



## **Background**

Green Goes LLC, was established in 2018 after I received the Annual Produce Business 40 Under 40 Award. This award recognizes talent and influence in the fresh produce industry, highlighting individuals who demonstrate leadership and trajectory in shaping the fruits and vegetables sector.

After receiving the award, I had the opportunity to connect with different people in the industry. At the time, I was working for a steamship company—a liner company based in Jacksonville, Florida—managing container logistics. I fell in love with the process of imports, exports, and working with shippers and cargo owners.

This inspired me to create Green Goes LLC, an importer and wholesaler of fresh produce in the U.S. We partner with growers to offer fresh fruits and vegetables year-round, focusing on B2B relationships with food service providers, caterers, and wholesalers.

I also started working with the Florida SBDC at FIU under the Business Growth and Acceleration Program (BizGap) as I began exploring opportunities to enter the government sector as a subcontractor or contractor to sell produce. The BizGap project in FL-27 is funded by a grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Focused on providing hyperlocal consulting, training and outreach to small businesses in targeted communities and commercial corridors.

**Solution:**

While the business hasn't yet grown significantly in revenue, it has grown in terms of information, resources, and potential opportunities. Before working with the consultants under BizGap, I knew I wanted to sell to the government but didn't know how to approach it.

When I began working with the Florida SBDC at FIU, I was first connected with government contracting consultant who then referred me to an access to capital consultant that guided me through the processes, shared resources, and referred me to the Miami Bayside Foundation. As of November, I became a beneficiary of theirs, which opened even more doors for me.

Florida SBDC at FIU helped me identify the pathways to reach my goals and equipped me with the tools to start walking down that path. I still have a long way to go, but thanks to FSBDC, at FIU, I know I'm heading in the right direction.

**From the Owner:**

My biggest advice is to seek out resources, don't be afraid to put yourself out there. Ask questions and find out what opportunities might exist for your business. Many new entrepreneurs don't realize how many no-cost resources are available to help them. I personally didn't explore these types of services for the first six years of running my business. I assumed they would cost money or that there was some hidden catch.

Once I started working with the Florida SBDC at FIU under the BizGap project, I realized that professionals are out there, ready to help—without any strings attached. This realization was mind-blowing! Now, I recommend organizations like the Miami Bayside Foundation and Florida SBDC at FIU to other minority business owners, especially Hispanic and Latino entrepreneurs. You don't have to do it all alone. There are experts who specialize in helping businesses like ours succeed.

Business Owner Name: Susan Rodriguez

Company Name: Grenn Goes LLC

Location: Miami, FL