

TruTag launches incredible, edible food tracing

By Jenni Spinner+, 04-Sep-2013

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TruTag Technologies has launched tiny sensors that let food firms add security features to food packaging, and to the food itself.

TruTags are sensors designed to help food manufacturers, pharmaceutical companies and other product companies thwart counterfeiting—which can be costly in terms of drained revenue, damaged reputation and lost lives.

"The ability to track food items, especially in light of the complex global supply chains of major food product manufacturers, is of high interest," TruTag Technologies representative Paula Page told FoodProductionDaily.com.

Each tag consists of a marking made from pure silica microparticles, digitally coded by a proprietary nano-etching process. Because the material is designated "generally recognized as safe by the [US Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) , they can be added in trace amounts to food, drugs, supplements and other items.

Tags can be imparted with a broad range of information; once added to a product, they can be scanned with the company's reading device. Users can use an iPad or iPhone to control the reader, then decode with the TruTag software.

"TruTags function much like a bar code in that they can be serialized to uniquely identify a product—we refer to them as covert 'edible bar codes,'" she said. "It is simply a matter of associating the ID number from the spectral code of the TruTags to a variety of product information in a manufacturer's database, such as date and site of manufacture, expiration date, product dosage or serving size, and country of authorized sale."

Page said that the Tags can be married to a product in one of three ways. They can be mixed into the actual base product, coated onto the item, or attached to or integrated into the product packaging.

Hawaii-based TruTag Technologies recently landed a 2014 Technology Pioneer Award from the [World Economic Forum](#) . The honor recognizes companies for technology innovations that stand to have significant impact on business and society.

Page reported that TruTag has launched pilot programs with a number of food and drug companies ahead of commercial launch.

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