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North American Produce Buyers feeling at home at CPMA

By

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[North American Produce Buyers](#), which works out of the Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto, is a trusted buyer and wholesaler of international produce, serving Canadian food retailers for more than 50 years.

With the Canadian Produce Marketing Association's show so close to home, the company is looking forward to all the trade show has to offer.

"We will have a full contingent of people attending the convention and will engage the attendees in meaningful discussions outlining several topics relevant to our area of expertise, the deciduous programs," said Stephan Schmekel, NAPB's executive vice president of sales and marketing. "We will be exhibiting as we always do and will participate in most functions throughout the convention."

Since the company's representation spans the full breadth of the spectrum, it will have its sales and marketing teams engaging in such related discussions with key players, as well as its procurement team, international logistics team, operations team and quality control people on hand.

"We expect that some of the hot topics will definitely be inflation and its effect on the consumption of grapes, and how to bridge the gap between having high quality grapes on the shelves all the while being mindful of the effects of inflation on the consumer's produce basket," Schmekel said. "We also expect to be discussing the future of the grape and stonefruit programs with respect to new varieties, sustainable packaging and tailored programs taking these aspects into consideration."

NAPB's history spans multiple decades with CPMA and the two have always held a very close relationship.

Schmekel sits on the board of directors of CPMA and will be involved in the different meetings and committees to discuss the many areas of involvement of CPMA in the promotion and consumption of fresh produce.

"We at NAPB have always felt it important to support CPMA in its efforts to represent our industry. The show offers the perfect avenue to engage the key stakeholders in mutually beneficial conversations," he said. "Our hope is to continue to educate the participants as to the benefits of laying out proper programs based on quality and consistency as well as looking to the future with new varieties, packaging solutions and tailored offerings."

NAPB will be exhibiting at booth No. 1102, where attendees can expect to meet the team and engage in meaningful conversations related to the several programs the company operates in.

"We will have multiple varieties of the finest and best grapes and citrus," Schmekel said. "As an

industry leader in the imported grapes, stonefruit, citrus and berry categories, attendees come to us for guidance on planning, ideas and our opinions help them in the decision making process for the present and future. As we've been active at the convention for so many years, our whole team is involved in their respective areas to ensure our attendees get all the elements needed to guide them."

So far 2023 has been challenging for the company, with inflation, related weather events and such.

"This being said, we continue to achieve our goals to ensure our partners, both from a grower standpoint as well as our retail partners, have successfully met their common objectives from a financial standpoint as well as from a growth perspective," Schmekel said.

And the CPMA is a great way for the company to ensure that its customers are happy and things are going strong.

"We value our partnerships very deeply at North American Produce, and when we feel that our key stakeholders have met their show objectives, and that we helped them with their deciduous programs, then we feel it's been a successful show."

[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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