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## **Mexican organic peaches coming for April market**

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In early April, Divine Flavor will begin seasonal shipping of organic peaches.

Carlos Bon Jr., sales manager of Divine Flavor LLC, said these peaches are the only organic peaches produced in Mexico. The fruit will be on the market throughout April and into May.



“This gives our retail partners a month’s head-start on the summer deal,” he noted.

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The fruit is grown in Hermosillo, Sonora, only by Grupo Alta, which is the parent company of Divine Flavor.

Grupo Alta produces two peach varieties. One is its proprietary Alta Kristy. Tropic Beauty is the other organic variety produced and shipped by the firm. The peach varieties were bred at Texas A&M University and the University of Florida, respectively.

This year, the peaches are “a fantastic crop. We are ready and excited,” Bon said. “We expect a total crop of about 250,000 boxes. Some of that will stay in the domestic market.”

Grupo Alta will mostly pack volume-fill peaches but will offer some trays. The peak size will be 70s.

“They taste fantastic. These eat better, which is why we planted them,” said Bon Jr. “There is no good stone fruit otherwise in the market at that time of the year.”

Bon noted that Grupo Alta’s priority in choosing and planting fruit and vegetables is that each variety must taste good.

Challenges in growing peaches in Sonora can come either in the form of too much heat during bloom, which killed the 2018 crop. Or, the Sonoran peaches some years can suffer from early frost. But this 15th year of growing peaches is expected to be one of Grupo Alta’s most highly productive seasons.

“The peaches are not the best looking, nor the biggest peaches, but they are wonderful eating and tree ripened,” Bon Jr. said.

He noted that Sonora, which is adjacent to the U.S. border, is so close to the market that tree-ripened fruit is practical. This is not the case for growers elsewhere in Latin America.

In the Mexican grape business later this spring, Bon Jr. said Divine Flavor “expects a large crop. We have an excellent bunch count and excellent quality. A good crop also helps with quality.” Divine Flavor may be shipping 5 million boxes of Mexican grapes this year.

“It’s a great year to be selling a bunch of grapes,” he offered, tongue slightly-in-cheek. There was a threat of freeze in late February, but Grupo Alta’s Sonoran vineyards escaped without damage, Bon Jr. noted.

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