



- Advertisement -

Cambridge Farms focuses on customer and grower relationships

By

J. McHenry

December 16, 2020

This year, the importance of relationships was front-and-center more than ever before at Cambridge Farms as the company built on its reputation and partnering. Ken Gad, president of the South Easton, MA-based company, emphasized the importance of relationships to success. “If we can’t make it a win-win-win it’s not worth doing,” he said. “I don’t want growers and I don’t want customers, I want partners — everybody can win that way.”

Gad credited Cambridge’s straightforward relationship with customers for easing the difficulties of the year. “We let our customers know what is going on,” he explained. “This is what we have, this is what we can accomplish. It’s not rocket science. It’s about being up front and letting them know what’s going on and to keep earning their trust. We have been working hard to stay ahead of the curve with our customer base by keeping them up-to-date on what we see for future supplies.”

Gad also noted the importance of taking care of the company’s growers while still meeting consumer needs. “We’re all trying to desperately to navigate this COVID-19 crisis to maximize grower returns so they’re viable in future but also get reliable product at a good value to the end customer,” said Gad. “It’s a double-edged sword to get that done.”

Though starting in 1983 as principally a broker/shipper, Cambridge Farms has morphed into a hybrid model with greater direct grower involvement. “Over time, we realized we had some fantastic relationships up and down the East Coast with growers,” said Gad. “And, we’re not talking about just Maine, we work with growers down to Florida, up to Canada, and even out West.”

This hybrid model has resulted in Cambridge being a more direct business partner with growers supplying seed and management input. “We partner with our growers to help them grow and market their product,” said Gad. “When buyers come to us, it’s no different than going to the farmer because we have those deep relationships with the growers.”

Gad gives accolades to retailers especially in the Northeast for having recognized the value in featuring potatoes during the pandemic climate. “They’re doing a good job featuring Eastern potatoes,” he said. “Consumers are still being prudent terms of how they spend their money, and potatoes represent a good value. We’ve seen our retailers really go out of the way to put potatoes in front of their customers.”

Overall, Maine potatoes have excellent potential for retailers to promote amply through the coming season, affirmed Gad. “This is a great crop for retail to promote at Christmas,” he said. “It’s local, it’s good quality and it’s great value. With the pandemic, more and more consumers will be cooking at home and buying more produce. I commend retailers for being on top of the value potatoes provide and featuring them.”

[Print](#)