

Garlic Year-Round from P&D

By Rand Green

FIREBAUGH, CA — P & D Garlic & Onion Sales is now entering its fifth season, and this year they will harvest and market some 300-400 acres of fresh California garlic.

In addition to their own acreage, they do some processing for other growers, and they market the product all across the continental United States and Canada, as well as in Australia, the Fiji Islands, the Caribbean and Hawaii.

Formed in 1984, P & D is owned by David Grimes, James Gillio and Peter De Arcangelis. Grimes handles sales and Gillio is in charge of growing.

They have a packingshed in Firebaugh with a warehouse that will hold about 35,000 cartons in dry storage. For cold storage, they utilize a facility in nearby Hollister.

They pack garlic in bulk form only, in 30 pound boxes, 22 pound boxes (10 kilo) and 50 pound sacks. However, they do have access to packaged garlic and peeled garlic as well, which they handle for other people.

According to Grimes, the company handles garlic on a year-round basis. When the California season is over, they "start right into the Mexican season." In the past, he said, they have brought garlic in from Argentina and other places as well,

"but we don't usually do that."

Prior to 1984, Grimes was on his own for two years before starting P & D, brokering garlic for various growers. Before that he was with the Fred E. Carter Co. "We handled 700 acres of garlic," he said. "We grew from the El Centro area to the San Joaquin Valley to the King City area" in the Salinas Valley.

They are just finishing up this year's Mexican garlic, Grimes said. "It looks like we will be done by the end of this month." California garlic, meanwhile, is just getting underway, and "should be picking up," he said. "It looks like we might be in for a fairly good year."