

GO REAL-TIME TRACKER

Avocado supplier protects “green gold”

It's important to us to preserve the freshness of each shipment.

Background

Mexico is the world's largest producer of avocados; the state of Michoacán supplies 45% of the international avocado market. As a key link in this global avocado supply chain, La Bonanza Avocados, located in Uruapan, Michoacán, is committed to producing the best of the Hass avocado variety—which comprises a significant portion of the country's total exports. Locally, this cash crop is referred to as “green gold,” and, for this reason, it's also a target of the country's organized crime cartels.

Challenge

Avocado theft is an ongoing concern for producers, and La Bonanza has had its share of challenges. As avocado exports to the U.S. have quadrupled over the last decade, La Bonanza's truck shipments to its northern neighbor became a target for thieves. Not only must their avocado shipments be protected from theft or tampering, this perishable cargo must also be kept at the proper temperature to preserve quality and optimize ripeness.

According to Obed Sanchez, foreign trade manager for La Bonanza, theft concerns were becoming a significant threat to La Bonanza's operations. “From the time the shipping trucks left Uruapan to when they arrived at the U.S. border, we were having difficulty preventing the theft of our trucks.” Over the span of a few short years, the company had experienced a series of truck thefts—sometimes multiple trucks per day.

Solution

A fresh approach to loss prevention

Since 2016, La Bonanza has used Copeland's GO Real-Time Trackers and Oversight software portal to monitor in-transit shipments of its avocados to the U.S. As a standard practice, one pallet loaded onto every shipping truck was equipped with a GO Real-Time Tracker. This helped La Bonanza's operations managers track the location of its shipments and validate that its perishable cargo was being held at the proper temperatures.

"It's very important for us to maintain proper temperature control and keep our avocados in the best condition during shipments," said Sanchez. But with an increase in truck thefts, these real-time monitoring capabilities began to take on an even more vital purpose.

"Our biggest challenge with stolen trucks is losing visibility to their location," said Sanchez. "If we can track their location, we know that we still have a chance of alerting the police and recovering the fruit." And since thieves typically transfer loads—of up to 40,000 pounds of avocados—to other trucks or distribution points in haste, time is of the essence.

Result

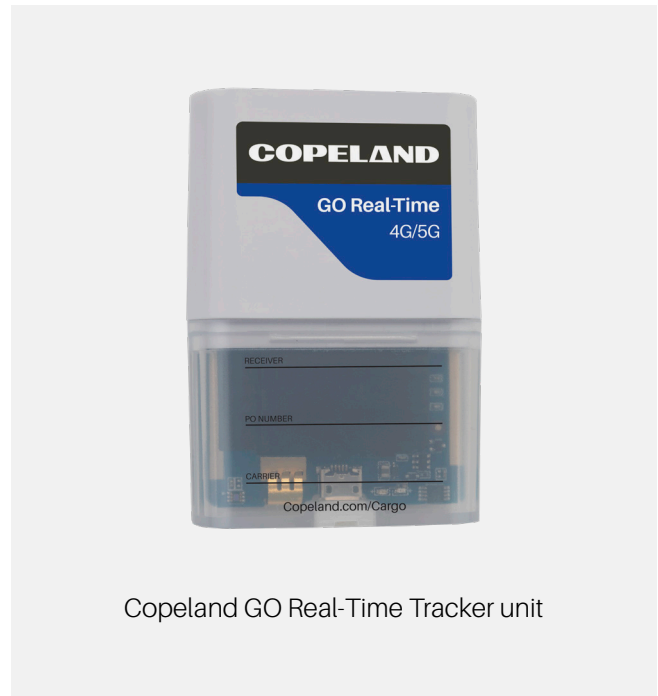
Real-Time visibility to stolen shipments

With the potential for thieves to disrupt shipping routes and steal entire trucks of perishable cargo, the La Bonanza management team needed to come up with a reliable strategy for theft prevention. To do so, Sanchez said that they would rely on the Oversight portal to locate stolen trucks in real time.

Sanchez said that during a spate of repeated incidents, their ability to quickly locate stolen loads via the Oversight portal led to the rapid identification of truck locations and recovery of their valuable produce. And while there's no way to prevent these crimes from occurring in the future, La Bonanza has a much better opportunity to recover their losses and bring criminals to justice.

La Bonanza also delivers avocados throughout the U.S. from its distribution warehouse in Mission, Texas, where shipments can take up to 1–5 days to reach their destination. Sanchez said that the team uses the GO Real-Time Trackers and Oversight portal to monitor shipment locations and delivery schedules to ensure that avocado temperatures stay within the preferred range of 38 to 42 degrees Fahrenheit.

"It's important to us to preserve the freshness of each shipment," said Sanchez. "Now that we have the real-time visibility and can access reports to verify temperatures during each shipment, we're better equipped to optimize food quality and respond to customer disputes."



Copeland GO Real-Time Tracker unit