



By Maura Maxwell

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Thx! goes from strength to strength



New products and markets on the horizon for label showing that business can be a force for good

Social impact label Thx! is adding grapes to its line-up as it continues its expansion in North America.

Martin Casanova, who co-founded the initiative with Raul Fernandez, said the first volumes would be available at the end of this year.

"We are glad to announce that we will start marketing grapes in the next offshore season from Peru and Chile, with the intention to partner with US growers to develop year-round supply," he told Fruitnet.

"Many customers who fully support the Thx! concept had asked us to expand into grapes and we have built a team with extensive experience with this product and with great appreciation of the entire supply chain starting with the farmworkers."

Building on its success with retailers and consumers in the US, the company is

choices that reflect their desire to positively impact their families, their

now launching the label in Canada, starting now with blueberries from British Columbia.

"We discovered that nearly half of Canadians make purchasing decisions based on socially responsible criteria. Canadian consumers are a perfect fit for Thx!," Casanova said.

With the Canadian blueberry season now underway, Casanova is preparing for the start of imports from Argentina, Peru and Chile in the autumn.

"While it is early in the season, the quality and returns have been very good to start and we expect this to continue through the summer," he noted.

The company is also set to unveil the new Thx! App in the coming weeks, allowing consumers to interact even more closely with the farmworkers they are supporting.

"Currently, consumers can watch a video

Breakthrough Solutions. Their ambition was to provide financial assistance to farm

of the featured farmworker by scanning the QR code in the label, but the new App will take the consumer experience to the next level," Casanova explained.

"While scanning the label, the farmworker will become 'live' and can speak to the shopper, inviting them to learn more about their dream along with a 3D video."

He added that the new technology would not only allow it to offer a much better interaction with the shopper, but also extend the label's reach to products sold loose, such as apples, pears, avocados and lemons.

Casanova believes Covid-19 has accelerated the trend towards responsible and transparent supply chains as consumer demand to know where their food comes from and how it is grown.

"Consumers are more aware and engaged than ever and are making product/brand

It is entirely funded by the participants in the supply chain and requires no extra

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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communities, others within the supply chain and the environment,” he said.

“We believe that Thx! fits perfectly with this shopper, considering we offer a simple, clear and direct way for consumers to make a positive impact to the community. By choosing a Thx! product, the consumer can clearly see how he or she is making a difference in a farmworker’s life.”

Thx! was the brainchild of Casanova, president of Florida-based importer and distributor Fudi Food and Raúl Fernandez of perishables consultancy

workers who had hit hard times while at the same time connecting these farmers with shoppers who are looking to make more conscious buying decisions.

The programme works by allowing farmers to accumulate points for every clamshell of produce sold. Once enough points have been collected, Thx! converts these to cash to pay for the particular need, or “dream” of that grower – be it repairing a damaged roof, providing running water inside the home or buying medicine for a sick a family member.

premium or payment by the retailer.

“We want to show that a business can be a powerful force for good,” says Casanova. “It sounds simple, but these small acts validate a person’s sense of self-worth, and our experience bears this out – the programme has already been shown to improve worker morale and raise productivity.”