Abstract

To deliver the quality for which consumers will pay premiums requires the whole supply chain to get smarter in terms of developing a two- way flow of information and leveraging off this new information . Issues of product tractability are currently receiving considerable international attention, particularly compliance and market allocation of information use in the supply chain. Approaching information systems in this manner requires detailed tracking of product throughout the supply chain. The ability to trace to levels below a whole orchard, to a block or individual bin or individual package, say , is affected by the processes that occur in the supply chain, and more particularly in the packhouse. These issues will be discussed in the context of the mixing and fruit stream splitting processes that occur in fruit packhouses. If the information system is designed correctly, this can deliver the traceability system at negligible cost. The potential for supply chains to provide improved traceability and information that facilitates more valuable feed-back to growers, more useful feed-forward to consumers, real-time information on consumer response, improved supply chain operations and the limitations of current system designs will be discussed. Two examples of the initial steps along this path will be presented; the capture and feedback of consumer behavior in the retail environment, and the feedback of supply chain quality information to growers at a sub-block level.