

## Reliable's Goal: Fresh, Organic Tomatoes Year-Round, Wherever You Are

American ingenuity always finds a "better mousetrap"—a way to improve production, profitability, reliability, supply, etc. We can always find ways to do it better, bigger, faster, stronger.



With the number of food recalls in recent months and years, many of them involving fresh produce, growers know that many consumers are growing tired of worrying about the safety of the food they are buying. The recent tomato recall, the cause of which may never fully be understood, not only caused human suffering

but untold losses to farmers across the nation. Organic farming is one way to minimize the risk of contamination, as there are strict rules to be followed in an organic enterprise, and one company is leading the charge in fresh, organic tomato production.

The improvement on this "mousetrap" is that these organic tomatoes can be produced practically anywhere across the United States, any time of the year, making for a steady, safe supply.

Steven Crider, founder and CEO of Reliable Brand Organics in Cedar Creek, Texas, provided the following summary of his efforts: "Our partners have a turnkey ability. We build the greenhouse, oversee the start-up processes and certifications, and stay with the company for the time period agreed upon. A company from California, for example, could come to us and say they want an operation in another part of the country to enable it to supply locally grown organic produce to customers in that area. Some purchasers may not need our assistance once the greenhouse is built, so they would purchase it outright. There are many purchasing and/or partnering options. We see this working particularly well for major retailers who want the assurance of nonstop supplies of locally grown organic produce in key areas of the country."

The company's current greenhouse in Walnut Creek, Texas, allows it to supply locally-grown produce to retailers and restaurants in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and Austin. But this can be duplicated practically anywhere because Reliable Organics' proprietary greenhouse growing technology produces the perfect gardening climate year-round. The company uses a rich, organic growing medium, and because it's in a greenhouse, weeds, pests and diseases such as salmonella are virtually eliminated.

And, best of all, what is produced is not the "lifeless hydroponic stuff, but produce grown in real soil that tastes like summer's best." That statement is true, as I personally sampled fresh tomatoes harvested within the last week and they actually tasted like tomatoes!

"People want food that's safe and tastes like it's supposed to taste," said Crider. "That's what we offer: contamination-free products with in-season flavor all year long."

In the greenhouse setting, plants can be grown closer together than in a field, increasing yield for tomatoes to as much as 10,000 pounds per acre per week versus 2,000 per acre per week with conventional field farming.

"We can partner with a major retailer to ensure a constant supply source, with distributors who want to guarantee volumes to satisfy customer needs, with growers or those on any other level, including people who want to enter organic production for the first time and those who want to increase production under their own brand name," Crider said.

Now the company is performing trials of heirloom tomatoes, cucumbers and bell peppers at its corporate headquarters location in Cedar Creek. For more information, visit [www.reliablebrandorganics.com](http://www.reliablebrandorganics.com).

Fresh, organic tomatoes, grown locally and available all year long. What a great idea!



by Gordon Lowry  
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