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Seven Seas expecting significant growth

By

Tim Linden

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[Seven Seas](#), which is a member of the Tom Lange Family of Cos., is anticipating a 20 percent growth in its Peruvian asparagus imports this season.

Veteran produce salesman Tracy Wood joined the company five years ago and continues to help grow the imported asparagus program from both Peru and Mexico. He noted the company sources from both countries of origin with Peru supplies typically occupying the space from mid-April to mid-January and Mexico asparagus dominating sales from mid-January well into spring.

“Right now, we are gearing up for the big volumes to start from Peru,” said Wood, whose official title is vice president of sales for Seven Seas Florida. “Peru is experiencing cooler weather, so they have been a little bit slow getting going with the big supplies. But we are excited and expect supplies to increase throughout September. We are expecting promotable supplies by the end of September and throughout October and November.”

Echoing comments heard from virtually all the importers, Wood said there will be strong volume in that time frame but “promotional price points are going to be a little more difficult to get to.”

He noted rising costs for all grower inputs with the increased cost of transportation to get the product to the U.S. market as very significant factors in the pricing equation this season. But with that said, Wood added that Seven Seas is working with its retail partners and setting up promotions throughout the fall and holiday seasons.

He noted that most of the Peruvian product will come to the U.S. via ocean container, but the company will use some air shipments when necessary. “There is just not that much space available by air,” he observed.

Wood said the ocean voyage has sped up significantly in his many years importing asparagus from that South American country. He said better service by the ocean liners and the ability to load in a more northern port have contributed to the faster timetable. “Now it’s an eight- or nine-day ride,” he said. “The ships typically load on Tuesday or Wednesday and arrive here on Thursday. It used to be a 12-day ride.”

Wood said Seven Seas’ increased volume from Peru is coming from two sourcing categories. “We have increased our position with some of our grower partners and we have also expanded our grower base,” he said.

He noted that most of the company’s Peruvian asparagus will be marketed in the United States in the standard 11-pound bulk box. “But we also offer one- and two-pound bags,” Wood said. “We are seeing a steady increase in that business.”

[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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