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A.J. Trucco anticipates strong blueberry business

By

Keith Loria

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[A.J. Trucco](#), which operates out of the Hunts Point Produce Market in the Bronx, NY, traces its roots to 1937 among the stands of the Washington Street Produce Market in downtown Manhattan. Over the years, the company has established itself as one of the most reputable and reliable produce distributorships in the industry.

“New York has always been an interesting market, and no surprise, business is up and down,” said Nick Pacia, president and CEO of the company. “Things are a little slower than expected and high prices on many commodities are affecting sales, but overall, we are holding our own.”

That’s especially true with some new products coming on this month — blueberries and cherries, which will pick up production going into summer.

“The season is on the way, and I think it’s going to be an interesting few weeks,” Pacia said. “The market is very good at the moment. There will be some promotion happening. Hunts Point will have gotten the first blueberries in New York by June 12, and people are looking forward to seeing them in store.”

The company’s retailers and partners are serviced by its sister company, Trucco Inc., based in Vineland, NJ, where there is a dedicated 75,000 square-foot state-of-the-art refrigeration and packaging facility.

“The big news here is our expansion with our sister company, adding 80,000 square feet for production and storage, which is a huge improvement to the facility,” Pacia said. “We opened in 2018 and less than five years later, we are already doubling the size of the facility.”

That quick growth comes from Trucco’s proven model of success in New York and New Jersey.

“It’s about taking care of business, taking care of the customer, the service, the product, and the quality,” Pacia said. “If there are problems from retailers or customers, we try to solve them as best we can.”

Trucco harnesses three powerful brands, KiwiStar for kiwifruit; TruStar for items such as blueberries, limes, Italian chestnuts, organic clementines and more; and Fresco for garlic from Spain, which it handles at both New York and New Jersey locations.

Pacia noted Sungold and green kiwi fruit has been trending up the last few years and that has led the company to expand and grow stronger in the category.

“We are also focusing a lot into citrus, mainly limes and mandarins from different regions in the

world, and we'll be seeing them become mainstream in the near future," Pacia said.

Pacia has a passion for the produce industry, and noted that if you don't have that charge, you're not going to make it in the industry.

"You need a passion for the product, for customers, for vendors and your workers," he said. "I believe you need to be fair with the vendors and honest with the customers and produce what's expected to be produced — and deliver what's supposed to be delivered. Those are the keys to continued growth. You need to be honest and available to deliver high quality to the customers."

Working at Hunts Point in New York has been a big reason why the company has found success.

"Without question, Hunts Point is the stop for all produce, and you can find any item — domestic or international — and we're a global source," Pacia said. "We're very happy with what we do and we look forward to season after season."

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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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