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GR Fresh looking for a winter rebound

By

Tim Linden

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After a challenging year, culminating with a weather-caused delay in its fall production from Mexico, McAllen, TX-based [GR Fresh](#) is looking for a strong rebound as it heads into the holiday season and typically greater production from West Mexico.

“After experiencing our best year ever in 2022, this has been a tough year overall,” said GR Fresh Vice President of Sales and Marketing Tony Incaviglia. “There has been pain coming from a whole lot of factors, but inflation is the number one problem. We have experienced rising costs across the board, including the cost of seed and packaging and getting the product from the source to the warehouse in McAllen and then on to our customers.”



Tony Incaviglia

If that wasn't enough, a couple of October storms in Mexico caused damage to some shade houses and knock out some young acreage, requiring some rebuilding and some replanting. He said flooding caused some acreage to be lost and heavy winds and rains damaged some of the shade house infrastructure.

“Just as we are celebrating last year's successes, we have these challenges,” he said. “To use a baseball analogy, you are only as good as your last at bat.”

Continuing in that vein, GR Fresh is back up at the plate looking for some solid hits as it heads toward the typically heavy Thanksgiving pull. “Our supplies have been light, but it looks like we are

going to start to get some volume over the next week or two,” Incaviglia said on the first day of November.

GR Fresh is a grower-shipper with solid production of Roma, round and grape tomatoes as well as a good lineup of Mexico’s core vegetables including cucumbers, all the Bell pepper colors, eggplant and squashes, from its production areas in the states of Sinaloa and Sonora and avocado production from Michoacan.

Because of the lack of supplies, Incaviglia said the vegetable categories were experiencing pretty solid markets, which he expected to hold as Thanksgiving demand increases over the next three weeks.

The tomato production was not hit as hard by the storms as it is still in the very early stages of growth. “Our new crop winter program on tomatoes doesn’t start for us until January,” he noted.

Incaviglia said the company’s winter vegetable deal typically stretches from about Thanksgiving into May so there is still plenty of time left in the game for a positive outcome.

He added that the company has no new initiatives to announce following the opening of its McAllen, TX, state-of-the-art warehouse in late 2021. “Right now, we are keeping our heads down and focusing on what we do well, which is the production of the staple items and delivering top quality products and service to our customers,” he said.

The GR Fresh executive said the warehouse was built on land that has room for expansion. The 62,000 square foot facility can add an additional 50,000 square feet when necessary. “We still have room in the existing facility to grow, but we are keeping an eye on that for the future,” he added.

[Tim Linden](#)

About Tim Linden |

Tim Linden grew up in a produce family as both his father and grandfather spent their business careers on the wholesale terminal markets in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Tim graduated from San Diego State University in 1974 with a degree in journalism. Shortly thereafter he began his career at The Packer where he stayed for eight years, leaving in 1983 to join Western Growers as editor of its monthly magazine. In 1986, Tim launched Champ Publishing as an agricultural publishing specialty company.

Today he is a contract publisher for several trade associations and writes extensively on all aspects of the produce business. He began writing for The Produce News in 1997, and currently wears the title of Editor at Large.

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