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NJDA championing New Jersey growers at New York Produce Show

By

Keith Loria

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The New Jersey Department of Agriculture is excited about exhibiting at the New York Produce show and attending various events throughout the week.

“Our team members look forward to reconnecting with familiar faces and meeting new contacts who may be looking to source Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables,” said Joe Atchison III, NJDA’s assistant secretary of agriculture for marketing and development division director. “The NJDA has been a member of the Eastern Produce Council for more than 30 years, and we gladly look forward to supporting and working with the New York Produce Show.”

The NJDA Jersey Fresh booth is No. 338, and the association invites buyers to stop by and learn more about the more than 100 varieties of fruits and vegetables grown in the Garden State and pick up some Jersey Fresh materials to take with them.

“This show is one of the most popular events we attend all year, especially with it being within proximity of so many of our Garden State growers,” Atchison III said. “We expect visitors to our booth to ask many questions on a variety of topics ranging from supply chain and transportation to the effects of the climate on seasonality and availability.”

Jersey Fresh remains as the longest established statewide branding and quality grading program for fresh fruits and vegetables. It has nearly 40 years of market presence and is a benchmark for other brands, having been emulated by other states.

The opportunities to increase the program further are plentiful, as NJDA continually works to improve and expand the program.

“We are working to grow our new Organic, Sustainable and Regenerative Agriculture program to provide technical advice, education and marketing support for those sectors while providing contacts for retailers looking to source these products,” Atchison III said. “We have several value-added products in our Made with Jersey Fresh program including sauces, salsas, canned tomato products, jams, beer and spirits and frozen eggplant cutlets all using Jersey Fresh fruits and/or vegetables. We are looking to add additional lines and participation from producers in the Garden State over the course of the coming year.”

This year has been a bountiful one for New Jersey growers, and a large majority of the state’s growers reported having excellent yields and as always with Jersey Fresh, outstanding quality as well. The peach industry had a particularly good season, perhaps one of the best in the past 50 years.

Those are just some of the topics that the NJDA expects to touch upon at this year's show. Having been a regular attendee for many years, Atchison III understands how to get the most out of the show.

"A successful show can be defined by the quality of the conversations had and the relationships renewed or started," Atchison said. "One or two top quality visits can make a whole show, and we've had success with this show in the past."

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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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