



Partenaires fédéraux en transfert de technologie

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, IPL Inc., Laval University

Technology Transfer Award

For the successful development, transfer and commercialization of SMART CRATE®, a reusable and recyclable container specifically developed for handling and transporting fresh fruit and vegetables

Team Members

Bernard Goyette and Clément Vigneault
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Roch Nolet
IPL Inc.

Jean-Pierre Émond
Laval University



Devouring some 44 million tons of fresh fruit and vegetables each year, North Americans demand the highest quality of local and exotic produce, no matter how far their selections have travelled to reach them. Yet as much as 50 per cent of the fresh horticulture produce harvested annually around the world never makes it to the grocery store shelves, much of it destroyed or damaged during handling and transporting. Delving deeper, researchers at Laval University and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) isolated several reasons behind the needless waste, including design flaws in poorly ventilated containers and excessive pressure, vibration, separation and compaction during shipping. Recognizing a \$3-billion-a-year market for the estimated two million

containers required, Laval University, AAFC and IPL Inc. jointly developed and commercialized SMART CRATE®. The SMART CRATE® is a handling system that increases the efficiency of the precooling system and reduces product packaging costs by 80 per cent. With increased storage time and better protection, growers are able to adjust their production to market demand and gain access to more distinct markets.

By 2006, 23 million reusable and recyclable containers – 7 million of them produced by IPL Inc. – captured 10 per cent of the market, replacing 230 million cardboard containers otherwise destined for landfills.



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