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Flavor is key to Fresh Farms' Mexican grape promotions

By

John Groh

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Heading into the 2023 Mexican table grape season, [Fresh Farms](#) is putting the focus on flavor with its “Taste to Believe” campaign.

The campaign, which is designed to reinforce the superior eating quality of Fresh Farms’ table grapes, looks to elevate the consumer experience, sense of wonder and enjoyment through taste.

“We aim to re-brand the grape category with an entertaining, over-the-top and playful approach,” said David Watson, senior vice president of sales and marketing at Fresh Farms. “With ‘Taste to Believe,’ we want to transform how consumers experience grapes by infusing a sense of fun and playfulness into the mix.”

Watson said more details about the campaign would be released in the coming weeks and updated throughout the season.

Overall this year, the outlook for the Mexican table grape crop is very good, according to Watson.

“We have grown year-over-year in Jalisco on volumes, and we have a mix of greens and Cotton Candy, with an increase in Sweet Celebration reds as well,” he said.

“In Sonora, we continue to grow as well – not necessarily in acreage but more in new varieties coming into full production,” added Juan Pablo Molina, general manager at Fresh Farms.

Watson said the Jalisco crop is on time for Fresh Farms this year, with harvest having begun in late March. He said volumes were smaller at the outset, which is typical each year. And while there are still grapes in the pipeline from Chile and Peru, Fresh Farms is forging ahead with promotions for its Mexican grapes.

“At Fresh Farms, we know we can’t control what other countries do, so we try to supply good quality in volume while also offering great service to our customers,” said Molina. “This, along with good promotions, will make for a successful season.”

Commenting on production from Jalisco, which kicks off Fresh Farms’ Mexican table grape season, Watson said the region is important as it fills a void that has been missing from South American imports.

“It’s the perfect transition for retailers really wanting fresh supplies close to home and a couple of days away from their warehouses,” he said.

Watson also added that since grapes from Jalisco are not required to be fumigated, it gives the

customer an even stronger, fresher grape on the shelf.

“Our varieties are preferred and we continue to trial new varieties of green and red,” he said. “Cotton Candy has been a very big demand item, and that continues to grow for us.”

Watson added that everything Fresh Farms offers in Jalisco transitions nicely into Sonora, where the company offers an even wider assortment of varieties and candies, such as Candy Hearts, Candy Dreams, Candy Snaps, as well as blacks and Red Globes, in addition to organics, which crosses over to all these varieties.

Regarding the Sonora crop, which is estimated to be slightly higher in 2023 over 2022, Watson said in late March that it is still too early to know what Fresh Farms’ volume will be in the region.

“We see great quality and promotable volume to make June a great month to promote all colors of fresh grapes,” said Molina.

Watson said Fresh Farms has plans for promotions with customers across all colors and varieties, including some special category management retailer programs on the candy varieties.

“Sonora offers a great kickoff for all retailers to promote high-flavor and fresh table grapes, including Cotton Candy, Candy Hearts, Candy Snaps, Candy Dreams and others,” he said.

Continuing on the candy varieties, Watson emphasized their importance to the overall lineup.

“We have increased the production on Cotton Candy, which is very important to us and our mix,” he said. “We have also increased Hearts, Snaps, Dreams and others.”

He said in addition to offering multiple pack styles, Fresh Farms employs colorful and eye-catching carry bags and category management programs to help retailers increase sales and optimize customer experience.

“I see the grape category expanding in high-flavor grapes and consumer packaging, much like the tomato and berry categories have experienced,” said Watson. “The key is getting these grapes into the consumer’s mouth. The trial will drive sales and trust in the products.”

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About John Groh |

John Groh graduated from the University of San Diego in 1989 with a bachelors of arts degree in English. Following a brief stint as a sportswriter covering the New York Giants football team, he joined The Produce News in 1995 as an assistant editor and worked his way up the ranks, becoming publisher in 2006. He and his wife, Mary Anne, live in northern New Jersey in the suburbs of New York City.

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