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DeFrescoPure champions innovative LivingCube

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Having grown greenhouse vegetables for more than 60 years, the family-owned DeFrescoPure is always looking to increase production and bring its customers what is wanted, which is why at this year's Southern Exposure SEPC show, the Kingsville, ON-based company will be featuring its brand-new lettuce and microgreens.

"This year, we will also be featuring our greenhouse strawberries and our Euro Beans," said Fiona McLean, marketing manager for the company. "Our booth will have a backdrop and we're going to have a refrigerated unit, which will be merchandised the same as a store with shelf talkers and decals on the side featuring our products."



DeFresco Pure will be exhibiting at Booth No. 622 during Southern Exposure 2019. Occupying Booth No. 622, DeFrescoPure will be represented by

Carl Mastronardi, president and chief executive officer; Ray Mastronardi, vice president of sales; Tom Ryan, sales manager; and McLean.

“SEPC is the kickoff to the trade show season and it’s a great fit for DelFrescoPure,” McLean said. “We always seem to have great success when we go to some of the smaller regional shows and we’re able to have those more one-on-one intimate conversations with the buyers and procurement teams and we get to see what’s going to be launched throughout the year by some others.”

Carl Mastronardi noted that the booth will also heavily promote DelFrescoPure’s new, innovative LivingCube, utilizing CubicFarms Systems.

“We are transforming from just a hothouse company to an indoor farming company. We’re going to be doing microgreens and all kinds of different lettuce,” he said. “We’re really excited about going into microgreens because nine out of 10 of my friends have never even tried it so it’s a wide-open category and I think we can really promote it and start working on it stronger.”

While microgreens had challenges in the greenhouse, the new unique system will allow DelFrescoPure to really capitalize on the market.

“We are looking at finding new and exciting things that we can grow in the indoor space,” Mastronardi said. “We’re excited because we can run very, very close temperatures and we can run the same temperature in January that we can in August. It’s all controlled.”

DelFrescoPure partnered with a farm in British Columbia on its containers, which are unique because there are no shelves, just a stainless steel moving belt that moves the produce every hour-and-a-half under light.

“It’s a totally new concept and something that we’re really looking forward to trying,” Mastronardi said. “The containers are all sitting on our site and they look like regular shipping containers, but they’re not — they are built for purpose and all climate controlled and we have the ability to produce 14 different things and give it its own microclimate.”

The company is also excited about its indoor strawberries and is currently testing and considering releasing next year going pesticide-free.

“We’re going to try the whole year and see if we can do it,” Mastronardi said. “We started picking our strawberries in October and here at the end of January, we’ve done it, so there’s a whole bunch of new and exciting things we’re doing.”

For instance, it found success recently with its new Euro Beans, something it tested the last four to five years and went commercial with in 2018.

“It’s so easy to get retail interest with these new products compared to the old ways of, and we’ve hit a line where we are coming unique,” Mastronardi said.

“There are five of us who grow here; we don’t use consultants, and we’re pretty good at growing new things. We are going to hit the market on things that are a bit more challenging since we have the knowledge and so far it’s worked tremendously for us.”

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