



Grupo  
G's España

## Case Study: G's Espana S.L. Spain



G's Espana S.L. is part of the wider G's group, which established its first presence in Spain during the 1980s, celebrating 30 years of operation in 2015. It now operates as 120 farms covering almost 6000 ha supplying a broad range of vegetables and fruit. The farms in G's Espana supply a wide range of multiple retailers as well as operating several

brands such as 'Pascual' and 'G's Fresh'. With the advantages of sunlight and temperature in Spain their season runs 52 weeks per year. Growing takes place at these locations: Campo de Cartagena, Aguilas-Almería, Jumilla and Baza, which are at different heights and temperature zones to provide produce for other parts of Europe consistently across the whole year.

### Environmental commitment

G's Espana have been LEAF Marque certified since 2007, partly in response to two customers in the UK, but as Rosalia Alcobendas, Technical Manager for Environmental Projects, says:

***“Only two of our many customers requires us to have LEAF Marque [certification] but for most of our customers in Europe and the UK it is a very desirable sign of our commitment to the environment.”***

Although initially set up to supply the UK, G's Espana now provides fruit and vegetables to customers throughout Europe.

## Integrated Pest Management



As an early part of their commitment to reducing pesticide use on the farm and developing Integrated Pest Management on their farms they have been working on a companion planting project with Syngenta. The project started in 2005 with 5

farms and this year will cover near 6000 m<sup>2</sup> across 12 farms. The results of this project have shown a substantial increase in the number of beneficial insects and pollinator species.

## Energy Efficiency

G's Espana have been revising their use of fossil fuels. This year, investments have been made in solar powered irrigation equipment that will save at least 0.01% of the total fuel consumption of the agronomic machinery. Using GPS technology to guide pesticide application equipment to avoid overlaps, G's have also been able to ensure efficient dosage and to save fuel. Most of the tractors are also equipped with GPS technology to improve the efficiency of tillage operations, again saving fuel and maximising field operation effectiveness. In addition, all recent machinery purchases have included AdBlue and SCR technology to reduce Nitrogen oxide emissions, a particularly potent greenhouse gas. G's HR department have been working with all drivers to ensure that they are up-skilled to take full advantage of all the advantages the new technologies and techniques offer.

In the Aguilas area, a Heliosec system has been installed underneath the machinery washing area which collects any agrochemical effluent as they are washed off the machinery. The water is allowed to evaporate by the action of the wind and the heat, leaving solid wastes behind which are then removed to be stored and managed by an authorized company.

## Optimisation of water management

As G's Espana production area is mainly located in the South West of Spain where water scarcity is an important issue, therefore another important goal for the company is saving water. Under each greenhouse there are drainage collection systems and there are water collection systems in irrigation systems – these actions make sure that water is captured and can be used again. To optimise water management, and target its use, Enviroskan probes are used. In these ways G's are using water wisely and focusing on optimizing its use in the fields and on the protected crops.

## Preserving and increasing biodiversity

G's are also working to preserve and increase biodiversity in their farms, creating two ponds in areas of Campo de Cartagena and Jumilla that are unsuitable for production. In these areas they have also placed shelters for birds of prey and created new habitats for reptiles.

For G's Espana the soil is a big focus and managing the soil between rotations can have a big influence on its short and long-term health. Controlled traffic farming is being employed to restrict compaction to known 'compaction zones'. Diligent monitoring of compaction using soil pits and penetrometers on a field by field allow G's to maximise the benefits of this and help to carry out sub-soiling at the right time and at the right depth. Alongside this form of management, cover crops are used to improve soil fertility, increasing the presence of trace elements, lessen soil erosion and improve soil structure. This year one of G's objectives was to increase the cover crops surface by at least 3%.

## Preserving and increasing biodiversity

One of the most exciting aspects of the LEAF Marque for G's Espana has been inviting people onto the farm, with over 50 young people visiting the school this season. Rosalia Alcobendas said:

***“Some of these young people were thinking about a career in agriculture, but they didn't have much information about it before their visit. This means that by showing them some of our farms they have a lot more information and they seem enthusiastic about the change to work in the industry.”***