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R.A.M. Produce Distributors primed for a successful 2021

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With the start of a new year come resolutions to eat healthier, which helps R.A.M. Produce Distributors LLC get off to a strong start in 2021.

“At this time of year, everything is moving well,” said Jim Bommarito of the Detroit-based company. “Everybody is starting their diets right now, and all the vegetables are moving — lettuces, celery and all vegetables move well at this time of year.”



As a longtime force on the Detroit Terminal Market, R.A.M. Produce Distributors LLC specializes in greenhouse-grown vegetables. Bommarito noted that 95 percent of the company's business is vegetables, adding that it also has seen success with some fruits, including strawberries and clementines.

As a staple of the Detroit produce scene, Bommarito said that the city is extremely competitive.

"Everybody in Detroit is good at what they do, I would say," Bommarito said. "The competitors are sharp and some of the customers are sharper."

That requires the team at R.A.M. Produce Distributors LLC to fulfill its unwavering commitment to the company's customers.

"You have to work a lot of hours right now to make sure all your customers' orders are filled and that they're getting the right price," Bommarito said. "You have to get down here at three in the morning to sell. Right now, at this time of the year, the big problem is being oversold stuff and trying to allocate it."

Although the world has looked to 2021 for a new start, the fact of the matter is that COVID-19 is far from behind us, and while the pandemic has had an effect on R.A.M. Produce Distributors LLC, the company has been well-positioned to weather the COVID storm.

"We've missed some foodservice business, that's a lot of packages and a lot of volume," Bommarito said. "That being said, the stores have been stocked up quite a bit — as they have across the country, I'm sure — during this. It's pretty much status quo, actually, if you take the average for the year."

He noted that the company's foodservice and retail businesses are split pretty evenly, and that the increase in retail business has balanced out the decrease on the foodservice end.

Labor is also a challenge, as Bommarito explained that finding people to work has been difficult, in large part because of the additional unemployment benefits people are receiving.

Still, there are lots of reasons for the company to be optimistic about the future, including the addition of Nick Allen to the sales team.

"He's a knowledgeable guy and has been in the greenhouse industry for a long time," Bommarito said.

It's an addition that is sure to make R.A.M. Produce Distributors LLC even stronger — and well prepared for what 2021 has in store.

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