

CASEY'S CORNER



For those of you who are in California, you may have noticed it has been very dry for the last couple of months. This has led Governor Brown to declare a statewide drought emergency. Water is our lifeblood and a lack of supply could be a very serious issue, not only for our farm but the rest of the agricultural industry in California. The effects are far reaching as agriculture in California is very big business that creates a lot of jobs and the spinoffs that result from the production activities. Just in crop value alone, the state produces \$44.7 billion (2012 figure) and that doesn't account for the residual benefits related to jobs/personal income tax, property tax and additional ancillary products like packaging. If we don't get substantial rain soon we'll potentially see fallow fields this summer.

Drought is not new to California. There has been inadequate infrastructure improvements for several decades. Perhaps this record setting drought will awaken the powers that be to get on with it and move forward with a *proactive* instead of *re-active* approach.

What are we doing to make sure that we have a continued supply of water? We are working hard on alternative supplies to prepare us for the worst case scenario. We are committed to pushing forward with these new avenues to ensure we maintain our ability to grow and supply our quality California grown tomatoes. This will keep our customers happy and ensure Houweling's and its team members continue with a bright future.

With my regards,



Houweling's Tomato Experts

At Houweling's, Mastery under Glass is our commitment to producing the tastiest tomatoes on the planet. With some of the best people in the industry, a world class facility and 30+ years of experience; we are the tomato experts! Whether it's growing the best heirloom tomato, packing, grading and shipping the best product to our retailers, or helping home gardeners. We know and LOVE tomatoes!

It is hard to argue that anyone (except for Casey of course) has more tomato knowledge than the talented grower teams we have in California and BC. For that reason, we want to kick-off a new section of The Vine – "Houweling's Tomato Experts" by featuring Wim van der Torre, tomato and propagation grower in Delta, BC and Ion Sfetcu our head grower in Camarillo, CA. We will feature different team members in each issue and find out what they love about tomatoes. We hope you enjoy this window into our glass house as we share with you why we love tomatoes!



A grower's mind set: "Be the best... and when you're there, tell yourself you have to do better than that."

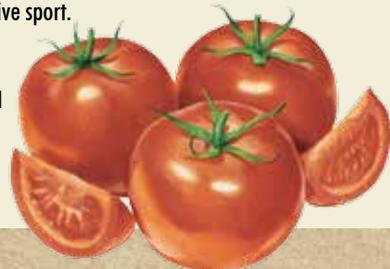
Wim van der Torre, Delta, BC:

That 9 month young tomato picker sitting in his father's arm happens to be your Delta Grower; "Born and raised" in the greenhouse as they say. I learned by crawling between the vines and playing with my Tonka Toys in the greenhouse soil, there was no better place in paradise than in those greenhouses.

When I started working in my father's greenhouses in the 80's, he was already in his 50's, a tomato-veteran, but still amongst the very best tomato growers of Holland. I couldn't have asked for a better mentor. From those years on, there was nothing I liked more than growing tomatoes but time did not stand still. We have implemented one improvement after the other as the industry has evolved. It is the everlasting urge to be better with each year and adapting ongoing innovations that makes growing tomatoes an addictive sport.

Wim van der Torre
GROWER PHASE 1 and PROPAGATION

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From the "Eh" Team Co-Gen Arrives in Delta!



After what seems to have been a long and arduous process of acquiring all the necessary approvals to install a Co-gen system at our Delta facility; we can now see the end of the tunnel! The building has been constructed and most of the equipment is installed. We welcomed the arrival of the engines in January and are hoping to be operational sometime in February.

This project will make us the first greenhouse facility in B.C which utilizes the technology of using Natural gas fired engines to produce power, heat and Co2. This has been an interesting endeavor and we are looking forward to the day when we can "turn the key."

- Al Ram
Energy Manager

Marketing Magic: CA Grown



Consumers demand access to year-round produce regardless of the season and it is one of the reasons for the emergence of greenhouses. Not all produce is able to be grown locally in greenhouses year-round leading retailers to source product internationally. Year-round availability is great but it can require our food to travel thousands of miles before it arrives at the grocery store. This increases the environmental impact, the cost of food and decreases the quality.

With 1/8th of the population of Americans in California and our centralized location in Camarillo, CA, we are able to supply California Grown tomatoes year-round! Already taking our California Grown advantage to consumers with our packaging, we realized a great opportunity was being missed with our fleet of rolling billboards. So look for the CA Grown stickers on all on our Houweling's trucks as they traverse the state bringing fresh CA Grown tomatoes to our valued retail partners.

-Kyle Stephenson



"As a family-owned business we're proud of our team. Congratulations and thank you to all team members celebrating an anniversary this month!"

