



The Al Harrison story

Al Harrison COMPANY

It all began in 1938 in Southern California, with Al and his brother Bob. They started a wholesale produce operation called the Harrison Brothers. They quickly began to tire of the inconsistent quality of the produce they were receiving from Florida. This prompted them to set up one of the first produce house in Nogales, Arizona in 1955 offering watermelons, corn and cherry tomatoes grown in Mexico. The brothers' office was nothing more than a hotel room located in downtown Nogales, close to the Sonora, Mexico border.

Eventually Al Harrison bought out his brother and expanded the business to a leased, one-dock warehouse. Fourteen years later, he built the Al Harrison Produce Co. Distributor Inc. facility, located north of downtown. During the 1970's Al Harrison became the leader in watermelon distribution and had almost 90% of the market. His colleagues began calling him "The Watermelon King", and the nickname stuck and is still used today to when referring to the company.

In 1984 when Al Harrison passed away at the age of 74, his son Tom Harrison took over and continued to build the family business. He brought his son Brent to work in 1982 and taught him the ropes. Brent started as a freight broker and warehouse manager. When Tom retired in 2005 Brent became President of Al Harrison. Brent's sister, Shelley Harrison-Valdivia started with the company 1991 just answering phones and then became a quality-control inspector in the fields and worked her way up to the sales department. Today Shelley shares the "Watermelon King's" throne, as Vice President.