



FRUIT 2006 LOGISTICA

Fruit Logistica 2006
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Product helps retailers reduce shrink and boost profits.

Prodew Inc. in Marietta, GA, appeared to have the misting market cornered in Berlin, where it demonstrated its misting and humidification system for attendees of Fruit Logistica. Among the benefits it touted for its system are a marked reduction in shrink, reduced labor costs and increased sales due to better appeal of the fruits and vegetables.

Itamar Kleinberger, founder of the company, said that misters are almost unheard of in Europe, so there was a great deal of curiosity and interest in the Prodew system at the show. "I would say that 80 percent of supermarkets in the United States have [misters],

compared to less than 20 percent in Europe," he said regarding his decision to exhibit at Fruit Logistica for the first time.

Among his customer list, Mr. Kleinberger counts many of the major U.S. supermarkets such as Kroger Inc., Ahold's Stop & Shop division, Publix, Harris Teeter, Ingles, K-mart and Target, as well as military commissaries.

"It has been a very good experience for us so far," added Mr. Kleinberger. "We have received a very enthusiastic response for our product."

The product is very reasonably priced and maintenance is minimal, added Shakeel Merchant, who works in sales for the

company. "Here in Europe, eight meters of the system costs about 1,000 Euro," he said. Installation is performed by the retailer or a third party, and Mr. Merchant said that in the United States it typically runs \$300 to \$400.

Mr. Merchant said that factoring in the reduction in shrink and the anticipated sales increases, retailers should see a return on their investment after only about three months.

Regarding the maintenance of the product, Mr. Merchant said that Prodew's goal was to make the system as simple and maintenance-free as possible. "There are no expensive parts to replace," he said. "The filters are reusable. They can simply be taken out, rinsed and put back."

Mr. Kleinberger said that he wanted to secure repeat business, and one way was to make the system simple and reasonably priced.

Prodew has been in business for about five years, said Mr. Kleinberger, who manufactured irrigations systems for the previous two decades. He currently has five patents on the Prodew system.



Itamar Kleinberger and Shakeel Merchant of Prodew Inc.