

For Immediate Release:  
November 6, 2005

For information, contact:  
Linda Brown, 510-452-8010 [lbrown@scscertified.com](mailto:lbrown@scscertified.com)  
or Annie Gardiner, 510-452-8003 [agardiner@scscertified.com](mailto:agardiner@scscertified.com)

---

## Groundbreaking Certification Program for Flavor-Rich™ Produce Announced at PMA Fresh Summit

Atlanta, GA – In an initiative aimed at building back consumer confidence in the flavor attributes of fresh produce, Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) officially announced the launch of its third-party *Flavor Management* and *Flavor Rich™ Certification* programs at the 2005 PMA Fresh Produce Summit. Under these programs, SCS combines the latest discoveries in flavor research with direct sensory evaluation and chemical/physical product analysis to help growers and shippers optimize the flavor of key fruits and vegetables, and provide retailers with a systematic approach for improving the flavor quality of the products they sell.

A briefing on the initiatives was provided by SCS at a special event hosted at the **Fresh Produce Association of the Americas (FPAA)** booth (#4343) on Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. During the briefing, Wil Sumner, SCS Technical Director of Food and Agriculture Services, described program goals, the process by which products are evaluated, and SCS's plans to establish a flavor rating standard that can serve as the basis of a national consensus standard.. The event also featured tasty Mexican melon samples.



“Quality starts with flavor,” said Sumner. “Yet over the past few decades, flavor characteristics have frequently taken a back seat to other considerations, such as shippability, appearance and size. By helping growers and shippers optimize flavor, we can encourage consumers, especially kids, to eat more fruits and vegetables, and obtain the important nutritional benefits that these foods have to offer.”

- MORE-

SCS's Flavor Management Program provides services to domestic and international growers on a proprietary basis to help analyze their operations, including production, harvesting, conditioning, storage and shipping, in order to determine the key factors that affect the flavor characteristics of their products. In addition, the program can be used to help companies formulate and execute a Flavor Management Plan to maximize the flavor delivery of their products. Initially, certification will be aimed at providing independent assurances that comprehensive Flavor Management Plans are in place. Over time, the certification program will expand to include point-of-purchase product identification, and should eventually lead to direct product labeling opportunities.

“Consumers want tomatoes that taste garden-fresh, peaches that taste like they were just picked from the tree, and strawberries boasting flavor every bit as rich as their bright red color suggests,” said Lee Frankel, FPAA President. “We are excited about the ability of the SCS flavor programs to give US consumers a thumbs-up about the flavor represented by our top quality Mexican produce offerings.”

Retailers have begun utilizing the service to establish flavor specifications for specific produce categories, compare labels, and augment their field inspector flavor evaluations. The Flavor Rating Service, a key component of the SCS's flavor management approach, offers retailers a systematic method for measurably upgrading the flavor quality of key fruits within the produce department over time.

“We believe that through these programs, it will be possible to increase the flavor ratings of key produce categories from 20% to 50% within 12-18 months of implementation, depending upon the sophistication of the retailer's label selection process,” said Sumner. “This would represent a distinct competitive edge for retail participants.” Sumner described SCS's flavor management approach as providing the tools needed to refine and sort labels, including cost-effective sensory analysis.

According to Sumner, seed companies and breeders have also begun expressing interest in the program to identify specific varieties that offer the best flavor characteristics.

- END -

***Background Information on SCS and FPAA attached.***

### *About Scientific Certification Systems*

SCS is an internationally recognized standards developer and independent certifier of environmental and food safety claims ([www.scscertified.com](http://www.scscertified.com)). Over two decades, SCS has developed standards and offered certification programs spanning a wide cross-section of the economy including agricultural production, forestry, fisheries, energy, consumer products, manufacturing and retailing, and the home improvement and construction sectors. SCS is headquartered in Emeryville, California.



**Contacts:** Linda Brown, Executive vice President, 510-452-8010, [lbrown@scscertified.com](mailto:lbrown@scscertified.com)  
Annie Gardiner, Marketing Communications Specialist, 510-452-8003, [agardiner@scscertified.com](mailto:agardiner@scscertified.com)  
Booth #2846

### *About Fresh Produce Association of the Americas*

FPAA is an association dedicated to the development and promotion of trade between growers and shippers in Mexico and receivers throughout the U.S. and Canada. FPAA currently represents more than 125 member companies involved in the production, harvesting, marketing and importing of Mexican produce entering the United States at Nogales, Arizona.



**Contact:** Allison Moore, Communications Director, 520-287-2707, [amoore@freshfrommexico.com](mailto:amoore@freshfrommexico.com),  
PMA Booth #4343