

Press Release

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STEADY, PROMOTABLE VOLUME EXPECTED FROM PERU *PAIA Celebrates 20 Years and Looks To Successful Season*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 6, 2021. Peruvian Asparagus Importer's Association (PAIA) members expect a high volume, successful asparagus season. PAIA's importer-members represent over 90% of the fresh asparagus imported and consumed within the United States. The association's importer and related industry members have worked diligently through the past year to ensure seamless and consistent supply for the 2021 season.

All parts of the supply chain have been affected by the pandemic over the last 18 or so months explains Jay Rodriguez of Crystal Valley Foods and PAIA Co-Chair. "One advantage that we always have with Peru no matter the circumstance or year is that we can bring in product year round, not just during peak seasons," he says. "It is a reliable source 52 weeks a year and we make sure to always have Peruvian asparagus to supplement other sourcing regions throughout the year."

Peru's year-round availability assures customers and their consumers of the freshest asparagus with consistent supply pointed out Walter Yager, CEO of Alpine Fresh and PAIA Co-Chair. "It is a reliable source 52 weeks a year and we make sure to always have Peruvian asparagus."

Peruvian fresh asparagus volume continues to grow, year-over-year, providing sufficient volume for retail promotions. Peru's growth in volume year over year has held steady for the last three years, according to Priscilla Lleras-Bush, PAIA Executive Director, who shares the following statistics:

Fresh Peruvian Asparagus Imports in Pounds

	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	
2020	25,613,526	2,063,967	329,591	4,144,249	18,419,622	15,445,806	
2019	18,018,821	2,144,215	2,719,842	11,492,036	18,697,183	12,859,122	
2018	17,139,838	630,962	3,625,281	9,577,542	17,985,972	13,817,692	
	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Total</u>
	20,057,215	19,491,950	21,077,955	29,266,585	23,788,319	26,780,212	206,479,443
	17,735,527	18,805,651	21,960,686	28,168,463	23,709,613	24,897,905	201,208,851
	14,329,165	20,916,577	22,920,800	24,571,400	27,042,342	27,208,791	199,766,146

Source: USDA

Rodriguez relates the expectation of steady supply, especially from the southern part of Peru which is typically heavier in volume. “Volume will be similar to last year,” he says. “However we believe to see increases in imports because we have seen an increase in asparagus demand in the U.S.”

This September, PAIA celebrates 20 years as an organization. On September 5, 2001, a group of Peruvian asparagus importers met to discuss critical issues for the future well being of the Peruvian asparagus import deal. “During the meeting, the need for a formal association including all Peruvian asparagus importers was agreed upon and Solutions Associates agreed to serve as coordinator,” reports Lleras-Bush. “Since then, the association has grown in membership, including trusted industry service providers, and has created a solid platform for importers and industry service providers to collaborate and advance the fresh asparagus trade.”

To find out more information about PAIA or its membership, please visit PAIA’s website: peruvianasparagusimportersassociation.com. The website offers news and PAIA’s Category Management Plan which contains a wealth of information to help retail better analyze the fresh asparagus business. “Within the Plan retailers will locate the best buying trends, highlights and demographics that assist them in selling more asparagus – one of the most nutritious vegetables for United States consumers year round,” says Lleras-Bush.

PAIA Mission Statement: *The Peruvian Asparagus Importers Association (PAIA) is an organization of US companies involved in the trade of importing fresh Peruvian asparagus within North America. We are committed to improving the process and present a united forum through which dialogue and progress is achieved. We represent the industry to the trade and focus on issues of political and logistical importance.*

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