

Fresh Digest

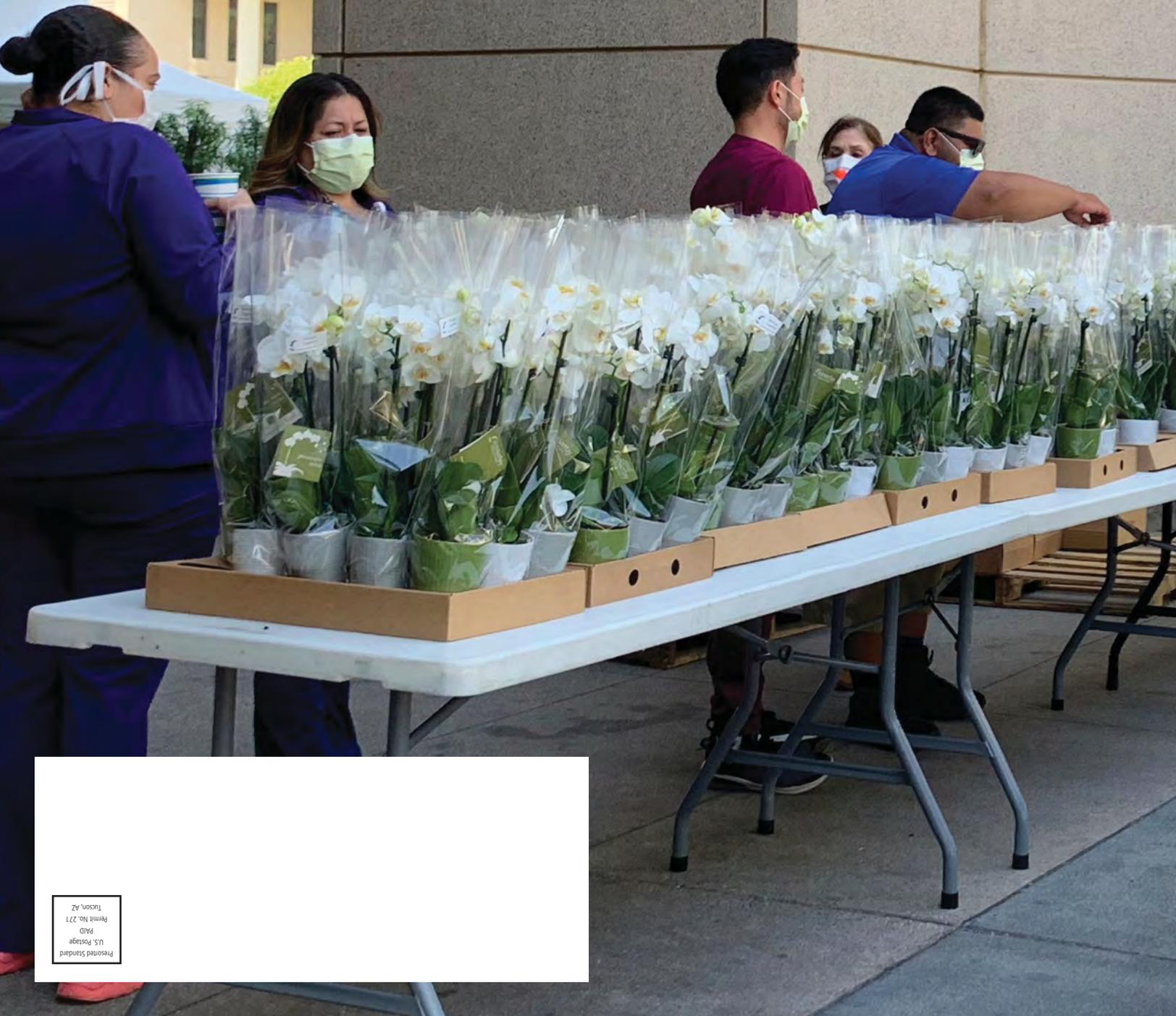
A Publication of the Fresh Produce & Floral Council

June / July 2020

KEEPING
A
POSITIVE VOICE

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MEET THE
2020 FPFC
APPRENTICES



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EDITOR'S VIEW

By Tim Linden



The New Not Normal

These are not happy times. As I sit here in the richest nation in the world on Memorial Day Weekend, we are not in good shape. At this writing, 40 million Americans have lost their jobs and about 100,000 have died because of COVID-19. I know people that have unfortunately contributed to both of those numbers. And both numbers continue to grow.

