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Winter to summer, Salix Fruit is always in season

By

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“We want to do the citrus category really well,” said Juana Elortondo, U.S. sales manager for [Salix Fruits](#), “and we know what it takes to be a high-quality import provider 12 months of the year.”

As a company-wide goal, Salix Fruit has positioned itself as the go-to citrus provider in the United States. “We know one of the key points to being a good vendor to our customers is to have supply year-round — not just seasonal — which is something we are doing,” said Elortondo.



Salix Fruits is a global import-export company of top-quality fresh produce based out of Philadelphia. Salix offers a vast portfolio of products, focused primarily on apples, lemons, tangerines, oranges, pears and grapes.

Working with more than 80 local growers in 18 countries, and 400 customers in 57 countries, Salix offers a unique customer-focused service, with deep category knowledge, vast experience, and year-round supply of high-quality fruit from around the globe.

“We sell in every continent, the Middle East and Southeast Asia are big markets for us,” said Elortondo. Established in 2013, Salix has seen significant growth over the past five years, opening offices in strategic global regions in India, South Africa, Chile, Spain and Argentina. “We position our people in those key sourcing locations to help strengthen our relationships with the growers and customers,” said Elortondo, adding, “it’s a strategy that’s worked well for us.”

On the trading side, Salix’s main commodity has been apples and pears, primarily exporting out of Washington state. As an importer, Salix receives product through ports on the East Coast, stores and operates through their facilities in Philadelphia, where they can repack to order for U.S. customers.

As for winter citrus, “Right now we’re breaking into our orange season with Valencias out of Sonora, Mexico,” Elortondo said. “The Mexican Valencias look really good, they are an excellent product.” When it comes to lemons and other citrus, Salix is currently featuring lemons from Turkey, as well as Spain. “Quality has been excellent, we’ve received a lot of positive feedback, and demand for the product has been good,” she added.

Salix is also currently featuring citrus from Morocco. “So far we have imported clementines, with some additional quantity in containers on the way,” Elortondo said. “We will then be switching to

Nadorcott and Murcott mandarins selling in bags under our private label 'Mundos.'" Salix will also be bringing in Moroccan oranges. "It's a smaller volume as it is our first-time importing oranges from Morocco," she said. Confidence is high the new commodity will be a hit, as Salix expects East Coast wholesalers to quickly secure their volume.

"We are also bringing in Colombian limes," said Elortondo. While limes out of Mexico are available year-round, Salix has identified first-quarter opportunities to import from Colombia, when quality and volume are at a low point from Mexico. "Colombia is a great producer of limes," she said, "and we have some really great sourcers and producers out there." Colombian limes will ship into Miami for the Southeast and through Philadelphia for the East.

For Salix, winter citrus serves as a good warmup for its lemon import season to the U.S. "Our busiest season is the summertime," Elortondo said. "Argentine lemons start in May and go up until October." The company is proud to be the No. 1 importer of lemons from Argentina, "we have partnered up with Padilla Citrus, to bring their high-quality lemons to the States," said Elortondo.

Stateside lemon quantity decreases in the summer months offering another opportunity for Salix to again fill a market gap with high-quality imports. "Argentina is the biggest producer of lemon in the world," Elortondo said, "but it wasn't until a few years ago that it was allowed back into the United States, so it is an origin consumers haven't seen in a while." Elortondo was also excited to highlight Salix's new processed industry channel, with Padilla. "The joint venture will feature lemon byproducts and will open a new industry channel for our business," she said.

Similarly, Mexico is growing lemons at volume. "We've just finished an excellent season importing from Mexico, we start seeing those arrive in October and finish in December," Elortondo said. Salix has a lot invested in Mexico as a sourcing country for lemons and other citrus.

Salix certainly knows its citrus, and that knowledge has paid off with significant company-wide growth. "We've achieved some of our goals by opening up new markets to retailers in the Chicago area and the Northeast," Elortondo said. "We believe being a good vendor to our customers means having supply when they need it, year-round." Quality and efficiency count too, and Elortondo added, "being on time, having plenty of trucking options, and having our packing facility in Philadelphia allows us to pack-to-order and avoid rejections."

All of the above have positioned Salix Fruits as a dynamic global trader, that is always in season.

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