

## Move complete: Quality Fruit and Veg settles into larger site

By Vic Kolenc \ El Paso Times

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Quality Fruit and Veg Co., one of El Paso's largest produce distributors, recently completed a yearlong move into its new warehouse and distribution center in Butterfield Industrial Park in East El Paso.

The new location at 10 Zane Grey has 68,000 square feet of warehouse space -- three times larger than its old location at 390 Colfax, said Nick Delgado, owner and president of the 25-year-old company.

The warehouse includes ripening rooms for bananas, avocados and tomatoes, he said.

Steady growth in sales over the years made the move necessary because the Colfax location had become too small, and the company had to lease space in other facilities, Delgado said.

"We sell multimillion dollars of produce each year" in El Paso, New Mexico, and Mexico, said Delgado, who declined to give the exact amount of annual sales.

"It's still a very good business" because there's a never-ending need for food service, Delgado said.

The 59-year-old has been in the produce business about 45 years, breaking away from his uncle's produce business in 1986 to start Quality Fruit and Veg, he said.

The company employs about 125 people.

It supplies produce to Food City, Vista Markets,

many small grocery stores in El Paso, and does "fill-in" orders for Walmart and Albertsons when they run short from their main suppliers, Delgado said.

About half its business is to retail stores, 40 percent to restaurants, hotels, hospitals, schools, and other institutions, and about 10 percent to

wholesalers in Juárez, Chihuahua City and other areas of Mexico, he said.

Quality Fruit and Veg gets its produce from various areas of the United States, South America, Mexico and other parts of the world, he said.

The company's Colfax warehouse was sold to the city of El Paso, which is looking at that location for a fire station, Delgado said.

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Nick Delgado, owner of Quality Fruit and Veg Co., stands in his new warehouse in Butterfield Industrial Park on the East Side. The new location is three times larger than its previous site at 390 Colfax. (Ruben R. Ramirez/El Paso Times)