Sure, there are segments of the economy that are doing well, but far more are not. The Zoom app is doing great but more than 600,000 restaurants in the United States are shut down or operating at half speed or less. It has been estimated that about 150,000 of those will never reopen. That is 150,000 buyers of fresh produce that will be gone. Foodservice suppliers in our industry have laid off many workers and are struggling to survive. Some are innovatively pivoting to new streams of income, but only in an attempt to weather the storm. Many can't survive too much longer.

There are signs that the country is starting to reopen. But the virus has not been tamed. Experts...you know, the real ones...tell us that COVID-19 is not going away. It could be with us for years, or at least until a vaccine is developed and 5-7 billion doses are produced.

While some are saying this could happen within a year, most are noting that we should be prepared for a lot longer. But researchers all over the world are doing their best to speed up the process, and they should be applauded. As a world, we have our fingers crossed.

During the middle of this challenge – or in the 2nd inning of a nine-inning game as some have suggested – is not the time to make predictions as to what the new not normal will be. But many, many things will be different.

In American history, it has been challenging times that have brought out the best in people and government and have led to fundamental changes in society. The last pandemic – the Spanish flu of 1918 – led to improved sanitation, better health care, better working and living conditions, and lots of research on vaccine development. With 40 million people unemployed, and thus subject to losing their health insurance, there is certainly momentum to changing the way we provide health care in this country. One would hope that will be a positive change.

Working from home will certainly get a boost. Along with that comes less traffic on the roads, cleaner skies, less demand for housing and office space in our inner cit-

ies. Rural America could very well get a much-needed boost as many of those working from home really will be able to live further from the office.

The agricultural industry is also going to change, but it is very difficult to guess how. The meat processing and packing industry is clearly in need of more scrutiny. Diets heavy in plant-based food rather than being animal centric seem to be healthier for both humans and the planet. There probably won't be a sea-change in this direction, but even a 10% reduction in meat consumption would be huge for our industry.

I suspect many produce companies will re-examine their business models moving forward. Diversification of products and customers will get a fresh look. With the expectation that this coronavirus, or the next one, will revisit us in the not-so-distant future, foodservice suppliers will want to have more diversity on their customer list.

“The Times They Are a-Changin.” When Bob Dylan wrote that song in 1964, he was clearly ahead of his time as he foresaw the monumental changes that would take place over the next generation. Listen to that song today and the words seem just as prophetic almost 60 years later. Change is coming. 🌱



Ryan Conlon
real Progressive employee

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EXECUTIVE NOTES

By Brian Cook



ON THE OTHER SIDE

What a crazy year it has been thus far! I don't think I have ever heard the words "unprecedented" or "pivot" so much in my life than I have heard them the last few months. The crazy thing is the words are perfect to describe the experience we all have been living through. That said, I expect like many of you, I am just about done with quarantine and Zoom. I want hugs and handshakes.

This leads me to the focus of this note. I can't wait to get ON THE OTHER SIDE. We are starting to see things open up more in the also now overly used "new normal". I have not had a chance to get out to golf, but I know my friends that are avid golfers have been out there...a lot! It has changed in its current state in a well-guarded attempt to keep folks safe.

When checking with the team at Tustin Ranch we learned that as of this writing golfers are kept to one per cart. I do not see that as a bad thing necessarily. Truth be told, I am typically all over the golf course so having my own cart to speed things up could be a good thing. They also just recently started having events there in a new format that allows for social

distancing while allowing events and life to continue. I am excited for the progress to continue and hope that we stay safe and continue to take precautions short term for long term stability. Even more exciting is to get back with all of you beautiful people on the golf course at Tustin Ranch even if it is a more limited capacity than prior years. Hey, they said the lunch trucks will still be there, so I am in!

We are also going virtual soon with the kickoff of a Virtual "Luncheon" in August. Details are still being worked out on the full programming but I am excited for our first step into this space. Please send any ideas you may have for future content to info@fpfc.org.

As you will see as you turn these pages, we are moving forward with some very important FPFC efforts, including the establishment and education of the FPFC's 2020 Apprentice Class. Here you are introduced to this outstanding roster of men and women who, like the apprentices before them, are being groomed for leadership roles in their firms and in the industry.

During these unprecedented times we are pivoting to adapt to the "new normal" (wink-wink).

Joking aside, maybe more than ever the need for leadership will be ever present and we are pleased to be able to continue this important service for our membership.

