

California-based Index Fresh bringing Colombia avocados to the U.S. market for a third season, with a five-week window closing later this month.

The global avocado marketer has had two previous rounds of bringing the Colombian fruit to the U.S. market, running those first two rounds as pilot projects.

“Colombian avocados are evolving to become a greater part of our offering for the general market. This is our third season and each time there’s more availability,” said Giovanni Cavaletto, Vice President of Sourcing at Index Fresh.

The Colombian Hass for this round is high in quality, slightly smaller in size which is complementary to the size curve coming out of California, Peru and Mexico right now.

“This fruit is helping fill in a niche that the market is looking for at this time of the year,” said Cavaletto.

Colombia has two seasons per year for avocados. The *traviesa* bloom (or off bloom) comes off June-September and represents 35% of the total harvest, while the normal harvest for Colombian Hass takes place November-February and represents two-thirds of the total harvest.

“Eventually, those two seasons are going to blend. And within a couple of years, Colombia will be a year-round supplier of avocados. Our goal is to have a steady growth each season and Colombia will be a very important part of our offerings,” said Cavaletto.

“They have fantastic growing conditions. There are three different mountain ranges that, depending on the altitude, are going to be able to provide an extended season. And then their proximity to markets is another big advantage. Colombia has ports on both the Pacific and the Atlantic so that they have really good access for both East Coast and West Coast arrivals.”

Index Fresh has been building relationships with growers in Colombia since 2012-13. The 2017 rule allowing Colombian Hass into the United States has helped grow Index Fresh’s mission to supply high-quality avocados as demand continues to grow around the world.

Index Fresh is working with forward-thinking growers in Colombia. There’s high regard for food safety, attention to quality, and the marketer has worked hard to really identify long-term partners in this growing region.

Index Fresh has long had a keen focus on sourcing in Latin America with Mexico and South

America each playing important roles. The global marketer has worked in both Michoacán and Jalisco for years, and continue to lead importers from Chile and Peru since they entered the U.S. market.