



2017-18 TA-DE PRODUCE DISTRIBUTING QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES SUMMARY

by Jesus Clark, QA Manager

One of my key responsibilities as head of Ta-De's Quality Assurance program is to ensure that **standards are consistently applied at all sources and throughout all shipments.**



With my 15+ years at major chain Loblaws and previously with the USDA, I bring strong comprehension of the "farm-to-fork" dynamic. Few distributor QA personnel have this breadth of experience, so I feel fortunate in being part of a team totally committed to excellence in this area.

Ta-De Produce, has, since 1966, prided itself in their quality assurance programs that not only met but often exceeded regulatory guidelines.

In partnership with our valued customers, we focus on safeguarding our food source and delivering top-quality produce in the most sustainable manner and at the best value.

With goals of "zero tolerance" and continuous improvement, our program is designed to unite our operations in Nogales, AZ, Sinaloa and Sonora, Mexico. The program is continuously benchmarked to meet customer and market needs.

At capacity, we move over 120 loads per day in our Nogales headquarters. We also have multiple brands to sort, grade and repack. There is no time nor room for mistakes.

"To accomplish our quality goals, I have implemented new manuals and personnel training, plus educational materials including state-of-the-art tracking software, all supported by frequent site visits."

Here are some areas where we believe our QA program excels and benefits you:

- **Produce selection & set up.** We only partner with top regional growers of specific commodities our customers want. By linking arms with savvy producers, from seed to shipment...and beyond, we ensure a "no surprises" strategy.
- **Issues mitigation.** My retail experience showed me the importance of constant communications with the field, warehouse and customer in preventing and solving issues.
- **Frequent field visits.** We're not "stuck" in the sales office or warehouse: we visit fields and talk to producers more than many. This way we know that what we see there is what we get here.
- **Keen eye.** There is no substitute for top training matched with sharp instincts (a good eye.) The ability to instantly spot and score defects means loads move quickly.
- **Support from the top.** Our QA program would mean nothing if not for the unquestioning support of our CEO, to whom I report directly. The ability to make immediate decisions to help customers: to be nimble and flexible in a changing marketplace, is a key to our continued success, and thus, *yours*.