Last, we hope September brings a greater reopening and feeling of safety assurance so we can meet live for the FPFC Luncheon at Castlewood Country Club in Pleasanton, CA. Either way, we will be ready to bring to you a worthy speaker you won't want to miss. Until we meet here again, go out and be a light to others. God Bless! 🙏



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Mark Munger



Don Gann

KEEPING A POSITIVE VOICE

By Emma McBride-Taylor



Patricia Jimenez



Robert Schueller



Paige Venable

With 2020 off to a rockier-than-usual start, the produce and floral industry continues to power on. It is evident that the industry has experienced many issues since the arrival of the novel Coronavirus within the United States. In an attempt to move forward and focus on positive outcomes for the second half of 2020, Fresh Produce & Floral Council members had the opportunity to discuss the positive changes they are taking part in and experiencing. After speaking with foodservice partners, participants from the Farmers to Families Food Box Program, and retailers, the positive voice members have for the future of our industry was clear to see. FPFC members are rolling with the punches that continue to be thrown their way - while maintaining a positive attitude.

Mark Munger of 4Earth Farms outlined the innovative precautions that the company has adopted during this time. He eagerly expressed praise for technological communication services such as Facetime, as he is able to personally address customers with a smile through the use of a screen. This has reassured all their customers throughout this time while also accounting for a personal connection that is currently being missed on a daily basis. Munger emphasized that 4Earth Farms community spirit is spread through every level of connection, most importantly the employees. In order to support the hard work each employee is doing, the company has provided weekly boxes of fruit and vegetables as a thank you. The company recognizes that their food operation would not be possible without the dedication of these individuals. Providing these food boxes for their employees is just an addition to the work 4Earth Farms is doing; they were also awarded a contract in the USDA's Farmers to Families' Food Box Program.

After having the opportunity to catch up with Don Gann of Stater Bros., he shared his positive attitude towards the later part of this year. Gann emphasized that Stater Bros., along with many other fresh produce retailers, will continue to see a steady increase in consumers taking advantage of grocery pick-up and online delivery services. He praised these innovative and beneficial services by stating "the convenience of curbside pickup and online ordering will be preferred by many consumers."

It is evident that "more people will be eating at home and preparing their own meals," which can coincide with a happy and healthy lifestyle. This will only be possible through access to fresh produce, which is a necessity during this time. Gann optimistically concluded "from my perspective, the rest of the 2020 should be strong."

Patricia Jimenez from Fresh Concepts also praised technology as a vital resource during this challenging time. In particular, she reported the company's appreciation for Microsoft Teams for internal and external communication; support and appreciation of the employees is also a central focus of Fresh Concepts agenda, which is cultivated during their company-wide happy hour every Friday to continue to build and support their company culture. Recently, they hosted an upbeat game show that focused on produce-related questions combining light-hearted entertainment with their common love of food. It is outstanding to see how FPFC members are continuing to connect with their colleagues and co-workers when they cannot meet in-person. She also praised the improvement of food safety throughout the industry stating "it is a great thing for our industry and the public. We are very happy to see improvements in food safety at all levels of the supply chain."

Robert Schueller of Melissa's provided insight into the alterations of lunch breaks within his company. He praised the in-house chef for cooking lunch for the employees multiple times throughout the week, which ensures no employee has to leave during lunch hour in search of food. On days that the chef is not present, Melissa's makes a conscious effort to support their foodservice partners

that are providing take-out options. Schueller stated that it is important that we do not have shortcomings in the produce industry and it is important to keep foodservice open. He is thankful they are able to help foodservice suppliers who didn't have the avenues to supply to retail through the USDA Farmers to Families' Food Box Program.

Paige Venable of Vallarta Supermarkets spoke about the effects the pandemic had on the entire floral sector. Paige's positive attitude shined through as she described the innovative handlings of both the floral suppliers and vendors, which should result in a new successful approach for the future. For example, she described the transformation of store front flower stores into movable floral trucks, similar to the familiar food truck. The ingenuity being witnessed in the floral industry right now will only continue to make those businesses more successful and flexible in the face of hardship and change. She continued by speaking about vendors who are having to reinvent themselves, mentioning the transformation process of companies that have never sold to the public but are now adopting drive-thru cash purchases and using social media to advertise daily locations.

Venable stated floral businesses must adapt their work relationships with each other in order for their companies to continue to operate. "This isn't going to work if we don't find a way to reinvent ourselves now - forget about the future, we won't make it through these current circumstances," she emphasized.

It is evident that the coronavirus has caused some serious issues throughout the entire world, especially with the daily struggle of changing information and the introduction of new guidelines. Now more than ever it is important to focus on the positive changes that industries have embraced in order to run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. The focus of interpersonal relationships between family members, colleagues and vendors has been the focal point of all the innovative changes that each and every company has supported. There has never been a better time to be a Superhero in the produce industry. It is evident that all our members are taking on this role during this time of hardship and change, which just reassures that we will all come out stronger on the other side. 🌱

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The Fresh Produce & Floral Council has partnered with Westerlay Orchids to donate phals to healthcare workers at City of Hope in Duarte, CA.

