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**United With Earth continues to evolve the dates category**

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By

Keith Loria

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[United With Earth Corp.](#), not only is a leader in dates, but continues to do more with them.

“Every time I look at a date, I ask myself, ‘what else we can do with dates?’” said Daryoush Davidi, founder of the San Rafael, CA-based company. “Initially, we were selling them whole, then we turned them into paste and made coconut and almond date rolls, then we started to chop them to be used just like raisins in cookies. We also turned them into powdered sugar. I am always looking for the next new hit.”

The company’s latest item is sliced Medjool dates, rolled with spicy chili to give them a nice sweet/spicy kick — just in time for Cinco De Mayo.

“Our initial pilot launch has been received to rave reviews,” Davidi said. “There is no such item currently in the marketplace and we wanted to be the first to introduce it. Overall, I feel our industry needs to do a better job catering to Latino and Asian demographics, and I feel with our new item, Spicy Medjool Dates, proudly grown in Mexico, we will meet the needs of this demographic.”

To stay successful in the date industry, Davidi noted one must stay true to their roots and keep evolving.

“You have to constantly look to expand your product line without sacrificing your quality and your identity,” he said. “We look for clean products with few ingredients and look to connect with a wider audience that hasn’t tried dates. Initially dates were mainly consumed by the Middle Eastern demographic, but in the past few years the Millennials have discovered the importance of healthy snacking and the negative side effects of processed sugar.”

Dates are naturally sweet and pack numerous health benefits, which adds to the demand.

The date industry has seen healthy increases in sales the past two years, with introduction to new markets and expansion to various sections of the retail space keys to the growth.

In the past, United With Earth had to rely on third parties for warehousing and quality check, but as of last year the company has proudly taken full control of distribution with a new state-of-the-art warehouse in California.

“We have the largest commercial walk-in cooler temp controlled facility in San Rafael,” Davidi said. “This centralized location allows easy access for pick-ups and drop-offs. This has contributed to our additional growth as we now can load trucks much faster with minimal lead time for POs.”

Despite inflation and price increases across the board in the retail space, the company is not seeing

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a significant slowdown.

“I feel in the past there was more of a sense of routine, which allowed for market predictability,” Davidi said. “More recently it has been more difficult to predict trends, whether it’s going to be slow or busy. I feel in this industry, you have to be well-stocked at all times to take on a rush of orders and then when it slows down, you pivot your overhead. For example, right now it is supposed to slow down after Ramadan, but our sales have been going strong into the second quarter. I feel dates are no longer just a luxury item but also becoming an essential item on a grocery list.”

While it’s too early to tell how this year’s dates crop will look, Davidi noted that there was a much-needed wet winter and spring this year.

“I wouldn’t be surprised if the new crop is delayed this year,” he said. “But these majestic palm trees at times have a way of compensating for heat and you never know — the new crop can be on time. The crop is typically here in September or October.”

*Photo: Daryoush Davidi*

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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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