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Henry Avocado offers fresh approach with Bravocado brand

By

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Everyone knows avocados are a commodity. Except when they're not. The Bravocado brand from Henry Avocado is a case in point, according to Phil Henry.

Henry's emphasis on fresh delivery to its retail and foodservice customers has driven the brand since Bravocado became part of the industry's lexicon in 1938.

Sourced year-round primarily from select growers in Michoacan and Jalisco Mexico, and the company's Southern California groves, this popular fruit under the Bravocado banner holds another distinction... retail and foodservice customers of Henry have enjoyed the fresh benefits of a custom-ripening process since 1983, when Henry originated it.

Whether organic or conventional, Bravocado avocados are shipped at the precise stage of ripeness requested by Henry's customers around the United States. Until then, the cold chain has been maintained at optimum cool temperatures in one of Henry's seven distribution centers that are strategically located for proximity to Henry's customer base.

Now an industry-wide undertaking, Henry still maintains its custom-ripening equipment and most experienced personnel for its proprietary CustomRipe process. There are a total of 120 ripening rooms in Henry's centers.

Bravo you say? So did the Henry children's music teacher who was at the family home when told the Henry avocado entry won a blue ribbon at the 1938 Los Angeles County Fair. It prompted him to exclaim "Bravo" as an audience would after a great performance. By combining the word "bravo" with "avocado," the Henry family created the brand name now known for its excellence from coast-to-coast.

Henry's two distribution centers in Texas are a clear indication of the company's high regard for avocados from Mexico and an affirmation that the location of Henry's centers are motivated by its freshness mantra "Always fresh, Always on time, Always just ripe!"

Henry designed, equipped and staffed the distribution centers in San Antonio and Houston, as Mexico's quality and capacity increased exponentially to become a trusted, year-round supplier.

The San Antonio operation now has 19 ripening rooms capable of custom-ripening 40,000 cartons for shipment each week. Houston, which also has a bagging operation, maintains 27 ripening rooms with a ripening capacity of more than 50,000 cartons per week. The total capability of the two centers in Texas is more than 3 million cartons of organic and conventional avocados per year.

Managing sales from both centers' locations, National Sales Manager Jon Ullrich has been

representing Henry since 1997. A 6th-generation Texan, with family ties to the fresh produce industry going back seven decades, he implements the master planned freshness strategy with hands-on contact with grower/shippers and customers on both sides of the border.

In Ullrich's estimation, avocados from Mexico have grown in stature since the company began its association with select grower/shippers from Michoacan and Jalisco. They are now the source of 90 percent of the avocados Henry distributes throughout the year.

"Quality from Mexico is now a given," Ullrich said. "Even with the huge increase in quantity over the years, there are ample premium grower shippers that compete to meet our high standards."

Henry distribution centers maintain a fleet of trucks for rapid pick up and delivery. As noted, their trailers are refrigerated to maintain the cold chain on the road. All to ensure that retailer and foodservice customers receive the freshest possible custom-ripened avocados to accelerate sales and reduce shrink.

In addition to San Antonio and Houston, Henry has two regional distribution centers in Escondido, CA; and one each in Phoenix, AZ, Milpitas, CA, and Charlotte, NC.

All seven are Primus Labs-certified and meet or exceed the federal, state and industry Good Manufacturing Practices guidelines and have Oxyion air purification systems that reduce bacteria, viruses and mold to keep the safest, most sanitary fresh chain environment possible.

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