The FPFC has strong relationships with the City of Hope providing a platform to share their message of Hope via the FPFC August Luncheon for many years.

Westerlay Orchids kindly provided City of Hope workers with phals to show their appreciation throughout this pandemic. The FPFC members continuously provide for their communities and we are very happy to help facilitate these relationships where we can.

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THE FPFC WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

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APeel Sciences

Michael Burbano
Best Produce

Jacob Thill
Fruit Growers Supply

Joe Quiroz
Green Herbs International

Nick DeSai
PeaTos

Krista Beckstead
Starr Ranch

Matt Rhodes
Varsity Produce

FPFC MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Fresh Produce & Floral Council is to connect members to the information, education and professional network they need to increase knowledge, grow their businesses and collectively advance the industry.

FPFC FORMS NEW COMMITTEE

The Fresh Produce & Floral Council has announced a new committee focused on enhancing the value of the FPFC Membership. The committee will be a liaison to FPFC members and their teams in hopes of discovering and creating ways in which the FPFC can improve communication and services and deliver greater value to each company. This committee will lead engagement with new, current and lapsed members, brainstorm ideas for enhancing membership value and focus efforts to ensure membership needs and wants are the FPFC's top priority. This group is excited to get to work, strengthening the FPFC core: our valued members.

The Membership Committee's mission is to enhance the FPFC Membership value by serving as the eyes, ears and voice for membership and ensuring membership challenges are met through transparent communication, collaboration and creativity; while expanding FPFC regional support, improving engagement and developing new opportunities for members.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Neil Merritt, Bard Valley Date Growers

Co-chair: Jules Buehler, North Shore Living Herbs + Greens

Michael Burbano, Best Produce

Erick Coronado, Avocados from Mexico

Jeffrey Fish, Western Mixers

Kyle Lane, Westfalia Fruit

Blake Lee, DLJ Produce

Michael Maddan, Jr., Maddan & Co.

Dannie Timblin, Melissa's

Michelle Ziegler, Pactiv

Jay Zimmerman, Love BEETS

We look forward to membership feedback, learning more about your business, and how we can help the FPFC better serve you! Please feel free to reach out to the Committee at Membership@FPFC.org



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Jacob Cadwallader grew up in Yucaipa, which is a small city about 10 miles east of San Bernardino. His parents divorced when he was five years old and he credits his mom with giving him the work ethic that has served him well through life, education and his work experience.

“My father was a nurse for several different hospitals while my mom worked many different part-time jobs as she raised my sister and me,” he said. “She was the motivating factor in my life. She taught me what it meant to work hard and the philosophy to do what you have to do to make it work.”

Jake worked hard in high school and did very well. His hard work gave him the opportunity to attend the nearby University of Redlands. “All through high school, I was driven by the desire to do something bigger. I had big goals for myself. I was very much money-motivated as I knew my mom needed help and I wanted to help her.”

was very gratifying. After you work a display, you can step back and get a sense of completion. You accomplished something; it’s great.”

In the late 1990s, he was a produce clerk and a college student, doing both fulltime. “My dad passed away my senior year in college and I got sidetracked. I took a leave of absence but planned to go back and finish my education.”

At the same time, his retail produce career was going well. He moved up the ranks, learned a lot and in 2002 was promoted to produce manager. “Store number 55 in Grand Terrace was my first manager position,” he recalls.

Jake stayed there for two or three years and then became store manager of a new Stater Bros., where he worked from 2006 to 2011. In 2011, he became a produce supervisor, with 20 stores under his purview. In 2017, he moved to the buying office, becom-

STATER BROS. MARKETS’ JACOB CADWALLADER

Perseverance Guides His Career

BY TIM LINDEN

This desire turned into a passion to help others and had Jake majoring in psychology in college. “I loved human psychology...and still do. I thought I would become a school psychologist. I love people and thought that was a field where I could help others and be bigger than myself.”

To help ends meet, Jake began working at Stater Bros. Markets at age 16 in 1993 while in high school, and continued working while at Redlands. He started as a courtesy clerk and started working his way up the ladder. “I had a very good store manager who believed strongly in cross training,” Jake recalls.

