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**Bland's sweet onions, a year-round delight from farm to table**

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Ahhh, the sweet onion. Consumers' love affair with the mild, sweet onion has turned it into a kitchen staple. The sweet onion is popping up on consumers' grocery lists all year, thanks to its naturally sweet flavor and its many health benefits — from reducing the risk of cancer to improving heart health. And luckily for us, industry leaders like Bland Farms ensure we have sweet onions available all year.

The Glennville, GA-based Bland Farms was the first company in the industry to market sweet onions year-round. No stranger to the sweet onion category, Bland Farms represents roughly one-quarter of the entire Vidalia Sweet Onion volume and has the largest controlled-environment storage capacity in the industry. But, in order to meet the needs of customers throughout the year, Bland Farms had to expand growing operations beyond its Georgia borders, across the United States, and internationally, since Vidalia season generally runs from April through August. In addition to being one of the largest family-owned and operated producers of Vidalias, Bland Farms is a leader and innovator in international growing areas like Peru.

“For us, what started as seasonal buying has turned into year-round demand. We have 2,000 acres of Vidalias domestically, 660 hectares of sweet onions in Peru, and 400 hectares of sweet onions in Mexico. Recognizing and acting on the rising demand for sweet onions enabled us to expand production, forming strategic growing partnerships that have proven extremely valuable and allowed us to supply sweet onions year-round,” said Troy Bland, CEO of Bland Farms.

The company's strategically located operations produce the highest quality, freshest and sweetest onions available to consumers and retailers today. For over two decades, Bland Farms has invested and built trusted relationships alongside its own team of highly qualified farmers and full-time operators in Peru.

The Premium Sweet Onions are about to make their seasonal debut. As the Vidalia Sweet Onion season winds down, Bland Farms will start shipping Premium Sweet Onions from Peru in mid-August. “Once the Vidalia Sweet Onion season is over, we immediately transition to our Peru program, which lasts through January. From there, we move into our Mexico program,” said Sloan Lott, director of sales at Bland Farms. “We want to ensure that our retailers continue to have Sweet Onions available for their customers.

“Currently, Bland Farms has 660 hectares of Premium Sweet Onions in Peru, but we also source from other farms there,” continued Lott. “Despite challenges that arise anytime you are working in international operations, one thing that stays the same is Peru's optimal growing conditions. The region has one of the best climates, with little rainfall and plenty of sunshine.”

Coming off its highly successful Southern Stars promotion featuring country music singer Billy Currington, Bland Farms is gearing up for Premium Sweet Onions with its Gameday Sweetness

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promotion. Bland Farms will partner with The Big Green Egg to give retailers a chance to win incredible prizes — including the grand prize of a Big Green Egg MiniMax Grill — through display contests.

“We know each retailer has their own needs, so we provide turnkey seasonal programs they can run. Whether they use them just as they are or build from what we provide, we make it easy for supermarket retailers to generate excitement around sweet onions,” said Lott. Even consumers can get in on the fun through social media contests and score temperature gauges, cookbooks, Big Green Egg accessories, Vidalia Brands products and, of course, a grand prize Big Green Egg! “Keep your eyes peeled for delicious new recipes, dynamic merchandise displays, POS cards, and cross-promotional opportunities as part of Bland Farms’ commitment to supporting retailers and driving engagement in the consumer sector,” said Lott.

In addition to generating excitement through the Gameday Sweetness promotion in August, Bland Farms will continue its support of the Breast Cancer Research Foundation during October. The company will unveil its full line of pink bags, boxes, PLUs and bins to raise awareness with merchandising. In addition, Bland Farms makes a generous yearly donation to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

From sweet onions to sweet causes, Bland Farms is dedicated to providing consumers and retailers with a high-quality and consistent supply of Sweet Onions and support.

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