



# Florida Mineral Salt

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& Agricultural Products, LLC.



## FLORIDA MINERAL, SALT & AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS: *A Family Business Helping Agriculture Feed the Hungry*

**By Jim Frankowiak**

The Clark brothers, Mike, Steve and Greg, own and operate Florida Mineral, Salt & Agricultural Products, LLC (FMS), a company formed in 1991 that provides vitamins, minerals and protein for livestock in the Southeast and beyond via their own brand and private label initiatives for other companies. “Ours is a family business that can trace its beginnings to the summers my brothers and I spent on the farms of our grandparents, both on our mom (Lena) and dad’s (Carl) side of the family. After our father retired from the Air Force while at Mac Dill Air Force Base, his last post, he went to work for Purina Mills in Ybor City, and later managed the feed mill operations of Tampa Independent Dairy Farmers Association (aka TIDFA, and presently known as Southeast Milk Inc., aka SMI) for over 45 years,” said Mike Clark. “We know first-



hand and appreciate the hard work of dairy farmers, cattle ranchers and farmers and we are committed to helping them produce the food that is vital to us all.”

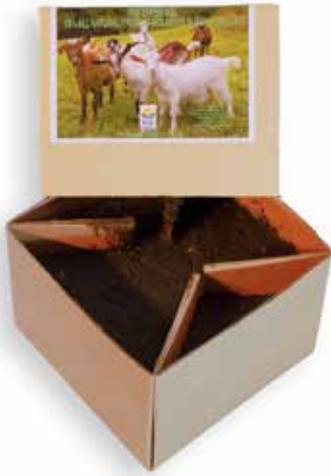
Mike and Greg were brokers and distributors for North American Salt (NAS), which owned Huco Minerals (where Steve worked for over 15 years) in the late 1980s. NAS decided to get out of the minerals business and emphasize the water softener salt and grocery salt side of their endeavor. “The mineral side of the business produced too much dust that covered the bagged grocery salt and they decided to get out of that business,” said Mike. The Clark’s bought the business from NAS and that marked the birth of Florida Mineral, Salt & Agricultural Products. FMS is located on the east side of Tampa on a three-acre site that had been the home of a Cargill Nutrena plant built in the late 1950s. In addition to nearby highway access to I-4 and I-275, the site has railroad link, though it is currently inactive. Mike serves as president and operations manager of FMS, Steve is general manager and secretary/treasurer, while Greg is sales manager and vice president. “As a family business, we all wear many hats and share multiple responsibilities,” said Mike.

“When we were considering the purchase, our father was particularly helpful guiding us to the non-complete feed side of the business which he thought offered a better opportunity

for us, and he was right,” said Mike. Other attractive aspects of the transaction were an existing customer base, plus the Clark Brother’s product knowledge and customer relationships. FMS manufactures high quality vitamin, mineral and protein supplementation products for beef, dairy, equine and other livestock species. The company is Florida’s only manufacturer of pressed protein blocks and poured molasses blocks for livestock. FMS also offers livestock supplements in bulk, bagged and liquid form.

Though FMS began its operations with the benefit of an existing customer base, the brother’s hard work and commitment to their customers has helped to expand its distribution well beyond Central Florida to the balance of the state and others in the Southeast and Puerto Rico. “In addition, we manufacture private label products for mills and feed companies in Florida and throughout the Southeast. We recently entered into a new private label agreement that will take our products into states well beyond those we currently serve,” said Mike. FMS products are now available at mills, feed and hardware stores.

With regard to continuing the legacy of FMS, Mike and his brothers have offered their children the opportunity to learn to work hard, “but the decision to join the business long term is up to our kids,” said Mike. “Presently my daughter Stefani



assists us by managing our website, Facebook, Twitter accounts, and is instrumental in creating our advertising for this publication, as well as others. We also are fortunate to have friends of the family who share our commitment and work with us to carry on the business,” said Mike.

The Clark brothers are active in industry associations. Mike is currently a vice president with the Florida Feed Association and Greg and Steve are both engaged with the Florida Cattlemen’s Association, the Hillsborough Cattlemen’s Association and the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association. “We also support the Florida State Fair, Florida Strawberry Festival, 4-H, FFA and several churches and their mission outreach efforts, both locally and internationally.”

“We have also become involved with and support a program called, Drive to Feed Kids ([www.drivetofeed.com](http://www.drivetofeed.com)), who’s motto is ‘Changing lives one meal at a time’ developed by Nutra Blend (one of our major suppliers) to help feed hungry people throughout the U.S. and in our local communities,” said Mike. “One aspect of the program involves the provision of backpacks with food items to feed needy children when they are not in school such as during the weekend. It’s really neat to be involved with industry people all working together to help those less fortunate.

“There’s a lot of talk about various actions that must be taken to provide food for the world population that is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050. We have joined the ‘Enough’ movement at [www.sensibletable.com](http://www.sensibletable.com) to learn more about what can be done to have a food secure world. We would like to challenge others to go to the website to join the movement, too. Realistically, it is many companies like ours and the products we manufacture that are important to agriculture as it strives to meet the growing need for food,” said Mike. “That’s a responsibility we take seriously and work hard to meet.”

The Clark family would like to offer a special thank you to several valuable staff members, Dorothy Love and Norman Popp for 22 years of service, Frank Cisco for 12 years of service, Brent Butler for 5 years of service, Zach Rodgers for 2 years of service, as well as their sons, Matt (currently working), Stevie, Taylor, Colby, Austin, and Caleb. “We would not be successful without our family, loyal employees and customers.”

For more information about Florida Mineral, Salt & Agricultural Products, visit: <http://www.floridamineralonline.net>.

