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## **Bland Farms Remains a Leader in Vidalia Onions**

March 12, 2018

Being based in Glennville, GA allows Bland Farms to be at the root of the Vidalia sweet onion industry, and the company currently represents half of the entire Vidalia volume and has the biggest controlled-environment storage capacity in the industry. It's a long way from its humble beginnings of 50 acres.

"Vidalias have helped us become who we are today. We expect another strong Vidalia season for Bland Farms and we continue to market year-round," said Troy Bland, chief operating officer of the company. "That's not to say this crop hasn't taken its lumps, but I don't foresee anything that's going to have an effect on marketing volume."



Of course, in order to meet the needs of customers year-round, the company had to expand growing operations beyond the borders of Georgia, across the U.S., and internationally.

And while Bland noted there has definitely been some weather events that have had an impact on crops, as of early March, everything looked like it was coming through with flying colors and there was no need to worry.

“A colder January had a lot to do with the heat units needed for this crop to be ready for market,” he said. “We’ve warmed up here in February and made up some ground and still seem on track for the middle to end of April for the Vidalia crop. We’re going to see a lot of great success like we’ve had in year’s past. There will be good, marketable product out there for the consumers.”

As a leader in the industry, Bland Farms is always trying to test out new stuff along with the rest of the growers to improve Vidalia onions and the season. For instance, this is the first year it has tried using a mechanical transplanter, which involved using plant tape on about 15 acres.

“There’s still a lot of stuff to learn there and we’re trying to figure out what that’s going to mean to us long-range—when to plant and how to fertilize in the green houses and different things,” Bland said. “It’s a very budding technology for us. We’re very encouraged about it but at the same time, it’s not going to change how we do things in the foreseeable future.”

Other than that innovative method, Bland Farms is continuing to do research and trying to discover the best way to grow these special onions.

“We learn something new every year, that’s for sure,” Bland said. “We’re celebrating the 70th anniversary of farming this year and very proud to still be in this business and that it’s still a family-run business and leading the charge in ingenuity and innovation. We continue to try to bring our customers the best product year in and year out.”

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