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Baldor Foods continues to grow in Philadelphia

By

Keith Loria

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This has been a big year for [Baldor Foods](#) in terms of people, process and potential.

“We started the year with some technology upgrades — a replatformization of our ERP that will allow us to continue to improve how we serve our customers,” said Bill Hodge, director of sales, Philadelphia and Washington, DC, for Baldor Specialty Foods.

The company has also continued building out its leadership team to scale with its growth, with the addition of Scott Crawford, new vice president of merchandising, who was previously chief merchandising officer of fresh direct and held executive leadership positions at Whole Foods; and Scott T. King, new vice president of sales, from Tropicana where he was senior director of sales.



“Both have jumped right in,” Hodge said. “Crawford is helping us evolve our product catalogue to match our values, as well as to support our relationships with our vendors. King is building out strategies and processes that will continue to help us ensure the success of our customers.”

Additionally, Baldor is bringing some terrific and responsible new vendors, like Fable, a meat-alternative made with upcycled shiitake stems, De la Calle Tepache, a fermented Mexican drink, and King Grove Blueberries, a farm that came recommended by Chef Dan Barber of Blue Hill at Stone Barns.

“At the same time, we’re growing our footprint,” Hodge said. “We recently signed a lease on a larger, 100,000-square-foot space in the Washington, DC area, and we’ve continued to service more of our Philly area business out of our Philadelphia warehouse to ensure more quality and shelf-life to our customers here.”

While Baldor is seeing solid growth in business in 2023, it’s at a slower rate than last year.

“I don’t think it is a challenge per se, but we’re trying to understand what the life after the post-COVID-19 bubble year will mean for foodservice and retail, as well as what impact recent tech layoffs, the softening of the labor market and a possible recession will have on people’s spending,” Hodge said. “We’re probably approaching a normalization, but people will always need to eat.”

Baldor opened a Philadelphia warehouse at Milnor Street in November of 2021, but have served this area for more than 20 years out of its Bronx headquarters.

“Today we’re entrenched in the community,” Hodge said. “We employ around 75 people in our 100,000-square-foot facility, and we service 800 clients, including Drexel, Temple and Princeton universities and all local sports facilities.”

Being in Philadelphia has been a big part of the company’s success, with Hodge calling the city “an amazing food town.”

“It’s not just cheesesteaks and hoagies, though those are great too,” he said. “Over the last 20-plus

years, we've seen a growing culinary scene here, owing to the creativity of chefs who are inspired by the best and newest ingredients available.”

Plus, with a growing selection of plant-based offerings, increasing global cuisines represented, and a distillery and bar food scene in the city, Baldor can supply the chefs with the better ingredients they demand.

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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.

