

## GS1 Digital Traceability

# Enhancing government response times to deliver an Australian first



GS1 Australia collaborated with government, the retail industry, produce growers and a solution provider to digitally enhance crisis response times and deliver an Australian first for food safety.

GS1 Digital Link and the National Location Registry (NLR) were used in a mock product recall that resulted in an Australian first, tracking and tracing products and properties in under 60 seconds, from consumer to farm and back again.

### Challenge

The New South Wales (NSW) state government were experiencing difficulties in quickly and accurately identifying properties and key assets in the horticulture supply chain using manual processes, especially at times of crisis such as a natural disaster, biosecurity incursions and food recalls.

The legacy processes were time consuming and impacted on the government's capacity to provide emergency support.

Additionally, disparate traceability systems throughout the state posed the risk of duplicated efforts and multiple data sources, creating inefficiencies and confusion.

“The NSW Department of Primary Industries collaborated with Woolworths, Food Agility CRC, Cherry Growers Association, FreshChain Systems, GS1 Australia and the potato and cherry industries. The most exciting part was to see the evolution of what new technology can do. How easy it is to make digital traceability really part of the farming process and it provides security for the farms in the event of a biosecurity threat by making that data more easily accessible and quickly identified.

GS1 data standards were used to identify properties and the subsequent flow of data electronically through the supply chain. This technology provided crucial insight into the horticultural supply chain by showing how properties can be identified and products can be tracked and traced in under 60 seconds.

This has incredible potential to be rolled out across other sectors to improve outcomes for industry and consumers.”



GS1 Digital Link on Woolworths instore products

## Solution

The NSW government introduced the use of the National Location Registry (NLR) and GS1 Digital Link to enable digital traceability and enhance government response time.

The NLR is a centralised database used to digitally map property locations and the movement of products throughout the supply chain. Location data within the NLR is able to be shared accurately and in real-time between supply chain partners including government, growers, pack houses, retailers and consumers.

GS1 Digital Link was embedded into a QR code and was applied to all products for tracking and tracing, making it possible for the expedited time of a product recall and enabling the consumer to access information about the produce and the grower, via their smart phone.

## Result

GS1 global data standards were used as a foundation for the traceability system. Information was able to be integrated, making the management of products in the supply chain much more efficient. Global data standards also reduced the time spent identifying product movement in the supply chain, making food safety incidences and product recalls easier to manage.

“The system also has potential to be a framework for electronic certification to boost market access and cut compliance costs for growers.”

Food Agility Annual Report 2021-2022

“Traceability can create a seamless path to log and access the data that plays an important role in delivering fresh, top quality, safe products to our customers. The added bonus of this technology is that we can harness it to share the individual farm to fork story of the products our customers buy. We’re excited to see how it comes to life as more supply chain partners get involved.”



**Warwick Hope**  
Head of Strategic Sourcing for Fruit and Vegetables, Woolworths

Accurate identification of property and products at pre-determined points in the supply chain was achieved. This type of traceability reduced downtime, demonstrated quicker, more accurate deployment of government resources and increased consumer confidence.

## Insights

- **Ratings and Feedback** – Electronic real-time feedback from consumers directly to growers was made possible using GS1 Digital Link embedded in a QR code.
- **Consumers** - Rated positively on the ability to view provenance and other credentials upon scanning the QR code.
- The **Most Accessed Data** from scanning the QR code was ‘storage use’ and ‘recipes’.
- **Freshness Index** – Growers were able to see how long their produce took to move through the supply chain to when it was scanned.

### GS1 Australia

Head Office, 8 Nexus Court, Mulgrave VIC 3170  
Locked Bag 2, Mt Waverley VIC 3149  
T 1300 227 263 | F +61 3 9558 9551 | ABN 67 005 529 920  
[www.gs1au.org](http://www.gs1au.org)

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