Consequently, he worked as a checker and on the stock crew and in several other slots in his first few years. “At one point he put me in the milk box, and I hated it. I complained and he told me he would move me to produce but I had to sink or swim on my own; he said. “I loved it. Working the sales floor

ing the vegetable buyer. He is currently Stater Bros. fruit buyer, sharing the buying duties with David Martes, who buys all the value added and UPC items, and vegetable buyer Brian Sahargun. The department of course, includes Senior Director of Produce Marketing Don Gann and Division Director Walt Phillip.

Once he moved into management, Jacob Cadwallader was able to create time to go back to the University of Redlands and finish his senior year. “I graduated in 2016,” he says proudly, crediting Stater Bros. with encouraging and assisting in that quest.

On the personal side, Jake and his wife Tracy have two children — 18 year old Kolby, who is studying to be an air traffic controller at the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Az, and four year-old Henry, who is no doubt studying at home like every other member of his generation during these COVID-19 times.

Jake spends his spare time on lots of family activities, including riding bikes and heading to the beach. “Music is also a huge passion of mine,” he said. “I’ve been playing since I was 18. I’ve taken lots of lessons and have played in a number of bands over the years.”

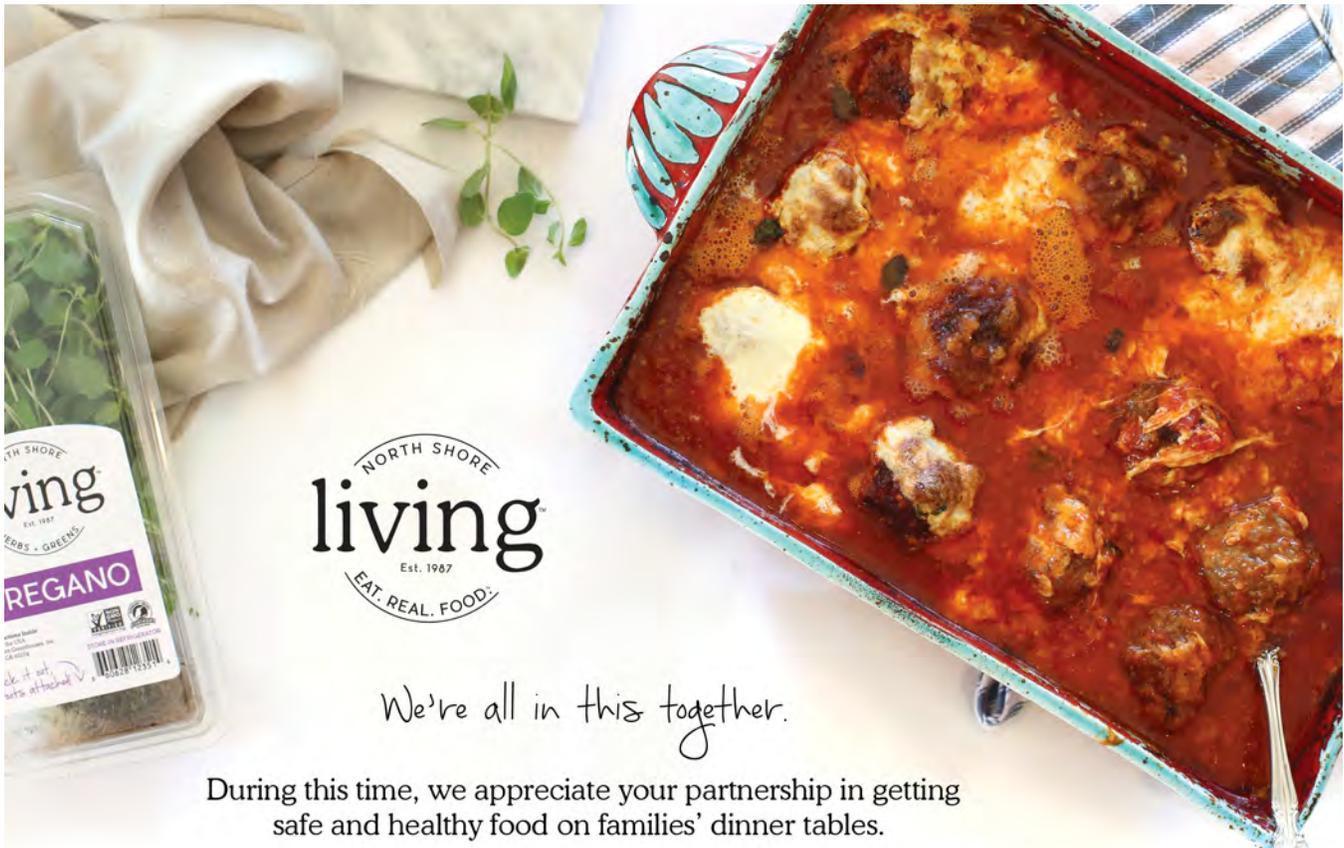
His instrument is the drums. Of course, he wanted to be a star, but “that really didn’t pan out. I now play with a group of guys that get together about every six weeks. We play at clubs and bars and weddings. I love to create music. I love to entertain but we also try to be impactful...and cool with our music.”

