



The summer has been challenging for those in the fresh fruit and vegetable industries. The Agricultural industry, including universities and governmental agencies, from around the world are discovering the fact Ethylene Control products don't just remove ethylene, but are also very effective in the fight against a number of destructive molds in produce. As you can see from the articles in the past issues of "Fresh Perspectives," people involved in the produce industry are finding more and more uses for Ethylene Control products.



President's Corner

Upcoming Events

- Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association Conference - Sept. 23-27 - Naples, FL
- Produce Marketing Association - Oct. 16-20 - New Orleans, LA
- Western Growers Association - Nov. 8-12 - Maui, HI
- United Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Association - Feb. 6-8 - San Diego, CA
- Virginia Food Expo - March 25 - Richmond, VA

Rogge Company Fills Unique Market Niche

SEATTLE, Washington - The Rogge Company, a Division of Charlie's Produce, headquartered here in Seattle, Washington, has nearly 60 years experience supplying the marine trade in Alaska with everything from food to supplies and equipment.

With an additional outpost operation in Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian Islands, about 800 miles southwest of anchorage, the Rogge Company primarily services marine vessels and hotels, reports Sales Manager, Dennis R. Kelly.

In all, the company services ocean-going ships, factory trawlers and cruise vessels, plus restaurants, hotels, and seasonal fishing camp cafeterias. Rogge Company has more than 30 employees dedicated to servicing this exclusive Alaskan market. Their busy season is January through August.



While Rogge is a specialist in supplying remote locations, one of the most unique aspects of the company is that it supplies some 25 different marine companies with fresh produce for their ships' crews, along with the products to keep produce fresh longer.

"These large factory trawlers go out for 60 days at a time with crews ranging in size from 90 to 160 individuals," Kelly explained. "They have to pack a lot of food and keeping it fresh has always been a challenge. We've developed a program to help them keep their produce fresh."

Marine Vessels See Advantage TO EC Filters

"We taught them how to use Ethylene Control filters and sachets in the marine vessel environment," said Kelly. "After our initial tests on two vessels, we opened the program up to the entire Alaska marine industry. Everyone came back to port after a 60-day run with good reports because they all saw an increase in their produce shelf life."

"Today, Ethylene Control products are part of our total marketing program. We help educate our customers about the effects of ethylene on fruits and vegetable. On a ship, all the produce goes into the same cooler box, which makes the task of keeping them fresh even more difficult," he said.

"It makes a big impact on crew member when they are still getting fresh lettuce and tomatoes three weeks beyond the normal cut-off point," he said. "We've never had a complaint on a can of green beans, but they are certainly unhappy when they see a fresh head of lettuce, a tomato or bunch of bananas go bad."



Ships' captains and chief stewards noticed up to a three-week extension on leaf lettuce, a highly perishable item. Kelly reported that some marine vessel operators have had such high success with the program that they are now putting more than on EC filter in their coolers.

Kelly said the parent company, Charlie's Produce, has been using Ethylene Control filters in their ocean-going containers for years. Our customers appreciate the fact that we provide the necessary tools to help them get perishable goods to their market destinations in the freshest possible condition. When I tell customers I can get them extended life on their fresh perishables, they all want to hear more and get involved."

Rogge's program in the trawler market is about a year old and continues to grow. They keep seven sales people busy in their Seattle office and three in Dutch harbor. "When I came to Rogge, I wanted to bring something with me that would make a substantial contribution to the company. The positive results we've seen from our Ethylene Control program is a big plus, both for Rogge and our customers."

Ethylene Control has been involved in testing one of its new products with USDA and independent labs, that could reveal some exciting results in the quest to find a safer replacement for sulfur dioxide (SO₂) on grapes.

Both the EPA and FDA approved its use on produce. Researchers say this new product is much safer and doesn't have the side effects of the old materials which often turn stems brown and tend to give the grape an off-flavor.

Besides grapes, the new material is also very effective in controlling post harvest decay problems on numerous varieties of cherries and other sensitive fruit varieties.



Farmers' Best Imports Top Mexican Produce

Farmers' Best International (FBI), of Nogales, Arizona was established in 1986 when Mexican farmers, Ivan Tarriba and his father, Roberto Tarriba Sr., saw a need to have their own sales and shipping outlet in the United States.

Roberto has been farming several hundred acres of land in Mexico since the early 1960s. His farm, Agricola Tarriba, is located about 80 miles south of Culiacan Valley, one of the largest and richest farming regions in Western Mexico. While Roberto Sr., directs the company's mango operation - known as Agricola Alex - with the help of his brother, Oscar Tarriba.



Ivan Tarriba is owner and president of Farmers' Best International in Nogales, Arizona. The company receives approximately 60 trucks of produce a day from his father's farm and from a few other neighboring growers. Leonardo Tarriba, one of Ivan's cousins, is the operations manager for the Nogales facility that has the capacity to store 150,000 packages, or 100 truck-loads, at one time.

They grown, pack, sell, and ship a variety of commodities - primarily cucumbers, red and green bell peppers, Roma tomatoes, zucchini, mangos, kabocha squash and grapes. Last year they handled more than 9 million packages - about 80% through the Nogales station and the balance through one at McAllen, Texas. About 65% of the total volume are produced by Tarriba operations while the other 35% are from eight other member growers.

FBI has 20 full-time permanent employees and hired about a dozen more for the seasonal busy period, which stretches from December through May.

For the past two years, Farmers Best has used Ethylene Control's filtration systems in its cold storage rooms. They started with one filtration machine and now operate three at their facility and use EC sachets in shipments of tomatoes and mangos.

"Three years ago, we were having trouble with our mangos ripening too fast and we received numerous complaints about maturity problems on arrival," said Leonardo. "We knew about the effects of ethylene gas, but didn't know there was a way to eliminate it until we discovered Ethylene Control. After installing the filtration system we saw the benefits right away - longer shelf life and better overall arrival condition."

Ethylene Control Proved To Kill Mold & Rot

Efficacy studies by independent researchers demonstrated that Ethylene Control Power Pellets kill a variety of rot and mold spores. Cultures of sour rot, blue mold, green mold, and brown rot were tested. In the majority of tests, no spores were detected after passing over Power Pellets.

The PMA Fresh Produce manual says that pitting of skin and discoloration are often problems in citrus. Exposure to ethylene may accelerate skin deterioration and increase orange's susceptibility to decay, researchers say.

For best quality, keep oranges away from ethylene-producing fruits and ripening rooms. Molding may occur if orange containers are stored directly on the floor. Power pellet reduce molds, fight rind breakdown in citrus, help the fruit retain its outer luster for weeks after wax has been applied.

The University of California, Davis researchers reported that the removal of ethylene gas is "critical to prevent concentrations that exceed the threshold for ethylene injury." In this study, several products that claim to eliminate ethylene gas were tested. Only Ethylene Control Power Pellets were found to remove ethylene gas.



"Food service at sea is tricky business. The Alaska Ocean (a factory trawler) is 366 feet long with a crew of 135. We are at sea from 30 to 55 days without receiving fresh produce. We prepare 300 to 500 meals a day and need to keep our produce for the entire trip no matter how long it is.

"I've had to buy large amounts of extra produce to meet these needs in the past. We have a single walk-in refer that stores all our fruits and vegetables and holds them at an average temp of 39 degrees. We are using the standard filter and the 9 gram sachets and have noticed an extended shelf-life of our product - especially tomatoes, mushrooms and lettuce. Please feel free to contact me or visit to see how we do it."

Robert M. Atterberry
Chief Steward



What People Are Saying...

F/V Alaska Ocean

