

PINELOCH MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

The story of Southern Fruit Distributors and Pineloch Management Corporation began on April 28, 1902, when twelve-year-old Philip Caruso arrived in the United States from Sicily. Starting as a produce vendor in New York, by 1924 Philip had the largest single produce wholesale company of fruits and vegetables in the country.

In 1925, he moved to Florida and began purchasing fruit and shipping it to his companies' New York branches. In 1926, Philip organized and incorporated Southern Fruit Distributors, Inc., purchased the patent and copyright of the Bluebird label, and opened his first fresh fruit packing house in Lisbon, Lake County, Florida, to buy and pack citrus for New York distributors. Other packing houses in Alturas and Winter Garden were added, as well as a small canning plant. By 1940 space was limited in Winter Garden and the processing plant was moved to its present location in South Orlando. After World War II, Philip's sons and son-in-law joined business. By 1946, Austin was president (age thirty-two, chief administrative officer, supervising production, sales and administration), Joseph was vice president (age thirty-one, grove operations including cultivation and harvesting, supervising truck and garage operations), John Walsh was vice president (age thirty-three, supervising plant maintenance, repairs, new construction and canning plant production) and Philip Peter was secretary and treasurer (age twenty-seven, supervising warehouse shipping operations and sales and warehouse stocks in the Southeastern U.S.).

Philip died 1963 at the age of seventy-two. In 1987, he was inducted into the Mid-Florida Business Hall of Fame.

By 1986, Southern Fruit reported \$95 million in sales and was ranked fifth on the "Golden 50 of Central Florida", a listing of the top firms in the area. The citrus industry began changing with global competition, freezes, environmental issues, and urbanization. The plant site was now in



downtown Orlando. A decision to sell was made by the Caruso family, and on its sixtieth anniversary in 1987, Southern Fruit sold its rights to the Bluebird label and its marketing operations to Citrus World of Lake Wales, processors of Florida's Natural brand juice.

With the remaining assets, the third generation helped change the landscape in South Orlando. Pineloch Management Corporation was incorporated in 1987 and three Caruso family members provide the current management team: President Jim Caruso, Vice President Phylis Caruso, and Facilities Director Paul Caruso. Other family members help guide the business through the board of directors.

Today Pineloch is a diversified leader involved in real estate leasing, management, warehousing and agriculture, including top-tier diversified properties throughout Central Florida such as The Market at Southside (retail), Southgate Commerce Center and Pineloch Business Park (commercial/office), and Pineloch Industrial Park (industrial) in Winter Garden.

For more information about Pineloch Management Corporation and Southern Warehousing, please visit www.pineloch.com and www.southernwarehouse.com.

