



**- Advertisement -**

**Pacific Produce announces exciting changes**

---

By

Tim Linden

September 4, 2024

[Pacific Produce](#), which has been representing fresh Peruvian product in the U.S. marketplace for two decades, has gone through an ownership change that has significantly increased its product selection and sources of origin.

Grupo Hame, a Guatemala-based company with a diversified portfolio that includes significant investments in Central and South America in real estate, fresh produce production and the food industry, purchased Pacific Produce and its Peruvian-based parent company Agrokasa in September of 2023. Both Agrokasa and Pacific Produce have continued to operate seamlessly this past year as full integration was achieved with the new ownership.

Pacific Produce LLC CEO Isabel Tavera said, “the change of ownership was announced last year, but it is now that we are finalizing the development of our new image, through a marketing effort that includes new product representation and a couple of new labels for the U.S. market.”

Pacific Produce continues to market Peruvian avocados, grapes, blueberries, and asparagus, but it has added bananas and plantains from Guatemala and Costa Rica and avocados from Colombia and Guatemala, though Guatemala producers have not yet gained access to the U.S. market.

“We expect that to happen in 2025,” Tavera said, noting that Grupo Hame is also planning to double its production of avocados, grapes and blueberries in Peru over the next four years

She noted that the southern Peruvian region in which the company grows its crops and has additional land, has a competitive advantage over the northern region because of climatic conditions. “We get better yields and better quality in the south,” she said.

Tavera added that Grupo Hame’s banana plantations in Costa Rica and Guatemala exceed 10,000 hectares. That production is currently marketed in the United States through several multi-national banana companies. “Pacific Produce will also be marketing Grupo Hame bananas as we move forward,” said Tavera. “But we will be honoring the relationships with current customers and will expand in that commodity in a way that is fair to everyone.”

---

She added that Grupo Hame is committed to continuing to improve its efforts in the sustainability arena and have always strived to go above and beyond with its many sustainability projects.

She reported that Pacific Produce will be offering two new brands for the company's fresh produce this month. Jumbo Premium Crunch is the new brand for the grapes and blueberries, while banana and plantains will be marketed using the Joy label.

Tavera noted that avocados will become Pacific Produce's No.1 commodity, with this new alliance helping the U.S. company have close to year-round availability of avocados from non-traditional and new sources of origin, with Peru providing supplies from June to October. Colombia and Guatemala's main season runs October to February and Colombia and Guatemala's Loca crop is produced in May and June.

She added that the company is diligent in its effort to improve the handling of Peruvian avocados. "Pacific Produce offers an avocado program, called Dr. Avocado, that helps customers ripen the Peruvian fruit correctly," Tavera said. "In fact, we won the Emerging Supplier of the year award from UNFI this year."

Fresh grapes from Peru will continue to be a seasonal crop from October to April with the Agrokasa division of Grupo Hame currently significantly increasing its acreage with plantings of the newer, sweeter varieties.

Tavera reviewed the evolution of Agrokasa noting the company was founded in 1995 with plantings of grapes and asparagus in the Ica region. Pacific Produce was formed in 2001 to sell those crops in the United States. By 2005, avocados were being exported around the world, with sales to the United States beginning in 2010. By 2018, blueberries joined the mix, with new grape varieties dominating the portfolio over the last half dozen years.

Tavera said the investment in a \$24 million water project in 2021 in Peru's southern growing district has set up Agrokasa for significant growth for many decades to come. It was this potential that attracted Grupo Hame to purchase the company last September.

Grupo Hame's roots are even deeper as it began as a Guatemalan cotton producer in 1952. By 1980 it was the world's largest producer of cotton, though eventually this crop was replaced by palm. Later on, in 2002, the company also invested in banana plantations in Costa Rica. Avocado and plantains were planted in Guatemala in 2020, followed by avocado cultivation in Colombia in 2022.

"Today, Grupo Hame cultivates 10,000 hectares of bananas across Guatemala and Costa Rica. Additionally, they are nearing completion of 3,000 hectares of avocados in Guatemala and another 2,000 hectares in Colombia."

In Peru, Grupo Hame, through Agrokasa, has 1,675 hectares of avocados, 885 hectares of fresh table grapes, 376 hectares of blueberries and 250 hectares of asparagus.

---

[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.

---

[Print](#)