

## ***BurrellesLuce Express***

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**HEADLINE:** Packaging styles, materials changing for fresh-cut

### Source Website

By Jim Offner

(July 26) Packaging — always a crucial component in the fresh-produce business — takes on even more importance when the product contained is fresh-cut, manufacturers and shippers say. It's a simple matter of shelf life. But, they add, shelf life is not exactly a simple matter.

"Any time you cut fruit and vegetables, you're going to cut into its shelf life right there," said Todd Somers, vice president of sales and marketing for Union City, Calif.-based Emerald Packaging. "So there's always some sort of work going on in developing new packaging ideas."

Packaging often falls into two groups where fresh-cut produce is concerned, he said.

"You have your field-pack items and your salad-cut items."

Field-pack products will continue to be rely on standard polyethylene packaging materials, with higher-end graphics for greater eye appeal, Somers noted.

"There will be greater pop on the package, perhaps finding ways to tie in marketing schemes with other commodities," he said. "They'll be doing things like using print technology that are tying in celery sticks to peanut butter and a head of lettuce to a salad dressing. It's a fairly straightforward kind of marketing."

And that type of approach will continue to gain popularity, Somers said.

"I think that will continue to grow, in terms of your fresh-cut or spring mix or chopped salad," he said. "People come home, tear it open and they have dinner made, that sort of thing. I think closure technologies will continue to be important and shelf life maximization will continue to be important."

Packaging manufacturers are constantly tweaking materials to gain more shelf life for precut products, said Larry Narwold, vice president of sales for Eden Prairie, Minn.-based The School Group II, marketer of the ***Green Giant Fresh*** brand.

"The breathability and materials are constantly changing," he said.

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***Highlights: Green Giant Fresh***