

North American Retailers Piloting RSS (Reduced Space Symbology) in Produce

Accuracy versus speed is a reality faced in almost all business processes; whether it is a manufacturing production line or a retail checkout line. Do you sell more red delicious apples than you ship to a store? As the number of conventionally and organically grown produce items offered at retail increases, so do the challenges for cashiers to accurately differentiate between conventional versus organic items which can lead to shortcuts taken and assumptions made which can cost you money.

This letter comes from the RSS Implementation Pilot Team, consisting of major North American retailers, produce and meat suppliers, and hardware/software industry members.

Beginning in June 2006, this group will begin piloting the RSS-14 Stacked bar code on loose / bulk produce items such as apples and bananas, then later in September, meat and poultry. This should help comply with the US Bioterrorism Act, Establishment and Maintenance of Records.

RSS (Reduced Space Symbology), a new bar code, provides the ability to scan and capture manufacturer / brand identification at the point of sale on loose produce items which currently carry the PLU.

RSS on the PLU sticker will enable cashiers to scan a piece of fruit, increasing the accuracy of information through brand and variety identification, while reducing shrink dollars and enabling category management in the department. The human readable PLU will still be present on the PLU sticker in addition to RSS bar code for scanning, so *NO procedure changes are required* for retailers not participating in the pilot. **(See sample code below)**

In addition to these benefits, the pilot will enable the retailers to measure the results such as:

- Increased accuracy at the checkouts
- Improved traceability to specific suppliers
- Reduction of organic produce entered incorrectly as conventionally grown produce
- Impact to produce perpetual inventories and shrink
- Increased customer satisfaction at self checkouts

During the test you may see some RSS codes appear on some of your produce items.

So now you're asking, what if I don't want to scan any RSS codes that appear in my store? Most new scanners will ignore RSS bar codes because by default scanner/scale vendors should have the RSS function turned off. Cashiers can ignore the bar code and enter the PLU as they do today. Although new scanners are usually shipped with RSS disabled, some retailers have requested their scanners with RSS enabled. If you have recently added new scanners to your stores, please contact your scanner and point of sale vendor with regards to RSS activation/capabilities.

Results of the pilot will be provided to the industry in the 4th Qtr of 2006.

For more information please contact any of the following or visit the website below:

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