

Produce and RFID

in 5 minutes

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*Wireless Communications Alliance
Presentation - 8/15/2006*

Background

- Created an internal rfid solution for largest privately owned produce shipper/grower
- Went live with WM since '05, pilots with Albertsons and Publix
- < 1% of product is rfid tagged
- Only single-SKU pallets



Goals

Initially:

- Meet mandates
- Identify opportunity areas

Eventually:

- Increased adoption
- Process optimizations
- Shared supply-chain insight
- Track and trace
- Accurate recalls



Implementation challenges

- No slap and ship
- Lack of automation
- Increased labor costs
- Technology deployment
- Tag selection
- Small volume
- *6% material cost increase*



Findings

- High cost!
- Mixed results
- Out-of-stock payback is low for produce
- Individual cases have 0.5% chance of being read at all expected points
- Rfid exposes weakness in standards, automation, and skills



Near-term payback areas

- Embedding rfid tags in cases for re-use
- Supply chain dwell time insight
- Time-to-cool reductions for quality and shelf-life improvements

