

## PRESIDENTE/TROPICAL SUPERMARKETS

# Two Independent Groups Play Leading Role in Hy-Top® Florida Debut



**PRESIDENTE/TROPICAL SUPERMARKETS** are among the first food stores in Florida to debut the Hy-Top® family of store brand products. The items are distributed by Southeast Wholesale Foods which currently stocks approximately 625 SKU's consisting of Grocery, Dairy and Frozen items. Hy-Top has over 2,700 items available, based on customer demands.

## Prominent S. Florida Grocers Use Neighborhood Brands to Stand Out from Competition

The owners of the Presidente and Tropical Supermarket store groups in South Florida have tapped a popular line of store brands to further advance an identity for the leading independent grocery stores as they seek to stand out from competition.

Owner/operators Omar Rodriguez, President and Manuel Marin, Vice President of the Miami-based food chain have chosen the Hy-Top® family of brands to help them create a unique identity to fuel their stores' success in today's competitive marketplace.

The well-known South Florida operators turned to Hy-Top®, first established in 1926, and its related brands: Hy-Top Classic®, Better Valu™, Life-mark, and Effortless Entrees to give their shoppers the value they demand, quality that matches or exceeds national brands, and the competitive pricing all so important in today's business climate.

Rodriguez and Marin opened their first store in Miami in 1990 at the corner of Biscayne Blvd. and 5th Street. A second store followed soon after in 1992 and today the company operates 11 stores and employs approximately 600 associates. Their stores extend from Miami-Dade County north to the city of Lake Worth in Palm Beach County. A new store in the Alapattah section of northwest Miami-Dade is scheduled to open this year.

Both men take a hands-on approach in the operation of their stores and are



**PRESIDENTE SUPERMARKET #2** located at 1550 West 84th St., in Hialeah, FL is taking a lead role in the introduction of the Hy-Top family food products in the South Florida market.

constantly in the stores monitoring activities. When questioned as to the pair's success, Marin told TODAY'S GROCER, "Our ownership policies and strong pricing controls, coupled with outstanding quality of the products we sell and customer service have helped us build a strong identity in this market." This apparently really has proven to be the formula for their success as Presidente/Tropical has grown to become the second largest independent store group in the Miami market over the past 14 years.

The two store groups serve a broad-based clientele of both Hispanic and non-Hispanic shoppers requiring the ability to meet the needs for diversity. When it became apparent that for their continued growth to be assured, it would be necessary to find a new wholesale supplier, Rodriguez and Marin turned to Southeast Wholesale Foods, Miami, Florida, which supplies premium Hy-Top store brands along with a wide se-

lection of national brands of dry groceries, dairy, frozen foods, bakery, packaged meats, and non-food items.

Southeast Wholesale Foods began supplying the stores in March of this year. "We were looking for a good wholesaler to handle our account," Marin said. "We wanted a store brand that would be attractive to our customers."

A team from Southeast Wholesale Foods led by Jairo Ferio immediately went to work re-merchandising stores — re-setting and re-tagging store shelves to accommodate the national brands along with the 350 SKU's of Hy-Top items.

It took about one month to totally re-merchandise the stores now supplied by Southeast. Besides a full line of dry groceries, Hy-Top and its related labels can provide dairy items, such as cheese (bagged, chunk and American singles), juices, butter & margarine. Frozen foods, such as ice cream, pizzas and

vegetables and for the price conscious consumer, the better Valu trademark, your savings brand.

Hy-Top, whose motto is, "Your Neighborhood Brand®," is a strong brand available exclusively in this area via Southeast Wholesale Foods. Just as Rodriguez and Marin did at their Presidente and Tropical stores, other independent retailers have the option of acquiring Hy-Top, and its related lines for their operations, as well.

"We've gotten an outstanding support from Southeast to make all this possible," Marin says. "They're giving us the help we need to bring customers into our stores."

Independent retailers looking to learn more about the Hy-Top option for their store(s) should contact Kevin Darcy, Vice President of Sales, or Tom Wieland, Merchandising Manager at Southeast Wholesale Foods, Tel: 305-883-1198, 1-800-780-1718, Fax: 305-883-1199, or online at swfsales@seff.com.



**PRESIDENTE/TROPICAL VICE PRESIDENT MANUEL MARIN** [center] is pictured in front of a large display of Hy-Top® brand cornflakes, accepting congratulations from John Robinson, CEO, Southeast Frozen Foods [right] and Scott Nicholson, President, Southeast Wholesale Foods [left].



All Presidente and Tropical supermarkets were re-merchandised in anticipation of part of the changeover to the Hy-Top label. Here, Owner/Operator Manuel Marin [center] and Presidente Supermarket #2 Store Manager Rafael Diaz [left] are pictured with Southeast Wholesale Foods Marketing Manager Jairo Ferio [right]. The three are standing in front of a massive end display of Hy-Top 8-oz. tomato sauce. Diaz, has been with the company eight years, the last five heading the management of store #2.



**OWNER/OPERATOR MANUEL MARIN** [center] is all smiles over the initial consumer response to the Hy-Top label at Presidente and Tropical Supermarkets. Here, Marin [center] is pictured in front of a Hy-Top apple juice display, with Rich Bauer, COO, Southeast Frozen Foods [left] and John Robinson, CEO, Southeast Frozen Foods [right].



**PRESIDENTE and Tropical supermarkets** are going all out to support the Hy-Top launch in the South Florida market. Owner/Operator Manuel Marin [left] and Southeast Wholesale Foods Marketing Manager Jairo Ferio are pleased as they check the case movement on 24-oz. Hy-Top ketchup, which was recently on feature promotion at Presidente #2 in Hialeah.



Both Southeast Wholesale Foods Vice President of Sales Kevin Darcy [left] and Presidente/Tropical Supermarket's Vice President Manuel Marin [right] point out the many benefits the Hy-Top line hold for independent retailers.