



A Company Built from Family

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Nogales, AZ- It was nearly 16 years ago when the Divine Flavor company formed and the first shipments of produce were sent to the supermarkets. The year was 2006 when CEO of Grupo Alta, Alan Aguirre, and Carlos Bon, Sales Manager (at the time), joined forces with Pedro Batiz to create a brand which would eventually go on to be known as the largest grower/shipper of Mexican table grapes and bell peppers. These gentlemen, aside from the years of experience and background in the produce industry, all had another commonality. Each of them came from the same family. It was this connection which contributed to the company's success in the early years, but later and as the company grew, it would become a central theme to Divine Flavor's farm foundation- working with other family-oriented producers who believe and represent the same values as the Divine Flavor company.

In the Caborca region of Sonora, an important area to the later part of the Mexico grape program, lies a group of growers who harvest and pack grapes for the Divine Flavor label. One of those growers is El Parral, a multi-generational grower who's been working with Divine Flavor for close to a decade. Majority of Divine Flavor's grape production comes from the vineyards of Grupo Alta, but as demand has grown, and to better help the later part of the Sonora grape season, Divine Flavor has established strategic partnerships with experienced growers in various Sonoran regions.

"Having strong family roots has been an essential factor to our success at Grupo Alta and Divine Flavor," said Carlos Bon, Vice President of Sales of Divine Flavor.

"If you look at some of the most successful growers here in Mexico, they all come from good families and the reason for their longevity is because family-oriented companies have stronger bonds within their organization, they have more passion, and their dedication to their farm produces excellent results which is what we look for when working external partners," Bon mentions.

El Parral, was formed in the early 1980's by Juan Angel Juarez Aviña, and at the time, they were one of the first grape growers in the Caborca region which produced Thompsons. As with many growers back in the 80's who wanted to grow grapes, it was a very challenging period. It was difficult to find companies to purchase the grapes and distribute their product. Though, as the years went by, Juan Angel was able to navigate the company through adversity and he eventually passed the torch to both his daughter Beatriz Juarez Gutiérrez, who is now current owner, and his grandson, Juan Gonzalo Balderas Juarez, who acts as the company's CEO. In 2016, Juan Gonzalo was introduced to Carlos Bon, and since then, El Parral has been working with the Divine Flavor group.

"Divine Flavor represents the top of the market when it comes to grapes and their other products and working with them has been a tremendous opportunity for our company," said Juan Gonzalo.

"As a grower, one of the most important factors will always be the pricing but to work with Divine Flavor you have to meet a certain level of expectation and comply with all the requirements to pack their label. My biggest impression I have with them is they push us to be better growers and get to the next level as they do with their farms at Grupo Alta, and for us, all the hard work is worth it."



Speaking with Beatriz Juarez Gutiérrez, she mentions the company's journey has been a long and challenging road but their commitment to their farm and the people who work there are a main reason why the company is what it is today.

"At our farm, we don't label our people as workers, and we refer to all of our staff as collaborators," said Juarez Gutiérrez.

"Something we want each collaborator to know and feel, which I believe we've achieved, is that they feel part of the team and the El Parral family.

Beatriz first started off as her father's administrative assistant but she eventually took over in 1986 when her father was dealing with health issues. For the next 16 years, she ran and operated the El Parral farm until her son, Juan Gonzalo, joined in 2002.

"I thank god I was able to prepare my son Juan for this business and see how he's developed a passion for growing grapes over the years and continuing our family business," Juarez Gutiérrez.

"When Juan first told me about our new partnership with Divine Flavor and that he spoke with Carlos Bon Jr., this made me very confident as I knew his father, Carlos Bon Sr. who was an exceptional man in this industry."

El Parral is one of the many agricultural partners to the Divine Flavor group and each of them have their own unique story of how their business came to life. For the marketing and distribution company, their vision of being a year-round supplier of all their products has become much more a reality the past few seasons due to the partnerships they've created throughout the years with other family-oriented farmers.

"We work and operate in a very challenging industry," said Bon. "We are very proud of the partners we have that compliment our farms and that have allowed us to grow into what we are today. They are very much a part of this group and more so, they are a part of our Divine Flavor family."

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