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La Bonanza poised to become major factor in the avocado

business

By

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Obed Sanchez, logistics and sales manager, had to pull himself away from his computer monitor in early October on the day *The Produce News* visited La Bonanza's warehouse in Mission, TX, in the Rio Grande Valley. In front of him are six live TV screens of the operations in Mexico that keep him in contact with CEO Gustavo Rivas regarding the packing operations and products coming to the import office.

"Vertical integration is the key to supply of Mexican avocados to the United States," said Rivas from the Uruapan office in Mexico. "Consistency and quality come from direct sourcing with growers like La Bonanza Avocados."

Honest and direct sourcing information is indicative of the commitment [La Bonanza](#) has in providing top-quality product and service to its customers.

"We like to stay in close contact with our customers and let them know about our predictions for the market, so they know what to expect," added Sanchez. "It also allows us to control how and when we harvest, which puts less stress on our growers."

"We pick and pack to order, and don't sell anything that is not already contracted," Sanchez added. "That helps simplify logistics, stabilize pricing and preserve the overall market."

"It also taps into sustainability, because we focus on the specific quantity and quality that our retail customers need," added Aaron Acosta, corporate relationship manager for La Bonanza.

La Bonanza has long been a player in the Mexican avocado deal, but it was relatively unknown in the United States until recently. In fact, it began selling direct to retail just two-and-a-half years ago, and the program was ramped up further due to the coronavirus pandemic. La Bonanza is now in the top 10 exporters of Mexican avocados.

"COVID-19 allowed us the opportunity to work with more retailers, since there was such a high demand at retail during the pandemic," said Sanchez. "It enabled us to prove ourselves as a company and demonstrate our commitment to freshness and quality."

The goal now is to amp up its presence here in the United States, and it has begun taking measures to accomplish that goal.

Acosta said it was a “natural progression” for the company to develop a presence in the United States. It currently has a fresh warehouse in Mission, TX and frozen in Laredo, TX.

“For us, the key is having the right plan in place and growing organically with our customers,” he said, adding that future growth plans are in the works.

Acosta and Sanchez are just two key players of a team the company has assembled as it looks to become a major importer and shipper of Mexican Hass avocados.

Also on board are sales and marketing veteran Maggie Bezart-Hall, who is senior director of strategic sales and marketing, and Casey Evans Beltran, director of fresh and processed foodservice sales.

La Bonanza, based in Michoacan, Mexico, is headed by Gabriel Alejandro Villaseñor Zurita, president, who has cultivated and packed avocados for the last quarter of a century.

At the La Bonanza warehouse in Mission, TX, are Obed Sanchez, logistics and sales manager, and Aaron Acosta, corporate relationship manager.

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