

PENNSYLVANIA



SIMPLY SWEET ONIONS

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Grower's Association (PVGA) was established in February of 2003. Members are primarily Amish and Mennonite farmers who live in the Lancaster County Area. The Co-op provides a facility where growers can dry, sort, grade, package, and store onions, winter squash, and cauliflower. PVGA also administers the "Pennsylvania Simply Sweet Onion"™ trademark for the benefit of the growers in the state.

The PVGA is a state funded committee that supports composed of five onion growers, a representative from Penn State University, a representative from the Association Board of Directors, and a representative from Stauffer Huling Farms, Inc. The committee governs the

label and acts as a marketer of onions sold under the label.

The Pennsylvania Simply Sweet Onion® is a branded onion, licensed through the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association (PVGA) and has been sold to local retailers since 2001. The varieties, growing methods and grade criteria were developed and tested by Dr. Orzolek and his team of researchers from Pennsylvania State University. The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture was responsible for funding the initial development of this sweet onion.

Today, this sweet onion is produced in Pennsylvania under a set of production and grading standards that result in a very high quality, large, sweet and non-pungent onion: each crop is tested for sugar content before packing. While some members use conventional growing practices others are certified organic.

Pennsylvania Simply Sweet Onions® are available in many supermarkets, independent local grocers, roadside farm markets and farmer's markets around the state from the middle of July through September. The onions can be found at over 18 retailers including Giant, Giant Eagle, Whole Foods Market, and Walmart. Direct sales are also available through Stauffer Huling Farms.

Pennsylvania Simply Sweet Onions® have grown in popularity. Their first year, started with a modest production of 1,500 boxes. In 2012, the PA Simply Sweet onion production was at approximately 60,000 boxes. PVGA anticipates further growth in upcoming years, with sales of 75,000 boxes expected in 2017. PVGA also provides a marketing services for local growers' winter squash and cauliflower.

Producer Co-op

est.
2003

Industry:	Agricultural Marketing
Member-Owners:	115
Jobs:	20
Revenues, Annual:	\$2.5 Million

KDC's Role

- Incorporation 2006
- Bylaws 2007
- Marketing Plan 2007
- Feasibility Study 2007
- General Consulting 2005-2007



Mission

Fostering a culture of personal and community empowerment through democratic leadership of cooperatively owned enterprises that successfully leverage economies of scale.

Work

Consulting, technical assistance, and research support for new and established co-ops (producer, consumer, worker, shared-services) in rural and urban communities in the multi-state area of PA, NJ, DE, MD, & DC.

Funding

A 501c6 non-profit organization, our work is made possible through grants from the USDA Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.