



## Agribusiness

### Yuma Manufacturers' Association Spurs Industry Training

The Yuma Manufacturers' Association was formed in 2006 to address concerns about workforce issues raised in a business survey. A customized training curriculum was designed around the common needs of local industry:

- ◇ Industrial Electric
- ◇ Programmatic Logistic Controls
- ◇ "Super Manager" course was designed in conjunction with the technical training

Courses were developed through the cooperative efforts of local groups, with equipment donated by a local industrial equipment shop; classroom space provided by Arizona Western College and computers by the Workforce Investment Board.

Companies can send their employees to centralized training sites or opt to have someone from their own staff become a certified instructor at their place of business.

There are currently 10 active members of YMA, and the group has passed approximately 120 individuals through the multiple training courses. In addition to college credit, participants now receive National Certified Accreditation.

### Yuma Manufacturers' Association and Dole

Dole Fresh Vegetables was one of the first companies to participate in the Yuma Manufacturers' Association and played an instrumental role in helping form the group. The company has had a long standing presence in the Yuma region but employee skill deficiencies and training needs were not being addressed at a local level. The cost of outsourcing training and travel had become a very large expense to operating the facility.

*"The formation of the Yuma Manufacturer's Association has been instrumental in the emergence of a strong sense of community, teamwork, and great resource development. Dole is an active participant and supporter of this Association that is successfully focused on providing resources for the growing opportunities common to businesses in this area."*

- Bill Hackett, Plant Manager  
Dole Fresh Vegetables

Wage Comparison Agribusiness Occupations				
US Cities*	Yuma	Phoenix	El Centro	Los Angeles
General & Operations Managers	\$30.91	\$42.95	\$31.60	\$52.46
Transportation, Storage, & Distribution Managers	\$31.49	\$29.46	N/A	\$38.52
First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers	\$17.77	\$22.35	\$26.18	\$24.11
Assemblers & Fabricators	\$9.42	\$11.52	N/A	\$10.63
Packaging & Filling Machine Operators & Tenders	\$8.94	\$10.95	\$11.80	\$7.96

\*Source: BLS, May 2008

### Why Yuma for Food Processing?

Located near the junction of California, Arizona, and Mexico, Yuma is a natural transportation hub with over 50 million consumers within a one day truck haul via Interstate 8 or US 95 both of which run directly through Yuma County. Some of the major advantages for business in Yuma:

- Is Arizona's Epicenter of Agriculture
- Is noted for having rich, deep and fertile river bottom soils
- Low cost utility rates
- Workforce with experience in the Food Technology industry
- Affordable labor rates
- 175,000 Acres of Colorado River irrigable land
- A 350 day growing season with sunshine 95% of the year
- Has 25 fresh produce coolers, 6 date and 4 citrus packing facilities
- Produces over 90% of leafy greens for the nation in winter months
- Grows approximately 150 different types of crops
- Salad plants process up to 2,000,000 pounds of lettuce daily
- Uses GPS technologies on 100% of the available acreage

### Leafy Green Marketing Agreement

- Arizona and California are the only 2 states where leafy greens are grown under an unparalleled collection of guidelines
- The Leafy Green Marketing Agreement (LGMA) in Arizona is funded by one cent per carton assessment
- The LGMA will likely become the production model for leafy green growers across the United States

### State Crop Rankings for Yuma in 2009

- Ranks #1 for lemons and tangerines
- Ranks # 1 for watermelon and cantaloupe
- Ranks # 1 for winter vegetables
- Ranks # 1 for Pima cotton
- Ranks #2 for field corn
- Ranks # 3 for Upland cotton

### Safety

- Has a low dry desert environment which plays an integral role in food safety
- Growers use the most advanced standards in food safety production guidelines
- Arizona Leafy greens have never been implicated with any food safety outbreak

### Markets & Suppliers

- Greater Yuma's economy is driven by our **\$3.2 Billion Agriculture Industry**. This includes the growers of fresh fruit, vegetables, meat and dairy
- Has many growers that grow specifically for the packaged salad industry
- **Mexico Supply Chain** — A number of companies, including Dole, Fresh Innovations and Fresh Express take advantage of our border location for twin plant and maquiladora operations.

