

## **Colorful Harvest packing colorful corn**

By Brian Gaylord – The Produce News

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In early July, Monterey, CA-based Colorful Harvest LLC rolled out a tray pack of its "Scarlet Red Sweet Corn." For the past three years the company has sold the corn solely in bulk.

The company is harvesting its California crop in Merced and has super-sweet seed varieties, said Colorful Harvest Chief Operating Officer Doug Ranno. The company also has trials in other areas of the state. The harvest season in California will run 10-12 weeks, Mr. Ranno said.

"The new super-sweet seeds are able to produce the same color," Mr. Ranno said. "It's a sweeter flavor and the flavor lasts longer."

Mr. Ranno said that Colorful Harvest is the only company growing red corn for human consumption. A distinction of red corn compared with yellow corn or white corn is that red corn has the naturally occurring antioxidant anthocyanin. A test by Danfelt Research determined that red corn has 350 percent more antioxidants than yellow or white corn.

The deep red pigmentation adds flair for chefs, Mr. Ranno said, noting that it's "great on a grill." The "Scarlet Red Sweet Corn" tray packs come with four ears of corn and a recipe, such as one for grilled "Scarlet Red Sweet Corn" with chipotle butter and lime. There is also one for a salsa and another for use as a garnish for seafood and poultry.

Back in March, Colorful Harvest announced an exclusive relationship with W.E. Schlechter & Sons in Belle Glade, FL, to market Colorful Harvest's "Scarlet Sweet Red Corn" grown in Florida. Colorful Harvest's partnership with W.E. Schlechter -- a member of the Pioneer Growers Cooperative -- marks the first time Colorful Harvest has grown the product outside California. The red sweet corn sells nationally, but Mr. Ranno said that customer requests led the company to seek an East Coast grower-partner. The red sweet corn is harvested with limited availability in Florida during April, May and into June.

Colorful Harvest intends to eventually extend the growing season to 12 months a year by growing the corn in other locations.

Mr. Ranno said that Colorful Harvest eventually hopes to grow a white corn and a blue corn to accompany its red corn in a patriotic theme pack available for the Fourth of July.

The company is "playing with a cobbette in foodservice" and looking into prospects for making its red sweet corn available as a frozen food.