DynaGlas Plus LDT

Customer Testimonial

Customer: Jopson Ranch
Contact: Tom Jopson
Covering used: DynaGlas Plus LDT (Light Diffusing Texture)
Previous covering used: Polyethylene Film, Double-Layer
Crop: Greenhouse Tomatoes

"In 1996, we successfully transitioned a good portion of our rice farming business to greenhouse grown tomatoes. Our tomato growing business started with 2 gutter-connected greenhouses that were covered with double-poly film. This helped reduce the capital outlay required during our start-up phase. The following year we added 4 more guter-connected houses. After 8 years, we experienced enough success and profitability to justify investments in capital improvements to our greenhouses.

The poly we were using was somewhat unpredictable in high winds of up to 70 mph (113 kmph) or more. It was both difficult to replace and costly to dispose of. Furthermore, we felt that the light quality and intensity that our crops were getting during the winter months was potentially stunting production and yields. Light transmission is extremely important for tomato plant growth, tomato fruit size and quality. Our preference was to increase transmission of natural sun light, as opposed to increasing our use of supplemental electrical lighting.

After much investigation, we decided to replace the poly with DynaGlas Plus® LDT (Light Diffusing Texture) corrugated polycarbonate. DynaGlas Plus LDT offered approximately 10% more light transmission than our double-poly film, plus it has guaranteed built-in condensate control. If condensate droplets form on the underside of a panel, they act like parabolic mirrors and reflect light away from the greenhouse. DynaGlas Plus forces the condensate to flow, ensuring that the light will actually be transmitted to the crop when it is needed most, December through February (the shorter, colder days in the winter months).

Converting from poly film to DynaGlas required additional structural supports. We used Palram's patented DrainAway Greenhouse Re-Covering System to engineer a conversion plan that not only provided the additional supports, but it also provided complete structural condensate control. By collecting and removing condensate from the structure, there is little or no dripping onto the crops below. This helps prevent moisturerelated disease.

To minimize heat loss during the night time hours, and to provide shading during the warmer periods, I also installed a fully automated energy/shade curtain. The combination of DynaGlas and an energy/shade curtain system dramatically improved our ability to control the climate and maintain or reduce our current energy requirements. More importantly, changing the poly to DynaGlas helped improve the environment inside the greenhouse by dramatically increasing overall light transmission.

As part of this process, we also made othe improvements to our structures. There are specific indicators that we can point to that demonstrate to us that the addition of DynaGlas and Curtain System was a sound investment. I would encourage anyone growing tomatoes in a greenhouse to give serious consideration to DynaGlas Plus LDT. [Note: SolarSoft 85 and SolarSoft 90 have since been introduced by Palram and represent a significant improvement in light diffusion over DynaGlas Plus LDT].

Many thanks to Palram Americas for their support and dedication to making great products for greenhouse growers."

– see reverse side for additional info –

PALRAM AMERICAS
Horticultural Products Division
Formerly SPS International

4741 Pell Drive, Unit #2 • Sacramento, CA 95838
(800) 994-5626 • Fax: (916) 564-5057

Follow-up questions:

1. Are you still pollinating with bees?
"Yes, no problems except traditional low light months when bee activity is typically lower (i.e., Feb)."

2. In your table showing Yield comparisons before and after DynaGlas, you show "Total in Pounds" figures and "Market Size Tomatoes In Pounds" figure. Can you help me understand the difference between the two? Is one a subset of the other? If so, how do the products differ?

"Market size tomatoes are top quality grade and sold at a premium to grocery store chains. These are the most profi table tomatoes we grow. Other, lesser quality tomatoes end up at local farmer's markets and smaller independent grocery stores. This is the most signifi cant information in this report---*not only did we increase our production yields, most of the increase was in our most profi table product*. Obviously, this speeds our payback of the investment and increases our return on investment."

Annual Production Yield & Quality Comparison

All Grades *(total production)*				
Month	**2001 & 2002 Season**	**2002 & 2003 Season**	**Increase**	
December	11,145 lbs.	14,340 lbs.	3,195 lbs.	29%
January	10,115 lbs.	12,244 lbs.	2,129 lbs.	21%
February	9,015 lbs.	10,940 lbs.	1,925 lbs.	21%
March	10,375 lbs.	13,762 lbs.	3,387 lbs.	33%

Market Grade				
December	6,791 lbs.	10,942 lbs.	4,151 lbs.	61%
January	5,369 lbs.	8,991 lbs.	3,622 lbs.	67%
February	6,526 lbs.	7,498 lbs.	972 lbs.	15%
March	7,716 lbs.	11,282 lbs.	3,566 lbs.	46%