### Distribution

- New San Luis II Commercial Port of Entry
- New Area Service Highway (SR 195)
- Renovation of San Luis I Port of Entry
- Yuma International Airport
- Over 10 major trucking companies



**Agribusiness**

**Dole Fresh Vegetables** (a unit of Dole Food, Inc.), one of the largest processors of fresh vegetables operates a plant in Yuma, Arizona. Dole opened its first vegetable processing facility in 1993 in Yuma, Arizona providing the highest quality product with quick delivery of the freshest produce on the market. This facility also produced Dole's first value-added pre-cut salads and vegetables.

**Sarah Farms** is categorized as a Produce-Handler Dairy. The integrated dairy and milk processing operations at Sarah Farms provide approximately 700,000 gallons of fluid milk each month to Costco Wholesalers and independent retail chains such as Basha's and Food City.

**McElhaney Cattle Company** is family owned and ranks in the top 50 privately owned businesses in the state. The company employs approximately 130 persons from the local area on a full time basis and adds about 5 million to the local wage base. The processing of approximately 130,000 head a year with the average inventory running between 115,000 to 125,000. In an average year in excess of 145,000,000 pounds of beef (live weight) will leave here for market. On a retail weight basis and based on the average annual per capita consumption, this yard would provide the beef requirements of a city of almost 900,000 people.

Average Use of Electricity by State		
State	Commercial	Industrial
	May-09	May-09
Arizona	9.69	7.05
Nevada	10.05	7.15
California	13.51	10.01

Source: Energy Information Administration, May 2009

**Incentives**

**Enterprise Zone**—All of Yuma County is designated an Enterprise Zone. The EZ program offers two types of benefits: income or premium tax credits and property tax reduction. Companies who are qualified are eligible for up to \$3,000 in tax credits per each employee and an approximate reduction in property taxes of 80% for five years.

**Foreign Trade Zone** – The FTZ provides economic incentives to companies doing business in international markets. The zone allows businesses to store, repackage, display, and assemble goods duty-free and without any customs formalities. In addition, Arizona is one of the few states that provides an 80% reduction in real and personal property taxes for companies that qualify for foreign trade zone designation.

**Job Training Assistance**—**Yuma Private Industry Council (YPIC)** - YPIC offers programs that cover the costs of employee training, including teaching, materials, equipment and other expenses. Companies can additionally qualify for reimbursement of up to 50% of employee wages paid during training.

**Cooler and Packing Plants in Yuma, Arizona**

FRESH PRODUCE	
Advanced Cooling Systems	Pacific International Cooling
Trans-West Cooling	Yuma Express Cooling
Uni-Kool Produce Cooling & Shipping	Taylor Farms Inc.
Red River	Priority Cooling LLC
DSA-Yuma Cooling LLC (Driscolls)	Tanimura & Antle Cooling
Semco South Cooling (American Cooling Inc.)	Spindle Cooling & Warehousing
True Leaf Farms	Nunes Vegetables Inc.
NewStar Fresh Foods, LLC	Dole Fresh Vegetables, Inc.
Dandy Cooling	Earthbound Farm Organic
Taylor Farms Inc.	Fresh Leaf Farms
Datepac LLC	Americas Choice
Skyview Cooling Co.	Lydia's Specialty Fruit & Produce
Pure Pacific Organics	
DATES	
	Datepac
	Sonora Packing
	Imperial Date Gardens
	Sun Garden Growers
	Medgood Dates Marthas Gardens
	Eirlichs Date Garden
CITRUS	
	Marlin Packing Co.
	Associated Citrus Packers, Inc.
	Mission Citrus
	Yuma Mesa Fruit Growers Assn.

**Site Location Assistance**

For more information about locating your food processing plant in Yuma, Arizona please contact:



**Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation**

**Julie Engel, President/CEO**  
 Email: [jengel@greateryuma.org](mailto:jengel@greateryuma.org)  
 Telephone: (928) 782-7774  
 Cell: (928) 210-5153

**Greg LaVann, Project Manager**  
 Email: [glavann@greateryuma.org](mailto:glavann@greateryuma.org)  
 Telephone: (928) 782-7774  
 Cell: (928) 580-0088