

Mucci Farms' Acquisition; SUNSET's New Intros



Greenhouse vegetable news from GrowerTalks magazine



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2019

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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Mucci Farms' Acquisition
SUNSET's New Line
AppHarvest's Hybrid Lights
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Corporate Social
Responsibility

IT'S IN THE
BAG



Mucci Farms' Acquisition

Mucci Farms continued its expansion plans today with multiple announcements, including the main one that it's acquired controlling interest in Orangeline Farms in Leamington, Ontario, grower of the Zing! brand of peppers. That acquisition includes all existing greenhouse and warehouse facilities, as well as additional land with plans for expansion. That means 32 acres of greenhouse and a warehouse, along with 100 acres of additional land. Though most of what comes out of the Leamington greenhouse is peppers, they also grow strawberries.

The company also announced it's bought additional land adjacent to the 60-acre Huron, Ohio, location to increase that tomato operation to a total of about 75 acres.

"The first 24-acre phase is in its second season of harvesting and we'll be building two more identical ranges. Phase 2 of construction is already underway," says Bert Mucci. "The Ohio program has gotten off to a great start and we're looking forward to growing our presence in the community and regional market."



The Orangeline Farms facility and surrounding land.

Back to the Orangeline Farms news, the acquisition was driven by consumer demand for locally grown produce.

“In searching for growth opportunities for both Orangeline's staff and our ever-loyal customers, the chance to partner with a world-class organization like Mucci Farms was an easy decision to make,” says Duffy Kniaziew, founder of Orangeline Farms.

All told, Mucci Farms operates 250 acres of tomato, pepper, cucumber, lettuce and strawberry greenhouses in Canada and the United States, and has a partner-grower network of 1,500 acres across North America.



SUNSET'S New Intros

I think I've written the following in this space before—according to a Nielson survey quoted at the recent United Fresh trade show, the snacking veggie subcategory is a \$1B industry. It saw 10% growth between 2012 and 2016.

SO, it makes sense that more companies are introducing new products in that category, like [SUNSET](#), which launched a new line of easily packed snacking veggies just in time for back-to-school. The line consists of Sprinkles Tiny Mighty Tomatoes (a sweet-flavored micro-grape tomato) and Qukes Tiny Mighty Cucumbers (smaller than mini cucumbers that pack a crunch).



While SUNSET is banking on the “cute factor” to drive impulse purchases and the quality and flavor sustaining growth, they say it’s not just for kids. The Sprinkles packaging was designed to hold “the perfect amount of tomatoes for a salad and is available to retailers with a custom clip-strip to hang in the salad section,” according to the announcement.

“Demand for these products has been tremendous,” says President & CEO Paul Mastronardi. “Our first crop of Sprinkles is fully sold out and we have more acreage planned in order to meet the requests of our customers.”

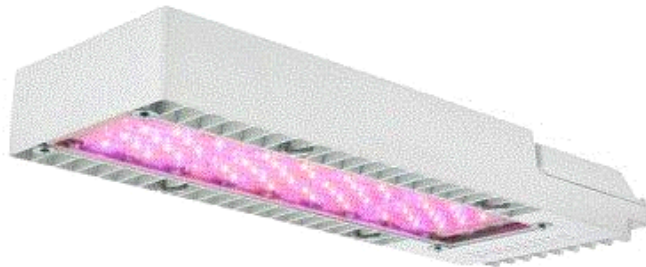
The Sprinkles tomatoes come in a 3.5-oz. package, while the Qukes come in two sizes, a 1-lb. family size clamshell and a 12-oz. topseal tray.



AppHarvest's Hybrid Lights

The new and highly anticipated AppHarvest growing facility slated for Morehead, Kentucky, recently announced with Signify that it would be using a hybrid lighting system in the 60-acre greenhouse range that will grow tomatoes and cucumbers.

The facility will be outfitted with Signify's Philips GreenPower LED toplighting compact lights, along with Agrolux high pressure sodium lighting. The facility is expected to be completed in the second half of 2020, according to the announcement.



The Philips GreenPower LED toplighting compact light from Signify.

Why the hybrid? According to the announcement, the LED system is 40% more energy efficient than traditional greenhouse lighting, while it disseminates less radiant heat. During fall and spring, the LEDs will be used, while the HPS lamps will be used during colder months in conjunction with the LEDs.

