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Foodservice

Florida Specialties enters trimmed beans deal

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IMMOKALEE, Fla. — Florida Specialties Inc. is entering the value-added business by rolling out packs of fresh-cut green beans.



Doug Ohlemeier

Christian "Chris" Tordonato (left), sales manager of Florida Specialties Inc., Immokalee, Fla., Ray Stephens, salesman, and Jeff Stepanovich, salesman, display the grower-shippers new packs of washed and trimmed green beans during the Southeastern Produce Council's conference and expo. Florida Specialties plans to source and pack the fresh-cut green beans throughout the year.

"This is a natural progression and a natural fit for us," Tordonato said. "Today's two-income families need easy to prepare meals. We feel value-added is the way retailers and wholesalers are looking to go."

Declining to state the investment the company's new owner, Myles Strohl, made in the machinery, Florida Specialties officials called it substantial.

Florida Specialties, which sells to retailers, wholesalers and foodservice distributors throughout the U.S., plans to source and pack green beans throughout the year from Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Michigan and New York growing regions.

Once Florida Specialties starts running its processing line, customers can view the trimming by watching the operation online, Tordonato said.

In other news, Florida Specialties late last year promoted Tordonato from salesman to sales manager.



Stephens

Tordonato, who has sold for the company since 2004, previously worked for Six L's Packing Co. Inc.

Ray Stephens, who has sold produce since 1992 for companies such as Pero Family Farms, Delray Beach, Fla., which was formerly called Pero Packing & Sales Inc., and Orrin H. Cope Produce Inc., Homestead, Fla.

Florida Specialties displayed the new packs at the Southeastern Produce Council conference and expo in Tampa on March 6.

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