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Exp Group no longer just a tropical house

By

Keith Loria

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When you've been doing something well for 40 years, you become a trusted name in the industry. That's certainly the case with [Exp Group](#), which distributes tropical fruits and vegetables.

The company's 35-acre, 293,000-square-foot facility in North Bergen, NJ, houses Exp Group, Exp Logistics and Exp Banana.

Exp Group has been growing more into an A-to-Z player in the marketplace, vs. just a niche tropical house. As it heads to the New York Produce Show & Conference at the end of the month, it will be highlighting the fact that it can be a one-stop shop for customers.

"Every year, this is a big show for us," said Anthony Serafino, executive vice president and principal for the company. "We're always displaying top visualization efforts. We'll have three booths this year, so it will be a larger display showing the different kinds of items we are looking to do."

The booths will be showcasing the more than 70 tropical items that Exp Group has in its facility right across the river in New Jersey.

"What attendees can expect is to learn about the different things and exciting plans we have for 2023," Serafino said. "We'll be showcasing those plans and our different line items. We're not just a niche tropical mix home; we'll still be a leader in the tropical space, but will also be delving more into traditional commodities that consumers and our clientele look to depend on."

Exp Group knows you need to be savvy when attending the New York Produce Show, and recently had a meeting to discuss its strategy.

"We really like to pick a focal point and know what we want to showcase," Serafino said. "The show is earlier this year, and it's the end of the year, and we want to get across our message, which this year is about our growth and what our company can do for others."

Tropical produce is being widely consumed in the mainstream more than it ever has, which is good news for the company.

"We're going to continue to do that, realize what our strengths are and add some new ventures into those strengths," Serafino said. "We are the premiere ripener in the New York area and we're going to continue to forecast that. We feel we have one of the biggest produce warehouse facilities in this area for someone who does what we do."

On the show floor, Serafino expects to be talking about the challenges of growing a national and global brand.

“That’s a key thing for us; we’re not just focusing on the New York and East Coast markets, we’re looking to penetrate other markets in the U.S., and that’s something we’ve always had our sights set on,” Serafino said. “But we do it very methodically. I would love to be a powerhouse tomorrow, but slow and steady wins the race.”

Looking ahead, the company has big plans for expansion in infrastructure and investments, including growing its ripening operation and increasing cold storage. Exp Group also is increasing investments into Central and South America, the Caribbean and more to sure up supply.

“Every year we look and try to add another piece to our belt to grow,” Serafino said. “It’s something that my father and I have always preached, and something we communicate to our team members.”

Speaking of the team, Serafino noted the company is always looks for good personnel, and already has a top-of-the-line staff who will be attending the show and available to talk with existing and potential new customers at the show.

Photo: Anthony and Emil Serafino

[Keith Loria](#)

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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