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I Love Produce gears up for PMA Foodservice

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By

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People who visit booth No. 107 during the PMA Foodservice Conference & Expo in Monterey, CA, will have the opportunity to learn about I Love Produce's offerings, as well as how the company creates productive partnerships that result in success.

"They're going to learn about garlic and ginger and shallots, especially the garlic and shallots, and there will be lots of information that I'll be sharing with new customers and old customers," said Eric Frasse, vice president of sales for the Kelton, PA-based company.

"Our plans for the show are going to be limited, it's just me going this year, but we're very excited about it and we're hopeful that it's a really great show."

The event will mark the first in-person show Frasse has attended since the pandemic, and he's very excited to catch up with his fellow produce professionals.

"For me, it's not always about clients and customers, sometimes it's just nice to connect with people in the industry and have that communication, see what's going on with everybody and catch up with old friends," Frasse said. "It's great to see other vendors and see my competition, just to say hello. The industry is very friendly and it's nice to see everybody and connect with everybody."

He added that the company has participated in virtual shows over the past year and a half, and while he noted that virtual elements can be helpful aspects of shows, they can't replace face-to-face interactions. He also said the PMA show is a key event for the industry.

"For us, it's important to support the foodservice industry side, the distributors and the PMA as well," Frasse said. "Especially now, it's really important to support foodservice distributors."

"We actually participated in donating money to the PMA to bring the distributors, who are just getting back on their feet, to the show," he continued. "It's important to us to get everybody back together and connected."

Among the topics Frasse expects people to discuss at the big event are labor, trucking, weather, and the cost of materials, and how the industry is going to handle those challenges.

In addition to its main three products of garlic, ginger and shallots, I Love Produce also handles some value-added items, including pearl onions and sun-dried tomatoes. Frasse said the company has some exciting developments in the works, but that it isn't ready to announce the details just yet. He did, however, promise that its future plans will be exciting. For now, the team at I Love Produce is focusing on vertical growth through the diversification of its retail and foodservice arms.

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With all the experience the staff at I Love Produce has; the past year and a half was unlike anything anyone had seen before and succeeding during this challenging time required dedication and a lot of hard work.

“We did well as a company, but we had to put in a lot of hours and work into making sure our supply and customers were well taken care of,” Frasse said.

The future looks promising, as the nation is making its way back to a life that resembles 2019 more than 2020.

“I’ve started traveling again and I’m starting to see it in different areas,” Frasse added. “Here in Pennsylvania, people are going out again and having a good time, so I think it’s going to become as normal as it can be. It’s going to take a little time, but we’ll get there.”

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