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Expansion nearly triples warehouse for Peirone Produce

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Peirone Produce Co., headquartered in Spokane, WA, has expanded its storage capabilities with the opening of its new 77,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art warehouse facility.

The company, created by Joe Peirone in 1945, has been a wholly owned subsidiary of URM Stores Inc. since 1986. The new facility nearly triples available warehouse space.

The company operated from its previous location for 45 years. "We did not have the capacity to change or enlarge that building," President and Chief Executive Officer Pat Davidson told The Produce News. "We wanted to grow the business and needed more physical space." Peirone Produce employs 120 full-time people and operates from 6 a.m. to midnight.

"We cover a big area," Mr. Davidson said. Peirone Produce primarily services retail outlets in eastern Washington, northeastern Oregon, northern Idaho and western Montana. "We handle everything you would see in a grocery store," he said.

Commodities are sourced globally. Looking to the Pacific Northwest, Mr. Davidson said, "Basically, we handle anything grown for the fresh market." The list includes potatoes, onions, cherries, peaches and carrots.

"We receive on one side [of the warehouse] and ship on the other," Mr. Davidson said. "The cold chain is never broken from the time of receiving to the time of loading. Inbound, we have a fleet of trucks up and down the West Coast." Commodities in this region are sourced from California, Arizona, Washington and Texas.

"We are unique as a company," he continued. "We are a very large long-haul company. We haul 80 percent of our own product."

The company has a separate fleet of trucks that distributes directly to grocery stores. Peirone Produce also backhauls commodities, maximizing logistics efficiencies.

The warehouse allows Peirone Produce to segregate commodities into four different temperature-controlled environments, which allows the company to achieve the optimum conditions for items such as citrus, apples and leaf veg. "Everything is controlled and refrigerated in the environment it's supposed to be in," he said. Additionally, Peirone Produce has nine Thermal Technology tarpless pressurized banana ripening rooms.

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