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Continental Fresh warns of mango shortage to come

By

Keith Loria

September 26, 2023

As a trusted importer of mangos, [Continental Fresh](#) has its eye on the pulse of the industry and understands the challenges in the category that are headed this way.

“There’s a unique scenario that is developing for later in the year,” said Albert Perez, CEO of Continental Fresh, based in Miami. “We’re just finishing up the Keitt variety out of Mexico in the area of Los Mochis, so we are winding down. We’ve begun receiving small amounts of Brazilian Tommy Atkins and by the end of September, we will be getting into more of steady supplies.”

The company takes particular pride in its Water for All label, which not only provides customers with excellent mangos, but also contributes one penny from every box to water projects in Latin America.

Mangos in Water for All boxes feature a waterdrop-shaped sticker with the address for a website that educates consumers on the company and its work bringing water to communities that do not have running water at all.

This year, for the first time, Continental Fresh will be packing some of the Water For All label out of Brazil, packed by a long-time grower who usually packs a Suemi label.

“We expect to have great supplies and promotional opportunities for our retailers and customers between September and late October,” Perez said. “Supplies from Brazil will remain in November but with lesser volumes.”

But then those issues Perez mentioned will start to rear their ugly head.

“El Nino has effected Ecuador and Peru in unprecedented ways,” Perez said. “Those two countries report reduced flowering and it’s going to greatly effect volumes. We expect pricing to be higher, but it’s really about availability.”

Some estimates put the percentage of mangos that are expected this year at 30 percent of last season — and that’s only if they are not further hindered by weather. Considering Ecuador has 12 million boxes last year, and this year looks like 4 million at best, things can get worrisome.

“In my 30 years in the industry, we have never witnessed such an effect by El Nino on production,” Perez said. “We are going to do everything we can to try and have supplies in November through February, but there will be some challenges to that.”

The shortage won’t occur until November, and the company has a good supply of Brazilian mangos available, so it can continue to sell as it normally does, but come late November and December, Perez noted customers will start to notice.

“We still have a great opportunity to push red bright Tommy Atkins mangos,” Perez said. “The mangos out of Brazil are looking great. We should have a normal crop in terms of supply and so far, the quality has been beautiful.”

Continental Fresh has enjoyed a good year so far, but the unknowns about Peru and Ecuador have made the rest of the year uncertain.

“Our job is to find a way to take care of customers that depend on us throughout those months,” Perez said. “It’s something we will need a little more time to understand. We’re going to rely on the relationships we’ve had over the years. We’re going to try and make the best of it.”

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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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