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**Nature Fresh Farms investing in growth**

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By

Keith Loria

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Nature Fresh Farms has a simple philosophy—it's devoted to growing and shipping quality produce in the most sustainable way.

“There is a responsibility that comes with greenhouse growing, not only to provide fresh produce for communities, but being able to grow it in a way that has minimal impact on the environment around us,” said Sarah Krzysik, public relations coordinator for the Leamington, ON-based company. “We are always thinking of how we can incorporate eco-friendly alternatives into our operations to protect both our plants and the planet.”

That's why at Nature Fresh Farms, the company is constantly researching and trialing new products, packaging and sustainable initiatives.



“Before we move forward on any new idea and devote more resources towards it, we undergo a thorough process of research and development to be sure it is a viable option long term,” Krzysik

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said. “With a 2.5-acre greenhouse and discovery center dedicated to research, we can reach new levels of product innovation.”

Since Nature Fresh Farms is continuously trialing new varieties of produce, and expects to bring some exciting products to the marketplace this year, the company expects all categories will continue to stay in demand into 2021.

Of course, every season presents different challenges for growers and the company does what it can to help.

“By utilizing our AI within the greenhouses, our growers have greater control in overall crop management,” Krzysik said. “With our amazing team, innovative technology, and various greenhouses across North America, we project a strong growing season this year.”

Not surprisingly, the ongoing pandemic has been the biggest challenge throughout 2020 and leading into 2021. Like many others in the industry, Nature Fresh Farms has had to adjust certain areas of its operations in order to maintain the health and safety of all its employees.

“Last summer we were greatly impacted by an outbreak with our guest workers. With many asymptomatic workers testing positive we were required to shut down our operations resulting in a huge loss of produce we were unable to pick,” Krzysik said. “Although we have experienced difficult times, we remained strong maintaining our surety of supply to all our retail partners throughout the pandemic.”

Thankfully, consumers consumption of fresh produce remains strong and the company believes that trend will continue to grow with shoppers focusing on maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Nature Fresh Farms has always focused on environmentally friendly options of growing. However, it’s not noticing sustainability playing a more prominent role for consumers when purchasing produce.

“Sustainability is an increasingly important issue with more consumers demanding companies to become socially responsible and adopt sustainable practices,” Krzysik said. “This shift is more apparent across the industry with consumers looking closely at the businesses they support and their commitment to the environment. Consumers want to know where their product is being grown and if it’s sustainably grown. We want to continue to educate them through our eco-friendly packaging and growing efforts.”

Nature Fresh Farms recently acquired a distribution center in Laredo, Texas and has invested in the operation of a 15-acre greenhouse with additional 15 acres under construction, located in Central Mexico. It’s also planning future expansion at its Ohio farm.

Other growth measures involve adding automation wherever possible to offset the lack of available farm labor, and constantly introducing new technology to manage or farm production.

“Success comes from the hard work and dedication of our entire team that want to provide the best possible service to our customers and consumers,” Krzysik said. “We are also committed to learning and applying new knowledge to our growing operations. We believe that to succeed in the industry we must continue to discover new technologies and practices that can improve how we grow, package, and distribute.”

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