

**Information and FAQs Regarding U.S. Tobacco Cooperative Inc., et al.
U. S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina**

U.S. Tobacco Cooperative Inc.- Case No.: 21-01511-5-JNC

U.S. Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers, Inc.- Case No.: 21-01513-5-JNC

Premier Manufacturing, Inc.- Case No.: 21-01519-5-JNC

Franchise Wholesale Co., L.L.C.- Case No.: 21-01517-5-JNC

Big South Distribution, LLC- Case No.: 21-01515-5-JNC

King Maker Marketing, Inc.- Case No.: 21-01518-5-JNC

Date: July 15, 2021

This page is posted to provide general information and answers to common questions regarding the status of the above-referenced bankruptcy cases. The information on this page is not a substitute for legal advice and while the information contained herein is believed to be accurate as of the date shown, it could be affected or superseded by subsequent occurrences, proceedings, and orders of the Bankruptcy Court. Therefore, you should be sure to read very carefully all notices you receive from Bankruptcy Court or Bankruptcy Clerk about these cases, and if you have legal questions about the cases or your rights you should contact an attorney.

What happened? On July 7, 2021 (the “Petition Date”), U.S. Tobacco Cooperative Inc., U.S. Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers, Inc., Premier Manufacturing, Inc., Franchise Wholesale Co., L.L.C., Big South Distribution, LLC and King Maker Marketing, Inc. (collectively, the “Debtors”) each filed with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina (“Bankruptcy Court”) a petition under Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code.

The § 341 Meeting of Creditors in each case will be conducted on **September 14, 2021**.

What does the filing mean for creditors? As a result of the bankruptcy filings and pursuant to § 362 of the Bankruptcy Code, an automatic stay has been imposed against most collection activities. This means that creditors generally may not take action to collect debts from the Debtors or the Debtors’ property. For example, while the stay is in effect, creditors cannot sue, assert a deficiency, repossess property, or otherwise try to collect from the Debtors. Creditors cannot demand repayment from the Debtors by mail, phone, or otherwise.

What does this mean for growers? As a result of the bankruptcy filing, the Debtors intend to continue to honor their obligations to their growers for crops anticipated to be purchased during the coming months.

When will I get paid? Due to the bankruptcy filing, the Debtors are prohibited from paying any debts that arose before the Petition Date, except as otherwise approved by the Bankruptcy Court. Should you provide goods or services post-petition, the Debtors intend to pay those invoices in the ordinary course of their business. The Debtors will file a Chapter 11 Plan and Disclosure Statement which will detail how prepetition debts will be repaid.

Who is in charge of the bankruptcy estates? Since the Debtors filed Chapter 11, they remain in possession of their assets and the management of their business. At the time of this notice, an Unsecured Creditors Committee has not been formed. Should you be interested in being a committee member, please contact the Bankruptcy Administrator for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

Should I file a Proof of Claim? Creditors that are owed money from the Debtors should timely file a proof of claim with the Bankruptcy Court. The deadline to file a Proof of Claim is **November 8, 2021**. Please contact the Clerk's office should you have any questions on how to file a Proof of Claim. A link to the Court's website is listed below.

<https://www.nceb.uscourts.gov/proof-claims>

Can I view documents filed in the case? Yes, you can view documents through PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records) by visiting www.pacer.gov. You will be required to register for an account and will incur fees; however, if you accrue \$30.00 or less of charges in a quarter, fees are waived for that period. Refer to their "Frequently Asked Questions" for more information.

Who should I contact for additional information or assistance? While the offices of the U.S. Bankruptcy Clerk and the Debtors' counsel work hard to make sure that bankruptcy cases run smoothly and are as successful as possible, unfortunately neither the Clerk nor counsel can give you any legal advice. If you have legal questions about the case or your rights, you should contact an attorney.