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**The Nickey Gregory Co. achieving historic sales**

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By

Keith Loria

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The [Nickey Gregory Co.](#) is gearing up for the Southeast Produce Council's Southern Innovations show, something it has done every year since the show originated as a fall conference in 2001.

"And we always will," said Andrew Scott, director of marketing/business development for the Atlanta-based company. "It's a good show for us, especially being geared toward foodservice, which is a large percentage of the business and people we sell to."

That means that the company will have both customers and vendors on-hand to talk to, and it gives them a chance for some important face-to-face time.

"You get to see a lot of friends in the business and fellow SEPC members who have been members for a long time as well," Scott said. "It's good to get together with everyone. It brings together a nice atmosphere that's not like your typical sales call at a desk. You can see friends face-to-face. We bring buyers and decision makers together and we get some high-quality people on the floor."

The hope always is the company might find a new customer or two and increase business, as companies see that the Nickey Gregory Co. is a regional processor.

"People like that just-in-time delivery, where they can order in one day and we deliver the next," Scott said. "With our distribution model, we can deliver to 11 states over night out of Atlanta. That makes this a good fit for us."

Scott remembers when the fall conference morphed into the show that it is now, and has enjoyed watching it evolve to the large 135-booth exhibition it has become.

"It's barely under half the size of Southern Exposure, and I think that works out great," he said. "We don't want to have booths just to have booths. It's a good number to be capped at, to make it easier for people to go around and visit with the exhibitors."

The Nickey Gregory Co., expects one of the topics of conversation at the show will be the high prices everyone is experiencing, though Scott noted that logistics, fuel and freight costs are starting to come down a bit.

"We've seen a little more of a downward pricing on freight rates, so that's helped a little bit," Scott said. "Processing, fresh cut is still very popular, especially at the restaurant level where labor is still very tight with back-of-the-kitchen help."

He is looking forward to talking with his peers and colleagues about ideas and solutions to save labor and deal with some of these other issues.

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In 2022, The Nickey Gregory Co., has experienced a record year as it enters the fall.

“For sales and cases sold, our numbers are higher than ever,” Scott said. “We continue to grow with our current customer base and we’ve added a few more customers, but it’s really mostly internal growth, especially within our processing division — Family Fresh Foods.”

Some of the Family Fresh Foods’ products will be on display at booth No. 304 at the show. Five of the team will be in attendance, including Nickey Gregory himself, talking about what’s been going strong.

“A lot of the value-added piece has really grown for us,” Scott said. “We’re also doing some brokering on our logistics side. We’re seeing different little pockets of revenue.”

With schools back, that represents a nice “shot in the arm” for business, Scott said, and that has helped sales grow even more in the past month, especially in its home state of Georgia, where schools start in early August.

“Schools buy a lot of produce, and it’s nice getting them back on board,” he said. “In 2022 and 2023, we’re going to work on gaining some more retail business and market share. Foodservice is where Nickey has grown business, and that continues to go strong for us. We’re still growing and things are going good.”

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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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