Speaking in mid-April when the Covid-19 pandemic was approaching its peak in California, Cadwallader said it was very much impacting Stater Bros. business. The produce buying staff was still coming into the office, though working at home was an option. He noted that the first week of the shelter-in-place order “everything was chaotic. We didn’t know what was going to sell.”

Panic buying on the part of the shoppers did take place and Stater Bros. quickly partnered with a handful of produce distributors to help it execute the supply chain with direct store deliveries to deal with the surge in business. While the first few weeks were hectic, in mid-April Cadwallader said buying habits were starting to get back to normal, but there were still differences. “The run on potatoes caught everyone by surprise,” he said. “Sales have started to back off but we are still selling a lot more than we used to.”

He also noted that bagged items were being purchased in large numbers. “And citrus sales are off the charts,” he said.

In total, Cadwallader said the produce department continues to post good numbers but he noted that the commitment by the company goes way beyond achieving good sales. “We feel a deep sense of responsibility to the community,” he said. “Right now, we are in a position to help folks and that is what we are concentrating on.” 🌱



The image is a promotional graphic for North Shore Living. On the left, there is a clear plastic container of regano (oregano) with a white label that reads "NORTH SHORE living Est. 1987 HERBS - GREENS REGANO". Next to it is a white cloth and some fresh green herbs. In the center is the "NORTH SHORE living" logo, which includes "Est. 1987" and "EAT. REAL. FOOD." in a circular seal. Below the logo is the handwritten-style text "We're all in this together." At the bottom, a message reads: "During this time, we appreciate your partnership in getting safe and healthy food on families' dinner tables." On the right side of the image is a photograph of a rectangular metal baking pan with a colorful patterned handle, filled with a rich red tomato sauce and several meatballs. A silver fork is visible in the bottom right corner of the pan.

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MEET THE 2020 FPFC APPRENTICES

Though the initial sessions for the 2020 Apprentice Class of the Fresh Produce & Floral Council have been altered by the coronavirus epidemic, the show goes on. The class of 12 is busy

getting further immersed into the world of specialty crops and learning more about this great industry of ours.

To introduce the membership to these potential future leaders,

Fresh Digest asked each member of this year's class to answer a few questions. We have paraphrased occasionally for brevity and clarity, but these are their words and stories. 🌱

Ali Romero

Account Manager

Torn & Glasser

Los Angeles, CA

Background: I grew up in the South Bay, and still reside there today. My family and I really enjoy the cool ocean breezes and laid back vibe. My mother, Cookie, along with her cousins came to Los Angeles from Egypt in the '70s, where she later met my dad while working for a boutique shop on Rodeo Drive. My family has always been in the restaurant industry, and I always found myself working for them -- whether serving kabobs, hosting events, or occasionally getting on the grill. I've always had a strong affinity for food, I remember as a child, opening the cupboards in the kitchen and smelling almost every spice jar we had, getting lost in the aromas. Fast forward 20 years, I had my son, and life officially began for me; working part time for my uncle wasn't going to cut it. So through a recommendation from a friend, I began working for Torn & Glasser, going up the ladder, and eventually settling into my current position as an account manager. I've been on the production line, manned the continuous roaster, loaded/unloaded trucks, and audited LTL orders. Sometime in my second year I had been advised that a sales position opened up, I applied, and thankfully the company offered me the position. Being situated across from the Los Angeles Wholesale Produce Market was an eye opening experience. I really didn't have an idea that there is a whole other world starting up at midnight, every night. We open at 2 a.m., so I get a little more sleep, but coming in at that time, complemented with working next to the legend, second generation owner Robert Glasser, who's been doing this his entire life. There is nothing he doesn't know. I'm utterly grateful for being in this industry and really looking forward to see what the future holds.

FPFC Connection: Torn & Glasser, and more specifically, our sales manager Chris Large, have been members, as he likes to say, since "the good ol' days." Chris would invite me to the monthly luncheons, and we would have a chance to talk shop, family, and just get to know each other more personally. Once we arrived, I really felt the love, all these industry powerhouses coming together, catching up with one another, introducing new ideas and partnerships. It really struck a chord with me, and I knew I really wanted to be part of it. That's where I learned about the Apprentice Program. I applied last year, and didn't get it. I took the somewhat disappointment in stride and came back stronger.

