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Vision Import and Tavilla Sales create synergies for growers

BY BRIAN GAYLORD

River Edge, NJ-based Vision Import Group and Los Angeles-based Tavilla Sales Co. are partners, an arrangement that creates synergies for their growers.

Ronnie Cohen, a partner in Vision Import, told *The Produce News* Sept. 7 that the two companies do their own deals and function separately but share grower deals together.

"On the procurement end, [Vision Import and Tavilla] do have synergy with growers," Mr. Cohen said.

Tavilla President Bill Vogel told *The Produce News* that the synergies created for growers are evident in the buying habits of consumers. While both Tavilla and Vision Import sell mangos around the nation, Tavilla concentrates more on the West Coast, where Los Angeles is the largest



Ronnie Cohen, a partner in Vision Import Group.

U.S. mango market, and Vision Import concentrates more on the East Coast.

Tavilla sells "12- and 14-size [mangos], but this size isn't used on the East Coast," Mr. Vogel said. Tavilla and Vision Import are sales agents for the growers, so the advantage of the partnership is in "how it translates back to the grower" and the growers' ability to "divert product" of differing characteristics to the appropriate market, he said.

Tavilla is procuring

mangos from Brazil at present, which will be followed by Ecuador in October. Peru's mango harvest is expected to start in December and go into March, followed by Mexico's harvest beginning in February with the Ataulfo variety.

Vision Import is in its third year as an importer, distributor and marketer of mangos, limes, pineapples, clementines and lemons.

Mr. Cohen said that the Tommy Atkins variety mangos have been shipping from Brazil for the past five or six weeks. "There's less volume early [from Brazil] with the cold weather," Mr. Cohen said, adding that recently warming temperatures are good for Brazil's mango harvest. The peak window for arrivals in the United States should be from around Sept. 20 through the Oct. 18 week, he said.



Bill Vogel, president of Tavilla Sales Co.

Ataulfo mangos from Ecuador should start arriving on the West Coast in light volumes at the end of September, Mr. Cohen said, followed by the Tommy Atkins variety. Vision Import also will have some Haden and Kent varieties, he added.

Industrywide, mango volumes from Ecuador are expected to drop by 10-15 percent. There will be a steady supply, but not a real peak, and mangos should ship into January, he said.

Mr. Cohen noted

that Vision Import's "grower deals and volumes are increasing."

The Kent mango variety is dominant in Peru, and Mr. Cohen said that Kent shipments should start arriving in the United States by the last week in December. He wants a "steady program."

Vision Import's mango harvest in Mexico will begin with Ataulfo mangos in February from Chiapas in southern Mexico. The company also will have Tommy Atkins, Haden, Kent and Keitts from Mexico.

Vision Import "sold more [mangos] this year" from Mexico than in the past, Mr. Cohen said, and the firm anticipates increased mango volumes from its deal in Guatemala, which is "95 percent Tommy Atkins," Mr. Cohen said. That harvest begins around the end of March and continues into May.