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Babé Farms launches Pink Rhône Little Gem Lettuce

By

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[Babé Farms](#) grows, packs and ships more than 70 varieties of specialty vegetables year-round out of California's Santa Maria Valley.

"Our product line includes rainbow root vegetables, baby head-lettuces, our signature Blonde Frisée, Romanesco cauliflower, specialty greens and many more baby and specialty veg items," said Matt Hiltner, marketing manager for the Santa Maria, CA-based company. "Our sales team keeps their finger to the pulse of the market, constantly keeping an eye out for what is trending in the culinary world. If we see an opportunity our production team will move quickly to secure seed. Our goal has always been to be a one-stop-shop farmers market for all things specialty veg."

Thanks to the sandy loam soil and mild, Mediterranean climate in Santa Maria, Babé Farms is fortunate to be able to grow many of its specialty vegetables year-round.

"For the more climate-sensitive crops, we have established partnerships with growers in South Baja, Mexico, in an effort to keep our valued customers supplied on a year-round basis," Hiltner said.

As of the end of August, 2024 has shaped up to be a huge year for Babé Farms.

"We have been breaking sales records with each month, and even the summer, which is typically a slower season for us, has been a busy one," Hiltner said. "We are hopeful to sustain this growth throughout the end of the year and into next year."

An exciting recent development was the launch of the company's new Pink Rhône Little Gem Lettuce.

"The first of its kind, Pink Rhône boasts qualities similar to Little Gem, including a sweet crunch, mild buttery flavor and glossy texture," Hiltner said. "Its appearance, however, resembles more of a European style lettuce — petite in size with loose outer leaves and a tightly enveloped core. What truly sets the Rhône apart is its intense pink color, which

extends all the way to the core, ranging from wine-red to light-magenta.”

The Pink Rhône Little Gem will be on display at IFPA Global Expo at booth No. B849 and in the Fresh Ideas Showcase.

Babé Farms’ customer base largely consists of foodservice distributors with a sprinkling of select, high-end retailers as well.

“With our line of specialty vegetables, we find this is the right balance for us,” Hiltner said. “The best way to forge strong partnerships with customers is open communication. In an age where orders are mostly placed via email, our sales team makes it a point to get on the phone with customers frequently to help nurture those personal relationships and eliminate any miscommunication that can sometimes arise in email chains.”

In addition, the company does its best to support customers by meeting with their sales teams for educational sessions and even riding along with them to visit chefs, showcase its products and answer questions.

“Having that face-to-face interaction with our end-users is vital in fostering brand loyalty,” Hiltner said.

Babé Farms utilizes social media as a means of educating its buyers and end-users with the goal to inspire creativity with beautiful imagery showcasing the colorful variety of specialty vegetables available.

“In addition to photography, we have hopped on the Instagram reel trend to show our products in action, displaying potential uses and recipes,” Hiltner said. “For example, we recently shared a reel where we collaborated with a local chef, Kean McCabe of Earth and Oven. Chef Kean featured our new Pink Rhône Little Gem in a summer salad. The video can be found at www.babefarms.com/videos/recipe-videos/pink-rhone-little-gem-salad.”

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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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