

## AGRO Merchants Expands Fresh Produce Ripening Capacity in Vineland

AGRO Merchants Group, a global leader in cold storage and logistics solutions, announced the addition of two new produce ripening chambers at its Vineland facility. This brings the total number of ripening chambers up to five, with a capacity of 150 pallets for ripening.



Elizabeth Lund, Managing Director of AGRO Merchants Vineland explains the fruit ripening process: “After receiving a shipment of unripe produce, such as bananas and avocados, we can achieve a precise stage of ripeness within 1-4 days.

We use ethylene gas, humidity and air circulation control to manage the ripening process. We have perfected the process over the years and there has been a great demand for this service amongst our customers.”

Ethylene gas is naturally produced by most fruits and it’s the only worldwide accepted method for fruit ripening. It maintains the aroma and taste of the fruit, as it merely stimulates the natural ripening process.

One of the biggest challenges in the industry used to be importing and getting perishables to shelves just in time when they’re ready for consumption. Nowadays most fruits are picked unripe to prevent spoilage and bruising during transport. This helps the industry tackle food waste and thanks to fruit ripening capabilities, consumers can enjoy produce at its best.

AGRO Merchants Vineland is the Northeast’s largest fruit and produce 3rd party logistics provider, proudly serving hundreds of customers and a wide variety of temperature-controlled products. In addition to storage, handling and distribution services, the site has the capability to repack products from basic shrink-wrapping applications to unique, customized packaging services for the retail and foodservice industries.

Last year, AGRO Merchants Vineland made [a significant investment in an eight-lane optical grader](#), which provides the company with the ability to grade citrus, avocados, and other commodities. The technology utilizes an array of cameras to photograph individual pieces of fruit, analyze defects, and grade the fruit accordingly – providing our customers with the best possible product grading and maximizing product yield.