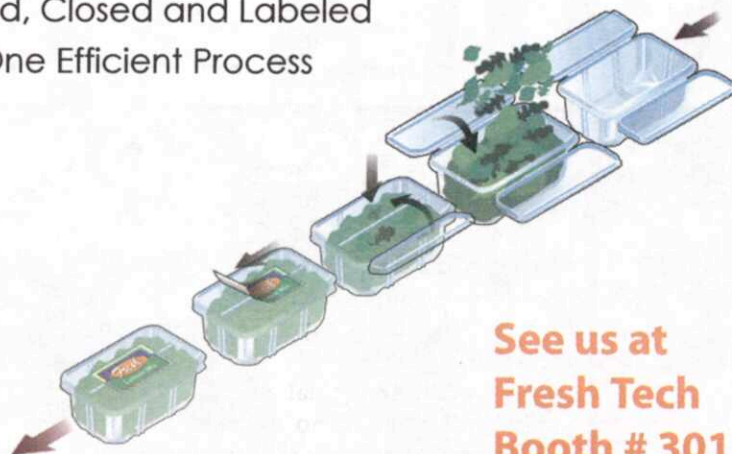
### Inventory Control

- One Piece Replaces Lid & Till
- Product Label Doubles as Safety Seal
- No Heat Seal Ring Required



### Labor Saving Design

- Automation-Friendly Design
- Filled, Closed and Labeled in One Efficient Process



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