



ELLIOTT GRANT, 36
Founder & Chief Marketing Officer
YottaMark, Inc.
Redwood City, CA

Grant has made news with his vision to give products a unique identity and thus help defend against counterfeiting, diversion and fraud, while creating a new channel for brand owners to deliver consumers more information. He founded YottaMark in 2003 to develop and commercialize technology to protect

consumers around the world from the threat of counterfeit and tampered products. Since then, YottaMark has become a leading developer of Secure Serialization solutions — a way of giving every item a unique identity a consumer can easily verify either online or with a cell phone.

Just after the 2006 spinach crisis, several produce companies approached YottaMark to explore whether the technology could bring cost-effective traceability to individual items of produce — especially field packed. The company ran successful field trials in strawberries, carrots, tomatoes, melons and grapes — and was recognized by PMA as a finalist for the Food Safety Award in 2007.

HarvestMark, the company's unit-level traceability solution for the produce industry, provides new opportunities for growers and retailers to enhance their brands, differentiate products in the store and improve customer loyalty. HarvestMark brings consumers traceability, transparency and assurance, and gives growers critical distribution-chain information and a powerful tool to respond to recall or foodborne illness events.

Grant has a passion for helping consumers make informed decisions that can keep them safe. "Whether this means enabling villagers in Africa to ensure their anti-malaria drugs are real and in-date with a cell phone or giving a mom the confidence to buy healthful, fresh produce for her family," he says, "I am inspired by our potential to make a positive difference."

The passion and commitment to food safety he sees in the produce industry also inspire him. "I want to help growers and packer/shippers communicate the passion and all the hard work they're putting in through to the end consumer."

Grant's goals revolve around solving the innumerable problems in delivering cost-effective traceability to the produce industry and educating consumers about it. "Once traceability is in place, there are also as-yet untapped benefits to growers, packer/shippers and retailers — in the same way no one really knew how useful Google was going to be when it first began."

He has had help and encouragement from many forward-thinking individuals. He credits Devon Zagory, now with NSF Davis Fresh, as having been very supportive and helpful in early efforts and also finds JIM PREVOR'S PERISHABLE PUNDIT column a fantastic way to get some unfiltered insight into the industry.

