

CASE STUDY

FOOD SERVICES. SOUTHERN BORDER IMPORT PROCESSES.

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With multiple regulatory bodies on both sides of the border, importing from Mexico was proving a real challenge for Global Fresh. Facing bottlenecks throughout the supply chain, Global Fresh reached out to the southern border experts at Livingston for help.

A problem of size

Chances are, the pineapples, limes, mangos, kiwi fruit and taro root you regularly enjoy from your local grocery store came from Global Fresh Inc. Since 2004, Global Fresh – based in Los Angeles, California – has been importing fresh fruits and vegetables from Central and South America, as well as Mexico and distributing them across North America. Soon, the company hopes to expand its export business to include the Asian and European markets. Along with providing high quality produce, Global Fresh is known for their great service and the strong relationships they've been able to build with their clientele.

Despite a highly competitive marketplace, Global Fresh is looking to grow its business and source its product from other countries beyond their current base.

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Southern border challenges

The foodservice category being very highly regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) poses an ongoing challenge for any importer/exporter in this industry. On top of these regulatory challenges, Global Fresh was also dealing with the complexities of importing from Mexico along with providers that lacked proper technology.

“We were facing challenges with the USDA regulations and the FDA and CBP,” said Jorge Alvarado, Supply Chain, R&D Manager at Global Fresh. “So we had to team up with somebody who knows what’s going on with these regulations.”

In addition, Global Fresh had not received access to technology or visibility into their shipment information or invoices from past providers, resulting in reduced efficiency throughout the supply chain.

How Livingston helped

After completing a thorough audit of the Global Fresh supply chain, the team at Livingston International determined that there were a number of opportunities for improving processes and reducing unnecessary costs.

Working closely with Global Fresh, Livingston provided both expertise and technology to simplify and improve the company's U.S. import process on the southern border. With Livingston's help, Global Fresh was able to establish standard operating procedures and consistent processes across all suppliers. In addition, through Livingston's Insight Compliance Center software solution, Global Fresh was able to view and manage all of their import data and documentation online.

Cost-savings opportunities were also uncovered in transportation, as it was discovered that Global Fresh had been overcharged in some areas and/or charged for invalid fees. And to ensure that the entire Global Fresh team had a full understanding of these new processes, they were given access to Livingston's online training.

"Livingston understands not just the CBP, FDA and USDA regulations, but also the logistics," Jorge said. "They have an understanding of the challenges of the southern border and the knowledge of international law and logistics required to operate successfully."

Improved efficiencies, improved bottom line

By providing Global Fresh with expert knowledge surrounding importing into the U.S. from Mexico, as well as access to state-of-the-art technology, Livingston helped the foodservice company improve overall efficiencies and enjoy a cost savings of 15-20%.

"For our company it worked out well," Jorge said. "There was a lot of communication between us and Livingston's southern border team. They came to our facilities, saw our challenges, and gave us solutions."



"We learned a lot," he continued. "Livingston simplified our operations and brought a lot of value to the table. Many brokers seem to hold on to information, but Livingston gives a lot of education to the shippers and suppliers, which I think is very valuable."

Livingston's expertise and attention to detail helped them build a strong, long-lasting relationship with the Global Fresh team. "From the southern border customs brokers that we know, there is no comparison," Jorge said. "Livingston does an exceptional job. From this day on, whatever we have, any commodity, we're going with Livingston."

Contact Livingston

Have questions or need help with your Southern border processes? We're here to help.

Email us at: simplify@livingstonintl.com

or give us a call at **1-800-837-1063**

