

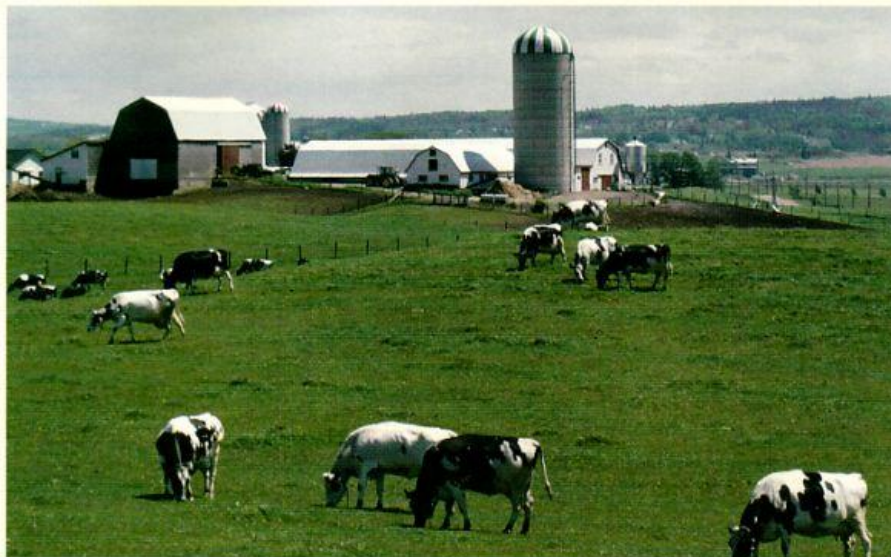
# Enterprise Resource Planning

## Traceability Software Performs More Than Just Recalls

by Anne Haapanen

**O**N JANUARY 15, 2007, the Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) launched the food safety initiative traceability program, which offers approved applicants seventy five per cent (75%) of their eligible costs up to a maximum payment of \$20,000 per applicant. Applicants could apply for either the grant program or the traceability pilot project, or both, as part of the government's Food Safety Initiative. This first-come, first-served program was limited to \$2 million and the application deadline was April 30, 2007.

The aim of the traceability grant program, states OMAFRA ([www.omafra.gov.on.ca](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca)), is to increase the implementation of facility-level traceability systems along the food industry spectrum, from farm to processing, and all points in between. This program is specifically aimed at the Ontario grower, primary producer, processor, distributor, transporter, supplier of inputs to production, and the primary packaging manufacturer whose packaging comes in direct contact with food or drink destined for human consumption. Successful applicants are



expected to develop a facility-level traceability system following Can-Trace data standards relative to production inputs and outputs.

This program has provided the means by which many smaller food manufacturers and distributors can develop and implement their own lot traceability programs, assisting them in tracking incoming raw ingredients, outgoing finished goods, quantities of materials used in recipes, warehouse management, purchasing, electronic data interchange (EDI) with purchasers, even accounting and operations.

Benefits of adopting a traceability program, besides providing safe food for the end user through system-wide product

monitoring, include reduced impact of a product recall; reduced operating costs and product returns; supply chain optimization through reduced inventories; and improved marketing of products with specific attributes (e.g., those which are nut-free, Kosher, organic or non-GMO).

Minotaur Software of Brampton, Ontario, has been inundated with calls as facilities receiving the OMAFRA traceability grant have begun sourcing software companies specializing in lot traceability. Minotaur's Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Judith Kirkness, says that business is so brisk that customers now come to them, mainly via referrals and the Internet, now that traceability programs are moving toward being mandatory and not just voluntary.

Food processing or manufacturing facilities are seeking complete business management software (termed "enterprise resource planning" or ERP) such as that offered by Minotaur, which will allow them to drill down to the origins of a lot number if they need to recall or pull a specific item, perhaps containing an allergen, from a pallet; tailor-made traceability software, a unique feature of the products Minotaur offers, will allow one to trace, for example, where (on-site or off-site) the product was manufactured, where it's currently located, where it's been shipped and even how long it has sat on the floor.

The meat industry in particular has benefited from this software. Minotaur's production modules can handle both food assembly and disassembly, the latter allowing processors to cut a primal or larger cut into component pieces. A



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unique feature of the modules is that they allow one to break down a larger cut by percentage, apportioning the cost of the cuts differently from the percentage yield.

The traceability software will track lot components from receiving to the shipping door and on to the customer. Every bar code is serialized and lot trace reports can be generated both forward and backward (from raw ingredients to finished goods and vice versa). This type of software is invaluable in helping a small- to mid-sized food processor or distributor meet HACCP requirements, which include having a formal recall plan in place.

We will eagerly watch how companies implementing facility-level traceability systems benefit operationally and economically, particularly those who receive OMAFRA's traceability grant. If you are a food processor or distributor who has benefited from adopting a food safety traceability program and wish to share your process with our readers, please contact us. We are always eager to hear from companies embracing HACCP principles and practices relative to food safety. ■

### **About Minotaur Software**

The Minotaur Business System's fully integrated modular design allows one to choose the modules (i.e., software applications) that best match current business needs, and add modules as one's business needs grow or evolve. As one's system is implemented, Minotaur is closely involved, providing the in-depth training and support necessary for a successful implementation. Minotaur, a wholly Canadian company, is a software developer, not reseller, and has been in business for over 22 years. In an effort to further support its customers, Minotaur Software will be involved in a number of industry associations and events throughout the year, in addition to its complimentary annual user conference to be held in October. For more information about Minotaur Software, please visit [www.minotaursoftware.com](http://www.minotaursoftware.com) or call (905) 458-7575 or (800) 668-1284.

### **About Can-Trace**

Can-Trace is funded in part under the Agricultural Policy Framework—a federal-provincial-territorial initiative

managed by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada—and is committed to the development of traceability standards for all food products sold in Canada. The Canadian Food Traceability Data Standard, developed in 2004, is based on a one up/one down model of sharing traceability information, is adaptable for different food and agriculture sectors, and covers traceability requirements specific to Canadian small and medium enterprises (SME). For more information about Can-Trace, please visit [www.can-trace.org](http://www.can-trace.org)

### **About OMAFRA**

For more information about OMAFRA's food safety initiative traceability program, please visit [www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/infores/foodsafety/traceabilityprgu.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/infores/foodsafety/traceabilityprgu.htm)

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**Anne Haapanen** is the incoming managing editor of **Canadian FoodSafety Management**.