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Four Seasons focused on continued organic growth

By

Tim Linden

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[Four Seasons Produce, Inc.](#) a full-service wholesale produce distributor servicing produce buyers in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions, continues to see its organic footprint increase as it now represents more than 50 percent of units sold.

Dave Hahn, director of procurement for the Ephrata, PA-based company, said its association with organic fruits and vegetables dates back to the 1990s and it is its growth leader. “Organics continues to be one of our strongest performing areas,” he said. “We are finding that more and more traditional growers are dipping into the category and each year we are finding that it represents a greater percentage of our business.”

Four Seasons sells to a variety of customers in its marketing region with regional grocers forming the core of its business. Its website reveals that the company supplies “organic, local and conventional fresh produce and related products to organic markets, food co-ops, independent retailers, chain stores, juice bars and other produce buyers.”

Hahn said its customers represent a broad mix of stores ranging from discounters to upscale, premium markets. He noted that the close proximity to New York City — only a three hour truck ride — gives them good access to a number of premium accounts that tend to do really well with organics. But Hahn said the organic shopper cuts across multiple economic demographics, meaning almost all of its customers are increasing their purchases of organic fruits and vegetables.

As such, Hahn said the Organic Produce Summit is a great fit for the wholesaler. “We love the fact that it is a small show and easy to connect with so many customers and vendors. I will be there this year. I am on the procurement side so my goal is to catch up with our vendors and look for new ones.”

Four Seasons is bringing a total of five associates to take advantage of the location to see several of its suppliers on their home turf. “We already have two tours set up — one on Tuesday and one on Wednesday,” he said.

Hahn revealed that they will have a booth at the show as a way to introduce themselves to new people on both sides of the buy-sell equation. “We are hoping both buyers and vendors stop by and chat and see what types of programs we can develop,” he said.

He again noted that independent retailers make up its core accounts, but they are always looking for new retailers and would love to do business with more chains. “Typically, with chains we’re involved with shorts and fills, but we are a full distributor with a complete line of fruits and vegetables, including a solid value-added program. So, we’re happy to see what we can do.”

[Tim Linden](#)

About Tim Linden | 

Tim Linden grew up in a produce family as both his father and grandfather spent their business careers on the wholesale terminal markets in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Tim graduated from San Diego State University in 1974 with a degree in journalism. Shortly thereafter he began his career at The Packer where he stayed for eight years, leaving in 1983 to join Western Growers as editor of its monthly magazine. In 1986, Tim launched Champ Publishing as an agricultural publishing specialty company.

Today he is a contract publisher for several trade associations and writes extensively on all aspects of the produce business. He began writing for The Produce News in 1997, and currently wears the title of Editor at Large.

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