



For Immediate Release

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Naturipe unveils Cold@Field in-field cooling system

Innovative new cold chain management system speeds fruit to market, preserving fresh taste and enhancing berry vitality.

Salinas, CA – June 6, 2012 – Naturipe Berry Growers, an owner partner of Naturipe Farms, has successfully tested and is currently utilizing an new concept which moves strawberries quicker to customers by streamlining the pick –to-cool time span. This results in extended shelf life of strawberries by 1-2 days for retailer and foodservice operators and lengthening the “taste life”, when flavor and taste are at its best.

“In 2010 we conducted several research projects to address the areas where we could positively impact strawberry quality, condition, shelf life and most importantly the taste and eating experience,” said Rich Amirsehhi, CEO of Naturipe Berry Growers. “As growers we have long known that quickly removing the field heat from a harvested strawberry is crucial to preserving berry freshness and quality. In collaboration with American Cooling , we took a different approach to berry cooling and developed new technologies for strawberry cooling that can start as soon as 30 minutes after harvest.”

The strawberries are cooled to 32°F in a self-contained, portable **Cold@Field** berry cooling plant, which is placed at the entrance to the Naturipe Berry Growers field. The customers’ trailer pulls right up to the temperature controlled loading dock, eliminating storage time, reduced handling and temperature variations, and speeds up loading. Mr. Amirsehhi added, “The early results have surpassed our expectations and we intend to expand the number of **Cold@Field** units where it is appropriate.”

Dr. Jim Thompson with Postharvest Engineering LLC., a former professor from UC Davis in Post-Harvest Engineering assisted the Naturipe team. “There are many factors that impact strawberry quality – temperature influences moisture loss and respiration rates. For every 20°F drop in temperature the moisture loss is cut in half and the respiration rate is reduced by a factor of 2-3.” Dr. Thompson adds “Those are very significant numbers, the faster you shut down moisture loss and respiration the sooner shriveling and metabolism slow down, meaning less loss of the sugars and acids that give strawberries their unique flavor”

“Our **Cold@Field** systems are modular /portable to move from district to district as the harvest progresses. We designed this to run very fast and efficiently with high airflow rates for consistent cooling. Automated pallet handling means less opportunities for bruising and a temperature controlled loading dock avoids temperature variations” said Michael Azzopardi, President of American Cooling Inc., Spreckels CA. “Naturipe worked very closely with our engineering team to develop a fully integrated system that is designed to extend shelf life and quality of their berries, yet it is a practical field based solution for their growers”

Rich Amirsehhi adds “We are taking proactive measures at all levels of our organization to focus on delivering great tasting berries. From proprietary varieties, to innovative packaging, improved production methods and new post-harvest technologies such as **Cold@Field**, our goal is to increase the speed to market, reduce shrink throughout the supply chain, and improve the “taste life - giving consumers more time to enjoy Naturipe strawberries.”

Naturipe Farms, LLC is a grower-owned producer and international marketer of healthy, best tasting, premium berries. With production primarily from multi generation family farms, located in the prime berry growing regions throughout North and South America. The diverse grower base ensures year-round availability of “locally grown” and “in-season global” conventional and organic berries. Naturipe Farms, formed in 2000, is a partnership between Hortifrut SA, MBG Marketing, Naturipe Berry Growers and Munger Farms. With sales and customer service offices located strategically throughout the USA – Salinas CA., Grand Junction MI., Estero FL., Boston MA., Wenatchee WA., Atlanta GA.

American Berry Cooling, Inc. was established in 1986. We provide fresh vegetable pre-cooling and handling services in multiple geographical locations. We currently handle approximately 34 million packages per year including the following services: Cold@Field in-field pressure cooling, Vacuum Pre-Cooling, Hydro-Vac Pre-Cooling, Hydro Pre-Cooling, Pressure Pre-Cooling, Ice Manufacture with Liquid Ice Injection Pre-Cooling, and Product Handling.

For the past twenty-six years, American Cooling Inc. has been in the business of providing fresh vegetable pre-cooling services to numerous produce shippers in the Castroville, Oxnard, Huron, Salinas, and Yuma districts. Michael Azzopardi has been in the business for more than 35 years.

American Cooling can be reached at 831-424-1282

