

# THE PACKER

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## Del Monte to expand use of air purifier

The shipper has started installing the AiroCide system in avocado ripening centers and plans to do so in fresh-cut facilities.

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Kennesaw, Ga.-based KES Science and Technology Inc. has increased its sales and expanded its reach in the produce industry by forming a relationship with Del Monte Fresh Produce NA Inc., Coral Gables, Fla.

KES announced earlier this year that Del Monte planned to use its AiroCide PPT — which kills mold, fungi and bacteria and removes ethylene — in its U.S. avocado distribution centers. KES director of marketing Kris Casariego said April 2 that the fruit giant now plans to extend its use of AiroCide to its fresh-cut operations.

KES plans to tout that fact April 25-28 during United FreshTech in Palm Springs, Calif.

"We're really trying to turn up the heat on fresh-cut and processing," Casariego said. "I think that's where we'll see some results from the Del Monte developments."

Tests in Del Monte banana ripening rooms in January showed that AiroCide reduced ethylene levels by 43% within 24 hours, 94% within 48 hours and 99.9% in 72 hours. Del Monte has since

installed AiroCide in avocado facilities in Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia and Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., Casariego said.

Dennis Christou, vice president of marketing for Del Monte Fresh, declined to discuss how many facilities the company plans to use the product in or what commodities are involved. Casariego, however, said KES expects its product to be implemented in more than 20 Del Monte facilities in the U.S.

"Del Monte made the decision to implement the AiroCide air purification system in some of its distribution centers after trials showed its effectiveness and reliability in removing ethylene gas," Christou said. "Additional benefits include the structure's portability, easy installation, low energy consumption and minimal maintenance requirements."

KES unveiled AiroCide at the Produce Marketing Association's convention in 2003. The company hopes its association with Del Monte will boost sales.

"People who were kind of listening to us before are really listening now. There's definitely been a pickup in interest," Casariego said.

Del Monte alone will give the product a lift. Casariego said KES hopes Del Monte will extend use of AiroCide to its ships and port facilities.

"With a company like Del Monte, the potential is huge," she said.

KES recently launched a Web site for the product at [www.KesScience.com](http://www.KesScience.com).



Del Monte Fresh Produce NA Inc., Coral Gables, Fla., tested AiroCide PPT air purifying technology from Kennesaw, Ga.-based KES Science and Technology Inc. in its Atlanta repacking facility and was pleased with the results.