

Record rain hampers fall harvest for Peri & Sons

After weathering a quirky spring season and then an unseasonably mild summer, Peri & Sons Farms in Yerington, NV, found itself challenged at harvest during the wettest October that Nevada had seen in more than 30 years.

David Peri, president and chief executive officer of Peri & Sons, expressed concern during the third week of October, when most of the onion fields were in the last stages of harvest.

As head of one of the nation's larger owner-farmed onion operations, Mr. Peri understands planting, nurturing and harvesting onions under less-than-perfect conditions.

"Here in northern Nevada there is no such thing as 'typical' weather," he said. "After 30 years of growing onions, we've developed a pretty good arsenal of techniques to combat whatever nature throws at us. Whether it's keeping our seeds and seedlings from washing away in sudden downpours or making sure they hold through random 60-mile-an-hour winds that blow through the valley or harvesting in difficult conditions, we've found a way to handle it all."

This fall harvest marks the third full year for Peri & Sons Farms' "Onions Year-Round" program, and Jessica Peri, retail sales manager for the operation, said that she is also concerned but optimistic about the harvest.

"We were able to harvest all our 'Sweetie Sweet' onions before the rains, and we are doing everything we can to

vested each variety at the optimal time, which allows for storage, curing, packaging and shipping at maximum efficiency. A crop of medium reds, grown for a particular deal, was harvested in mid-October, and "Sweetie Sweet" onions have all been harvested and are safely in the sheds.



Jessica Peri, retail sales manager at Peri & Sons Farms, pulls a sample of a nearly mature, beautiful red onion from one of the company's fields in Yerington, NV, during the October harvest.

(Photo courtesy of Peri & Sons)

Whites, yellows and more reds were being during the third week of October.

"On those rare occasions when nature and technology align perfectly, it's very rewarding," Mr. Peri said. "Harvesting each type of onion at its peak makes for incredibly fresh, beautiful, great-tasting onions — and good business."

Peri & Sons Farms is family-owned and strictly family-

keeping our seeds and seedlings from washing away in sudden downpours or making sure they hold through random 60-mile-an-hour winds that blow through the valley or harvesting in difficult conditions, we've found a way to handle it all."

This fall harvest marks the third full year for Peri & Sons Farms' "Onions Year-Round" program, and Jessica Peri, retail sales manager for the operation, said that she is also concerned but optimistic about the harvest.

"We were able to harvest all our 'Sweetie Sweet' onions before the rains, and we are doing everything we can to lessen the impact of the rainy weather on our whites," she said. "We feel pretty confident about everything else."

Ms. Peri added, "Our Onions Year-Round program means that we can seamlessly transition our customers from spring onions to summer onions and then to storage onions. Logistically and safety-wise, it's a worry-free program. Our customers know they are getting domestically grown onions that are certified clean and safe and are always shipped fresh right from our family farms."

Although spring planting proved challenging this year for the Peri & Sons Farms team, Mr. Peri said, "We were able to strategically stagger the planting of our various varieties. During the summer we experienced temperatures that were consistently mild, with no dramatic highs or lows, so each of our varieties matured right on track."

Peri & Sons Farms has har-

Jessica Peri, retail sales manager at Peri & Sons Farms, pulls a sample of a nearly mature, beautiful red onion from one of the company's fields in Yerington, NV, during the October harvest.

(Photo courtesy of Peri & Sons)

Whites, yellows and more reds were being during the third week of October.

"On those rare occasions when nature and technology align perfectly, it's very rewarding," Mr. Peri said. "Harvesting each type of onion at its peak makes for incredibly fresh, beautiful, great-tasting onions — and good business."

Peri & Sons Farms is family-owned and strictly family-farmed, growing, packing and shipping its own product rather than pooling onions from a network of independent farms. Ms. Peri believes that full control, from planting to the time the onions are delivered directly to the customer, is what sets Peri & Sons Farms apart.

"Many onions on the market today, including imported and sweet onions, are multi-sourced and commingled, and so it's a difficult proposition to trace them," Mr. Peri said. "When customers buy our onions, they get well-documented, straight-line traceability, and that's very important today."

He noted that he is aware of reports that national and world onion supplies may be tight again through early 2011.

Peter Ng, U.S. wholesale and export manager for Peri & Sons Farms said, "We are keeping a close watch on how various political issues and weather issues across the globe are affecting the onion market."