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**- Advertisement -**

## **The Wonderful Company unveils fall promotion plans**

By

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With pistachios, citrus, pomegranates and Pom Wonderful products leading the charge, The Wonderful Company has a full fall lineup and a bevy of opportunities on tap for consumers and retailers.

During the recent Fresh Summit, The Wonderful Company team sat down with *The Produce News*, via a video meeting, to discuss its various crops, new offerings and the promotional support it is offering for each of its categories.



Diana Salsa,

director of marketing for Wonderful Pistachios, unveiled a brand new and aggressive advertising campaign for the company's pistachios featuring former National Football League star Tony Gonzalez and Olympic weightlifter Kendrick Farris. With the expectation of a record-breaking California crop topping 1 billion pounds for the first time ever, The Wonderful Company, which dominates pistachio production, is emphasizing the plant-based protein element of pistachios in its campaign.

Salsa called the plant-based dietary trend a "movement" and said the campaign is touting the ability of pistachios to provide protein during snacking occasions. She said many consumers want to eat less meat in their diet and this campaign will offer pistachios as a meat alternative that can still deliver a protein punch. In fact, she said eating pistachios is a much more efficient way than meat to consume protein.

Salsa reiterated that decreasing consumption of meat products and replacing them with plant-based alternatives is more than a fad but a new direction with staying power. As such, consumers are going to need many alternatives for filling their daily protein needs.

The advertising campaign for pistachios will use a variety of media outlets to convey this message, including advertising on television and in print and also on social media and digital platforms. Graphically pleasing display bins and retail promotions are also part of the effort. The Wonderful Company recently added two new flavors to its pistachio lineup, giving consumers at least 10 different options for their purchase of the popular nut.

## Citrus

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Speaking in mid-October, Wonderful Citrus President Zak Laffite reported that it is the perfect time of year to discuss that commodity sector as the company's grapefruit from Texas and navel oranges and mandarins from California had either just started or were about to start being harvested.

Unfortunately, recent storms, including Hurricane Hanna, damaged a portion of the Rio Grande Valley grapefruit crop causing Wonderful to anticipate about a 20 percent drop in production. However, even with that, Laffite noted that Texas has become the nation's leading supplier of fresh grapefruit, surpassing Florida in recent years.

Wonderful Halos mandarins continue to be a very popular crop, with the company's brand over-indexing the category. Laffite said mandarins and navels have performed exceptionally well during the pandemic as consumers have sought out the nutritional benefits offered by citrus to boost their immune system.

Laffite said sales of citrus (other than mandarins) have been flat in recent years but the buying habits of consumers during these difficult times have re-invigorated the category. Laffite believes that many consumers have been reintroduced to navels and grapefruit and that sales will continue beyond the pandemic-induced change in buying habits.

Britt Beck, senior director of marketing for Wonderful Citrus, elaborated on the 2020-21 promotional program for the commodity. She noted that the consumer preference for packaged produce during these times, which has been well documented through research data, can be confirmed by Wonderful's experience. The company has seen an uptick in sales of its three- and five-pound bagged citrus options. Halos have long been a consumer and retailer favorite, as they are an easy item to merchandise in the brand's retail-ready display bin and cartons.

Beck said this year's marketing campaign includes new point-of-sale material and eye-catching bins designed to attract consumers' attention. The marketing program is also geo-targeting consumers on their smart phones with sophisticated tools to drive consumers to purchasing opportunities. Colorful stickers will be used on the fruit as well.

She noted that the company has also seen tremendous sales via e-commerce and called it a testament to the company's brand.



## **POM**

Charlotte Mostaed, director of marketing for POM Wonderful, discussed the company's whole fresh pomegranates as well its pomegranate juice and its arils sold as Pom Poms. She said that the fresh pomegranate season is under way, as California began harvesting its crop in late September. Pom Wonderful is utilizing in-store promotions with display bins to merchandise the seasonal item, which is typically only available through the fall months.

Mostaed said a digital campaign is being mounted to promote Pom Poms as a great snacking item as well as a great addition to many dishes, including salads, desserts and even center-plate presentations.

The promotional campaign for Pom Wonderful juice will continue to highlight the health benefits of pomegranate juice. Pom Wonderful has realized great success in emphasizing the health benefits of antioxidants and positioning the popular juice as an "antioxidant superpower" fighting "free radicals."

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