



By Matthew Jones

Wednesday 19th August 2020, 2:21 GMT

Sun Belle adds fifth DC

Acquisition of Texas facility follows signing of marketing and distribution agreement with Giddings Mexico



US berry marketer Sun Belle has acquired the business and property of CoolHouse Distribution Center, a cold storage business based in Laredo, Texas.

Established in 2017 by Lucy Montemayor and her father Rodolfo Delgado, CoolHouse's 35,000ft² (3,251m²) facility includes refrigerated and freezer space. The building is strategically located between Laredo's two international bridges across the Rio Grande River, the Colombia Solidarity Bridge and the World Trade Bridge. The Port of Laredo is the largest inland port of entry in the US.

Sun Belle has purchased 100 per cent of CoolHouse Distribution Center and will maintain the existing CoolHouse third-party business under the CoolHouse banner.

Lucy Montemayor will join Sun Belle as general manager of the Laredo distribution centre.

The acquisition adds a fifth distribution centre to Sun Belle's business, with the company currently operating facilities in Maryland, Florida, Illinois and California.

"We have long known that a Sun Belle refrigerated handling and distribution center in Texas was our next step," said Janice Honigberg, president of Sun Belle.

Honigberg said the need for a base in Texas took on greater importance following the announcement of a long-term exclusive marketing and distribution agreement between Sun Belle and Giddings Mexico.

Under the agreement, Sun Belle will market all of Giddings Mexico's conventional and organic blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries in the US.

"We are extremely pleased that Sun Belle is establishing a distribution centre in Laredo," said Patricio Cortes, general manager and co-founder of Giddings Mexico.

"As we continue to increase our berry production in many diverse growing areas throughout central and northern Mexico, we are confident that this centralised distribution centre will add significant customer support and real time responsiveness so that the freshest

product delivers from our farms to retailers and to consumers."

In addition to CoolHouse, a sales and distribution company named Sun Belle Laredo will be established to deliver berries directly to customers in the US' south and southwest, and for customer pick-ups.

"Between our five distribution centre we can service retailers and food service providers throughout the country with even better efficiency and coverage," said Honigberg.

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

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