Fun Fact: All through middle school, high school, and a little in college, I was big time into sneakers. My friends and I would go line up at the mall, waiting for Foot Locker to open. We would be scanning everyone's shoe size in front of us, trying to figure out if they'll have our sizes available. Since then, the shoe game has completely changed, and it's nearly impossible to find what you like, without paying double or triple the actual retail price. To this day, my mom still jokes about my response when asked as a teenager, what I would do with a million dollars, my answer, buy more shoes! Maybe with that 100 to 200 percent markup, that wasn't such a bad idea!



Kimiya Manshadi
Sales Associate
Moonland Produce
Vernon CA



Background: I was born and raised in sunny Redondo Beach, CA. My passion for the produce industry started when I was about 3 years old. I would follow my father around the house mimicking his phone calls pretending to sell mangoes. I would always look forward to coming into work with my parents in the produce market. I knew when I was younger that my path would always bring me back into the family business so I graduated from the University of Arizona with a BA in agricultural business economics and management

FPFC Connection: Moonland Produce has been a part of FPFC since 2019. We learned about the council from our good friends at Westlake Produce. My colleagues and I attended luncheon events where we learned about the Apprentice Program. Hearing the past apprentices speak about their experience made me excited to be a part of something bigger in the floral and produce industry. I applied for the program to expand my knowledge and connections in our industry.

Fun Fact: Outside of the realm of my job I enjoy practicing hot yoga. Before the pandemic I would practice at least three times a week.



Luke Vitanza

Retail Sales Supervisor - NorCal

Wonderful Sales

Davis, CA

Background: I was born and raised in Cleveland, OH. I'm fortunate to come from a family that has instilled a positive work ethic in me and challenges me to be better in all that I do -- two attributes that serve me well as a team member of Wonderful Sales. Thank you mom and dad! After graduating from The Ohio State University with a finance degree, I worked in banking - never imagining I could have a fulfilling career in the produce industry. Thankfully, I transitioned to the produce industry six years ago. I was able to combine my sales experience in finance with my desire to sell something healthier by joining Wonderful Sales as a retail sales merchandiser in Northern Ohio. After three years, I relocated to Davis, CA, in a supervisor position without ever having visited - what an adventure! I now lead a team of 10 merchandisers and thoroughly enjoy the daily challenges, learnings and development that come with my role.

FPFC Connection: I learned about the FPFC when my work colleague, Joel Adams, invited me to attend my first FPFC NorCal luncheon in September of 2017. While I was initially nervous being newer to the industry (and even newer to California) I found fellow attendees to be welcoming and encouraging. I still stay in touch with people I met, and connections made that day.

Fun Fact: I spent a year living in Northwest Montana working as a professional ski instructor. This experience is what first piqued my interest in leadership roles. Facilitating and witnessing the growth and development of my students throughout the ski season was both fascinating and fulfilling for me.



Jennifer Miller

Retail Account Executive - West Coast

Zespri Kiwifruit

Studio City, CA

Background: I was born and raised in California and currently live in Studio City, walking distance to Universal Studios. I graduated with my undergrad in Nutrition & Dietetics from Cal State University, Long Beach which was ultimately where I fell in love with the food and beverage industry. After college, I dabbled in various positions at a small startup CPG company including QA/QC, R&D, marketing, and business development/sales. I then started working at Coca-Cola as an account manager and worked my way up to a district sales manager, which is when I realized that I really enjoy account development, relationship management, and collaborating with different teams. I pursued my Masters in Business Administration from The University of Phoenix to further increase my knowledge and develop my skills while continuing to work full time. I was approached by a recruiter to work at Zespri which has been my first experience in the produce industry. I love the focus on health and whole foods which aligns with my education and belief system and I am very excited to see where the industry is headed!

FPFC Connection: Zespri is actively involved in the Fresh Produce and Floral Council and I learned about the organization shortly after I started with the company last May. Since then I have been to many events including various luncheons, the FPFC Expo in Anaheim, and the FPFC Dinner Dance. I heard about the Apprentice Program through multiple people that have already completed the program including one of my colleagues, Laura Sterling. Everyone emphasized that they thought it was very beneficial in terms of learning more about the produce industry and loved the networking and community built from it. I applied for the program because I am new to the industry and want to gain a better understanding and comprehension of how the supply chain cohesively works together.

