

▲ Part of the Gold Coast Packing crop that makes it among the largest washed and ready to use cilantro packers in the world.

and shipping costs on a year-round basis.

Other trucks picking up in the Valley will also be encouraged to take advantage of consolidation opportunities at the new location.

Fresh Venture Foods was a year in construction, but decades in the making. Both of the partners in the new facility have spent more than a third of a century in developing their reputations for quality products and a loyal customer base.

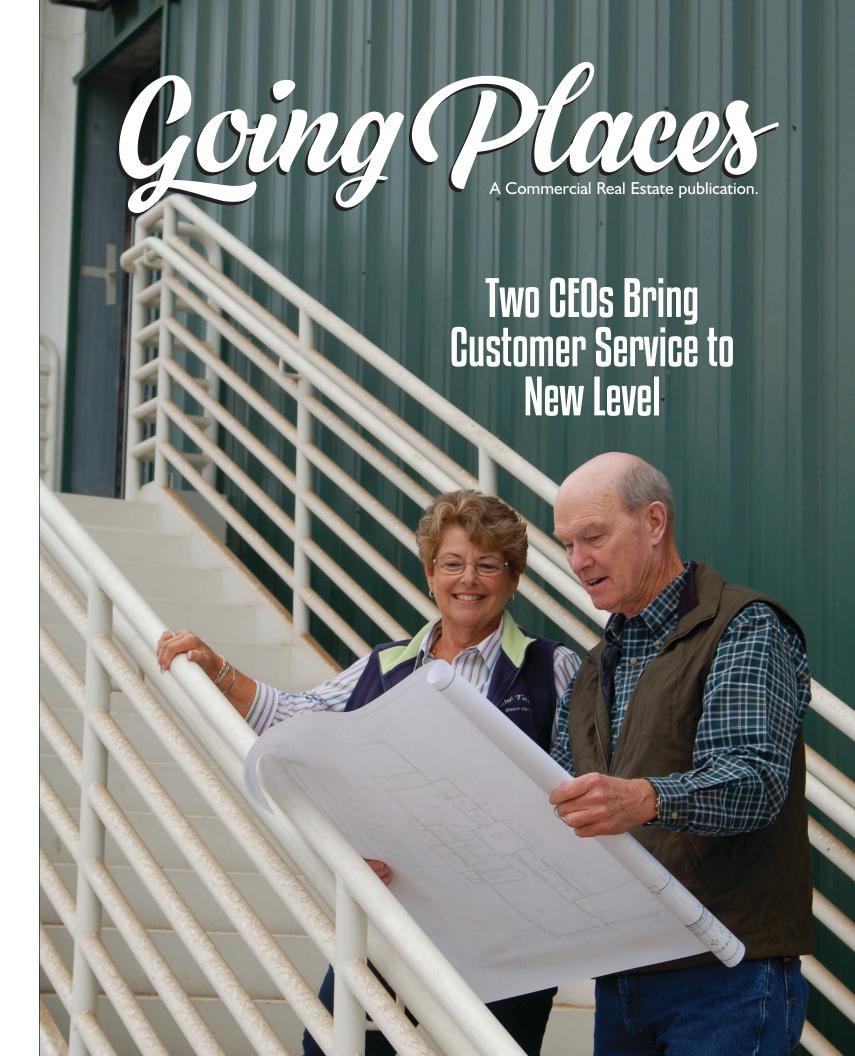
Thus an important element of the joint announcement was to assure their respective customers that the partnering companies will keep their individual identities and that marketing and sales contacts are unchanged.

In fact, the new building has 8,000 feet of office space for the separate administrative functions of the two companies.

Whether this joint effort between Gold Coast Packing and Babé Farms becomes the "new normal," in this and other industries, remains to be seen. What we do know is that these two companies were uniquely qualified to create a new model that has generated a "win-win" scenario for them, their employees and customers.

Will others follow?

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Babé Farms and Gold Coast **Packing Build and Share New Processing Plant**

by Rob Bryant, editor of Business World

o-operative efforts exist throughout the history of business, and they have been particularly prevalent in the annals of the agricultural industry. The joint undertaking by two prominent growers in the fertile Santa Maria Valley, however, may be plowing new ground.

In an effort to solve their mutual need to modernize and expand their respective processing facilities, Gold Coast Packing and Babé Farms created a third entity, Fresh Venture Foods. By combining forces, the two farming operations have met their customer service objectives on a grander scale than either would have achieved on an individual basis.

