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Consalo Family Farms offers blueberries year-round

By

Keith Loria

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[Consalo Family Farms](#) has been in the farming industry since the 1920s. “I represent my family’s fourth-generation and have watched our company grow and expand from just one tractor to where we are today,” said Chelsea Consalo, EVP of Consalo Family Farms and the Fresh Wave, which is the sole marketer of all products grown by the Vineland, NJ-based company. “Blueberries are what we do. I am personally very passionate about our blueberry farms and spend my summer managing the operation.”

The 2022 season will start shortly, and all at the company are excited to get started. “We have a long history of upholding continuity of supply in the blueberry category,” Consalo said. “We are proud to grow New Jersey blueberries, but also offer berries year-round from Mexico, Peru, Argentina, Chile, North Carolina, Georgia and Florida.”

The 52-week continuous supply allows Consalo Family Farms some key advantages. “As a vertically-integrated grower, packer, and shipper, we have full control over our fruit and control over quality,” Consalo said. “We manage the supply chain from the farm through distribution.”

In 2021, the company began shipping blueberries on June 10 and expects to start this year around June 15 as a few cold nights pushed back this year’s start date. “We have high hopes for the 2022 season,” Consalo said. “Of course, labor is a challenge, and we have over-prepared with sourcing as much labor as possible.”

In addition to labor, the weather is one of the biggest challenges in the blueberry segment. “When the rain comes, we can’t harvest, and we can get behind,” Consalo said. “When it’s too hot, it can affect quality. We are constantly keeping up with Mother Nature.”

Along with the company’s most recent warehouse expansion at its headquarters, set for completion in less than a month, Consalo Family Farms has invested in a new warehouse management system. “The system will allow us real time monitoring of product movement and pallet locations in our continuously growing operation,” Consalo said. “We have also recently added new packing equipment to our Egg Harbor City, NJ blueberry packing facility which we hope will maximize efficiency for us during the upcoming New Jersey blueberry season.”

Because the company does everything in house, the opportunities to service retailers are endless. “With our expansion, we will have increased our cold storage capacities as well as packing rooms,” Consalo said. “We are growing our summer citrus program, and continuing to promote our brand, Little Smoochies. Our premium, double bunched, placed pack herbs and wet vegetables are also available in any custom pack size in our distinguished pink Consalo Family Farms branded tag.”

As a member of the New Jersey Blueberry Industry Advisory Council, Consalo is very aware of the

promotion the state does to promote local. “Last year, I was excited for our #JerseyFreshBLUES campaign featuring an airplane banner flying the Jersey shoreline,” she said. “We are continuing this promotion for Jersey blueberries this summer. Retailers can always highlight local produce with signage, but we have partnered with some of our vendors to do some more personal Q&A’s, interviews, and other product features.”

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About Keith Loria |

A graduate of the University of Miami, Keith Loria is a D.C.-based award-winning journalist who has been writing for major publications for close to 20 years on topics as diverse as real estate, food and sports. He started his career with the Associated Press and has held high editorial positions at magazines aimed at healthcare, sports and technology. When not busy writing, he can be found enjoying time with his wife, Patricia, and two daughters, Jordan and Cassidy.

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