Meanwhile, I contacted AppHarvest to get an update on the progress of the facility in Morehead.

Stay tuned for a report once I get in touch with company representatives.



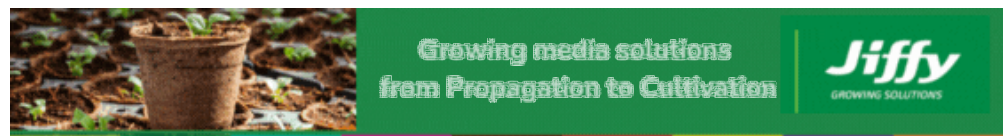
Certis USA's New Insecticide

The Requiem Prime insecticide isn't new, but it's now being distributed through **Certis USA**, which is a new development. Requiem products were developed in the mid-2000s and have been distributed by Bayer. As an ongoing collaboration between the two companies, sales and distribution of Requiem Prime will now move under the Certis USA umbrella of biopesticide products, according to an announcement about the move this week.

Requiem products provide effective control of thrips, whiteflies, aphids and mites in specialty crops, including citrus and greenhouse-grown produce.

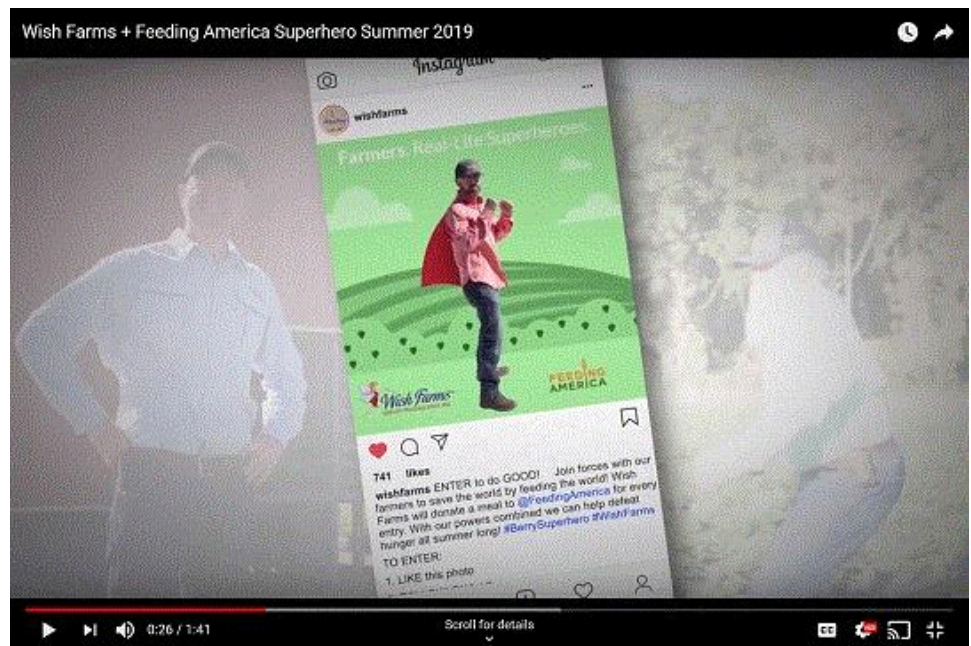
"Because of its low-risk status and the numerous benefits that growers receive from incorporating it with their overall control plan, Requiem Prime is an ideal fit for the portfolio of biopesticides offered by Certis USA," says Mike Allan, Certis USA Vice President for North America. The company will offer Requiem Prime to customers in all U.S. states except New York for all label uses.

It can be used in spray programs alone or in combination with other crop protection products, according to the announcement. It's considered a low-risk insecticide because of its reduced toxicity to mammalian and non-target organisms.



Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR is something that consumers not only look for in a brand these days, but expect their favorite brands to participate in. That can look like giving back to the community or donating to a larger cause, but it's an important part of operating in today's marketplace. Berry-producer Wish Farms just announced the results of its "Superhero Summer" partnership with Feeding America, which led to more than 50,000 meals donated to those in need.



Click [HERE](#) or on the photo to watch a video recap. Does your brand have a CSR component? Drop me a line at jpolanz@ballpublishing.com and tell me about it.



As always, feel free to email me at jpolanz@ballpublishing.com with comments, questions, news and views.

Until next time,

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