> The plant has modernized systems for receiving, cooling, cleaning, sorting and packing that will increase production for the founders by 50 percent.

Mainly, the new facility's additional space and modernized systems allow for future growth, without sacrificing the product quality and unsurpassed food safety standards that both companies have established over the past three decades.

"Fresh Venture Foods is basically a mutual enterprise between two old friends with similar requirements for economy, efficiency of operations and room for future growth," explained Ron Burk, CEO of Gold Coast Packing. It is the first new processing and cold storage plant in the Santa Maria Valley in 16 years.



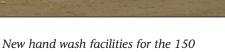
His company's product line includes value-added broccoli and cauliflower florets, table-ready cilantro, and spinach and specialty packs, which are very popular in the foodservice market.

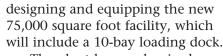
> Judy Lundberg, CEO of Babé Farms, which grows, packs and ships specialty salad blends and baby vegetables to foodservice as well as the retail market, felt the timing was right for the pair to launch their new business model.

"Both of our companies were working at capacity, in outdated facilities on multiple sites," she said. "We had to do something and we decided to do it together."

Both Burk and Lundberg agreed that their mutual desire to maximize customer service guided every plan and decision in

employees assure that food safety begins with individual cleanliness policy and HAACP compliance.





The plant has modernized systems for receiving, cooling, cleaning, sorting and packing that will increase production for the founders by 50 percent. Such new capacity will improve turnaround time from the field to their respective customers' warehouses.

"This kind of efficiency," added Ms. Lundberg, "is ideal for those of us promoting the benefits of fresh produce."

▲ A modern cooling system is among the many installations that enhance the operational efficiency of Fresh Venture Foods and enables both Gold Coast Packing and Babe' Farms to maintain their unsurpassed quality standards well into the future.

Better efficiency isn't lost on the employees, according to Burk who explained, "Customers will enjoy optimum service from our personnel who are operating in a more comfortable and efficient environment. Extra room to do your job allows more productivity at less effort."

A combined work force of 150 will operate two shifts over six days per week. A second building phase, to accommodate future growth, will bring capacity to 105,000 s.f. when expansion is required.

Cost savings and efficiencies are also found at the loading dock. The customers that Gold Coast Packing and Babé Farms have in common will be able to consolidate loading, which will reduce delivery times

(continued on back)

2012





FRESH VENTURE FOODS WAS A YEAR IN CONSTRUCTION BUT MORE THAN THREE DECADES IN THE MAKING.

1992

Ready to use cilantro developed for food manufacturers. 4x1 lb. cilantro developed and is a staple in the Foodservice Industry to this day. Gold Coast Packing, Inc. becomes Gold Coast Packing, Inc. Gold Coast sole provider of value-added cilantro nation founded as a western **Packing** vegetable and strawberry Value-Added Division launched to meet Broccoli and Cauliflower fresh-cut lines developed. rapidly growing needs of consumers Spinach "Triple Wash" and process line developed **Kev Dates**

1989

the "Timesaver" broccoli and cauliflower packs designed to help regional processors minimize the costs involved with processing these products themselves Moved into our current facility on Becomes partner in FreshKist, a newly formed large scale

1998

Gold Coast Packing, Inc. pioneers the value-added green onion program. Introduces

2005

A year of sales growth product development, equipment engineering and beginning stages of the plan for a new facility

Announces plan to build new processing facility with Bahé Farms

2011

1979

Babé Farms

Key Dates

Babé Farm

Founded by Will Souza and partners. Babé Farms premiers as one of the first large scale growers of specialty vegetables

and spring mix "mesclun" in the U.S.

1986

Begins supplying major club store with bagged spring mix "Continental Salad."

1991

Entered voluntary HCAAP program under supervision of Primus Lahs

1993

Becomes the third produce company in

"Zap" tables debut, microwaveable

West Boone St. in Santa Maria, CA

1997

2000

Featured on popular Food Network TV show

western vegetable grower/shipper in Santa Maria and Salinas

Expands into organic farming program for spring mix, certified by CCOF.

2007

Celebrates 25th Achieves Global GAP certification

Expands acreage in Santa Maria "Unwrapped." Judy Lundberg becomes and Baja, MX. gourmet vegetables. sole owner of Babé Farms