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**Savvy growth strategy in place for Exp Group**

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By

Keith Loria

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As a leading importer and marketer of tropical and Latin items, [Exp Group](#) relies on more than 40 years of experience and is a name those in the industry know they can trust.

Comprised of several company segments — such as Exp Logistics, Exp Bananas and Exp Serafino, the multinational group is known for delivering and distributing produce from Central and South America.

With a customer base that includes everyone from bodegas to retailers to wholesalers, Exp Group has a different strategy for each segment that has proven to work.

So far, 2023 has started off well for the company, though inflation is causing some issues.

“We’re seeing some volatility, especially in March, with some traditional commodities we deal with — bananas and plantains more specifically,” said Anthony Serafino, vice president of the North Bergen, NJ-based company. “We were dealing with very elevated prices from the source, but now we’re seeing hopefully a stabilization in that market.”

For the first time since the pandemic, the company is seeing some resistance on traditional commodities due to inflation, and it’s closely monitoring those markets.

“Still, we’ve had a nice start in 2023, just a little more volatility than we would have liked,” Serafino said. “It’s really trying to manage some headwinds and hopefully we can get some tailwinds in the next few months.”

Through it all, Exp Group’s growth strategy has remained the same — to delve into a nationwide development of a lot of commodities and penetrating different markets.

“We’re noticing some turbulence for the first time in a good amount of time,” Serafino said. “Typically, the produce supply chain has been pretty resilient through everything that has gone on with the coronavirus pandemic, and we’re hoping that this turbulence will subside soon, and that’s all driven by the consumer and market. We try to stay as competitive as possible with keeping our growth strategy intact.”

Exp Group as a whole is always looking for good people to join its companies, and each year add headcount, increase space and make more investments in the ripening landscape.

“We have plans to add even more cold storage to make us a more prevalent player in the produce space,” Serafino said. “We control what we do direct to source. We work with our growers in these foreign countries and joke to our consumers that the only way they could get more direct is if they

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picked the fruit themselves.”

The company has been developing a European business, and that is coming along nicely and everyone is excited about, it's making further investments into logistics, and it's focus continues to be as a nation-wide company and grow more with key personal.

“We want to be that one-stop solution for our consumers and customers,” Serafino said. “Exp preaches that farm-to-table model and our customers appreciate that. We have a good handle on who our customer is and what they are looking for.”

Looking ahead, Exp Group knows what it takes to continue on this impressive growth pattern.

“Anyone can talk growth, but our numbers speak for ourselves,” Serafino said. “We have added commodities, made more foreign investment than a lot of our competitors have into growers, distributors and the supply chain, and focus on that direct model. We need to continue to do what we do, which is deliver the best quality merchandise.”

Last year saw record numbers, and Exp Group expects to have another record year in 2023.

*Photo: The Exp Group team*

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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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