

Buoyant booster of the bulb

"TEXANS can be a little bragadocious," said **Paula Fouчек** at the UK launch of the 1015 onion from the Lone Star State. Ms Fouчек, who describes herself as a "buoyant booster of the bulb", was not underselling her compatriots on this occasion.

Representing the Texan growers was **Dale DeBerry** who introduced himself with the words "Howdy! From the

state that brought you J R Ewing, I bring you the designer onion." This is the sweet onion that Texans eat with strawberries, the vegetable that sells to makers of onion ice cream.

Also present from the Rio Grande valley was **Bob DeBruyn**, a man who will lift up his trousers to show you his cowboy boots. Mr DeBruyn has a pinny with the

slogan 'Kiss me, I eat onions' emblazoned on it. "Onions have been the most important thing in my life," he said, "maybe with the exception of my wife and daughter." As a younger man he had thought "an onion is an onion is an onion, and anyone who would pay a premium for anything else is crazy." Nowadays he held the opinion that "having one onion to sell to all people was like having a mallet to drive all kinds of nails." As for the 1015, "if you want something you can have in your salad and not remember for two days, this is your animal". The southern United States, he said, were full of people turning to their neighbour and saying "Gosh, I had a great onion. Where did you get it?"

With Mr DeBruyn was his daughter **Margaret**. A psychology major who had worked in mental hospitals, said her family was "crazy about onions" and that she had recently given up running a division of the DeBruyn produce company to work as a stockbroker.



L to R: (back) Dale DeBerry of Progreso Produce Company; Mortada Mohamed from the Texas Department of Agriculture; Bob DeBruyn of DeBruyn Produce Co; (front) Roger Manning of Inter-Trade International Market Development Ltd and Paula Fouчек, Texas Citrus and Vegetable Association