■ Aaron Saenz	<i>Shipper</i>	Camarillo, CA	14 years
■ Floro Galdones	<i>Supervisor</i>	Delta, BC	13 years
■ Carlos Paloman	<i>Fork Lift Operator</i>	Camarillo, CA	9 years
■ Jose Garcia	<i>Labor Ph6 Supervisor</i>	Camarillo, CA	6 years
■ Victor Wong	<i>IT</i>	Delta, BC	5 years
■ Victor Vazquez	<i>Labor GH Supervisor</i>	Camarillo, CA	5 years
■ Tara Tashiro	<i>Project Manager</i>	Camarillo, CA	4 years
■ Martin Rodriguez	<i>Welder</i>	Camarillo, CA	4 years
■ Oscar Hernandez	<i>Ph4 Grower</i>	Camarillo, CA	4 years
■ Douglas Cambara	<i>Maintenance</i>	Delta, BC	3 years

In the Glasshouse

The Pest Department is very important in our production process. Our team controls pests and diseases by constantly monitoring the plants and using preventative measures. We work together with all the other departments: Labor, Picking, Selling and Maintenance to be able to strategically implement our Integrated Pest Management plan. We need constant communication between our labor force, growers, and sales team to be able to program all activities related to tomato and cucumber production.

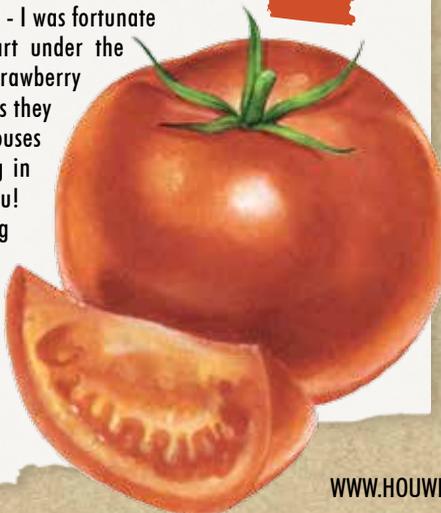
One of the main functions of our department is monitoring and identification of pests and disease that could attack our crops. One portion of the pest management team's job is to check each plant in the greenhouse (more than 200,000 plants) once every week and identify potential issues. While the other part of the team (control) will make the best decision with the grower to control and eliminate the problem in a natural way: beneficial insects and preventative measures. We have a great pest management team and I would like to thank them all for their hard work.

- Jose Calderon



I am "howling" with glee - I was fortunate to acquire a work of art under the label of Houweling's Strawberry Tomatoes. What beauties they are! I pass those greenhouses and now I am indulging in their bounty. Thank you! May the New Year bring you all the prosperity, you so deserve.

Deborah M.
Ventura County, CA



Linton's Tech Talk:



I take great pleasure in announcing the addition of Mike Hatfield to the Information Technology team. He will be responsible for overseeing our infrastructure in all of our locations and will also help manage our business systems. Mike comes to us with over 4 years of AX experience and has worked in the produce industry for a number of years.

Mike is native to the central coast. He spent some time in the Bay area but is really excited about the opportunity to return to Ventura. Outside of his love for technology, he loves to spend his spare time flying Model Aircraft and playing with his dog.

We are really excited about having him onboard. Welcome to the team, Mike!

We also want to take this opportunity to thank Arnulfo Casarez for filling in as our interim onsite technician over the last three months. His help has been greatly appreciated. We wish him all the best with his future endeavors.

- Linton Clarke

Houweling's Tomato Experts

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Ion Sfetcu, Camarillo, CA:

In many ways tomatoes are part of us as they are one of the most cultivated and consumed vegetable in the world. They have been studied vigorously and without doubt they are part of many culinary recipes.



Originally domesticated in South America and imported in Europe in the early 16th century. Tomatoes have become a staple in many cultures' diets. Today it is almost impossible to imagine life without them. They come in all shapes, sizes, colors and include a variety of flavors ranging from sweet to acidic. We can ask the question: Are the tomatoes intelligent plants? My answer would be: Yes! They are quite intelligent plants because of their ability to adapt and

Main & Vine



During my holidays, I had the pleasure to meet with some old friends. One of those friends - Tony Gui, a practicing physiotherapist, took the initiative to organize a food drive for people in need in the BC area and Houweling's was kind enough to donate strawberry tomatoes for this great cause.

With the efforts of 15 volunteers, meals for roughly 200 individuals were prepared and distributed. We hope that these meals provided some cheer to these individuals during the holiday season.

- Rishi Moorjani

thrive in a number of different environments, in addition to being able to communicate their needs to growers.

Overall, our communication with tomato plants is limited. However, by studying, cultivating, observing these plants for such a long period of time we've learned a lot about them. We know more about their behavior, about their needs, and how to create symbiotic relationships with these amazing plants. The more you enter into the world of tomatoes, the more interesting and exciting it is to grow them, harvest and eat their delicious fruits.

John Thorne wrote: "The tomato is softly, lovely and yielding and totally yours; it was borne to give pleasure." I agree!

- Ion Sfetcu
Head Grower

BEN'S BUZZ

Christmas Lunch

Christmas is the time of year when you celebrate with family and friends. This year Houweling's did just that, on the 19th and 20th of December tamales were served along with champurrado and sweet Mexican bread for all the departments at Houweling's. The event lasted an hour and a half with prizes being raffled off at the end. The prizes varied from gift cards to 39 inch televisions. It was great to see everyone enjoying the tamales, conversing and participating in the raffle.

We would like to thank everyone that was involved in organizing the lunch and would like to send our sincerest "Thank You" to our suppliers for donating gifts for the raffle. We hope that everyone had a great holiday season.

- Ben Vasquez

