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Marolda Farms looks to increase organic acreage

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At Marolda Farms, “Spring was strong and sales were strong,” the company’s Richard Marolda Jr. told *The Produce News* Wednesday, Aug. 12. “It started off slow because we had a cool early season. But things panned out in the end, and it all worked out. The summer also started off pretty strong.”

The company saw its usual array of items in the spring. “Cabbage was really strong this year again,” he said. Sales were really strong on the organic line this year.”

On the conventional side, he added, “Cabbage was good to us this year. Sales were strong and prices were strong. Also beets were good, both bunched and bags. Conventional cilantro sales were good this year” although “it had its ups and downs in price.”

On the organic side, “All the items did pretty good, they all moved well,” he said. “I sold more swiss chard this year than I did last year. And I started growing rainbow swiss chard organically this year.”

Also regarding organic produce, “It was an over all increase in sales,” he said. “Cilantro is always a big organic item for me. It seems like I almost never have enough.”

Looking ahead to the state’s fall produce season, Marolda looks to have conventional collards and kale, mustard, turnip greens and cilantro. “Those are going to be the main items,” he said. “This tends to mirror our spring season. We also have a lot of conventional leeks in the ground for this fall.”

Regarding the company’s organic items for this fall, he said, “My main items are going to be green kale and Tuscan kale, cilantro and spinach. It’s a nice season for guys like us who do mostly the wet

veg.” The fall “is not as big as the spring season, but we try to extend it as much as we can.”

Marolda Farms, located in Vineland, NJ, is owned and operated by Richard Marolda Sr. and his wife, Sherry. Richard Marolda Jr. (their son) is the production manager and also spearheads the company’s organic program; those products are shipped under the “Rock & Roll Organics” label.

The company harvests from about 250 acres of conventional acreage and about 100 acres of certified organic acreage, according to Rich Jr. But the organic number is about to rise.

“My organic acreage is probably going to get closer to 120 to 125 acres” once all the paperwork for certification is completed by around early September, he said.

The fall season remains a big part of the over all New Jersey produce deal at Marolda Farms. “It’s pretty important because it gives us the financial shot in the arm we need to finish off our season and get through the winter and then start again in the spring,” he stated.

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