Fun Fact: Outside of work I live a very active and 'on-the-go' lifestyle. I go to the gym 5-6 times a week and enjoy cooking and trying new recipes. I love spending time outdoors and enjoy attending live music concerts on the weekends. I make it a goal to try to leave the country at least once per year to see new places and expand my knowledge of the world. I'm recently engaged to my wonderful fiancé, Misha, and we both value spending time with our family and friends and are often found traveling or attending events with them.



Sweet!

Wishing you
'Sweet Success'
in the FPFC
Apprentice Program



JEN MILLER
Retail Account Executive
Zespri North America
2020 FPFC Apprentice Program Participant



Emma McBride-Taylor

Event & Communications Specialist

Fresh Produce & Floral Council

Anaheim, CA

Background: Hi there! I am from a small town in the Florida Panhandle called Pensacola, but I am now living in Long Beach and loving it. I attended the University of West Florida and graduated with my BA in Public Relations/Communications. Throughout college I spent time working in foodservice and local city government. I moved to California in 2018 in search of better opportunities for myself. Since moving here, I have worked in sales, development for a non-profit (specializing in social services) and I now find myself working in communications and events for the FPFC...and I absolutely love it. I love working for an organization that is supportive of its members and loves to give back to the community.

FPFC Connection: I first learned of the Fresh Produce & Floral Council when applying for my previous position as communications specialist. After researching the FPFC, I was happy to find out how involved the group is with supporting other non-profit organizations (Caterina's Club, Feed OC, OC Food Bank, City of Hope) and their participation in partnerships with national and global organizations such as PMA and United Fresh. I attend every event that the FPFC holds and I look forward to meeting more FPFC members once we are able to all meet face-to-face again. I learned about the Apprentice Program during my first interview with the FPFC, and the program was one of the first things that initially intrigued me. I thought it was a great opportunity for members to learn, grow and network as professionals. After speaking with the 2019 and 2020 Chair of the program, I decided that it would be a great opportunity for me, as someone very new to the produce industry, and I applied for the program. I knew I would be able to expand my knowledge about the supply chain and food safety while increasing my produce industry network and connecting with our members!

Fun Fact: Almost three years ago, I packed up my entire car and decided to move across the country without a job or a place to live. It was a fun and scary experience that I am so thankful for! Outside of the FPFC, I spend most of my time hiking or walking with my dog, Izzy. To stay sane, I enjoy daily runs, hiking, kayaking and binge watching my favorite TV show on Netflix – Mindhunter. I am very close with my family and spend as much time with them as possible.

Congratulations Emma!



**Fresh Produce
& Floral Council**

**Wishing you a great thyme
as your knowledge blooms!**

*We're rooting for you,
The FPFC Board of Directors*



EMMA MCBRIDE-TAYLOR, EVENT & COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
Fresh Produce & Floral Council, 2020 FPFC Apprentice Program Participant

Kyle Griffith
Sales Manager
Hollandia Produce L.P.
Carpinteria, California



Background: I grew up in the farming community of Visalia in Central California, which is where my love for agriculture began. I attended California State University Fresno, where I earned my Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Business. While attending college, I was lucky enough to participate in the Center for Growing Talent Program. This is where I fell in love with the produce industry. Making the most of that experience, I was able to meet Brian Cook and Baltazar Garcia and quickly knew I wanted to be at Hollandia Produce. Since then, I have enjoyed the fast paced and always changing lifestyle of our industry and love the challenges it throws my way.

FPFC Connection: I learned about the Apprentice Program when I was involved with the Center for Growing Talent. We worked hand in hand with the apprentices of the program at the time. This quickly influenced me and made me want to someday be able to say I participated in the same program as these young professionals that I now look up to.

Fun Fact: Outside of work, I love staying active. You will often find me either on a trail, at the beach or doing something active to keep myself busy. My passion for staying active began years ago when I started my weight loss journey. Since then, I have come to love being active. It's not only a way to stay fit, but also clears my head and helps me stay grounded.



Justin Yates

Assistant Buyer - Produce

Grocery Outlet Inc.

Emeryville, CA

Background: I was born in Mountain View, CA and raised in Cupertino, CA until I was 10 when I then moved to a town in the East Bay called Danville. Both parents were in the food industry working both the retail and sales side as I was growing up, so I was exposed to the industry for most of my life. Out of high school, I worked part time at a landscape architecture firm helping draft construction details and doing hardscape/planting plans in AutoCAD. I then studied philosophy at UC Berkeley before working in sales at Monster Energy for six years. My foray into produce was actually serendipitous as I was originally hired by Grocery Outlet to be in the frozen/deli department and then a week before I started was moved to produce. A year later, I have tried to soak up as much as possible and am very excited and eager to learn. Produce is quite a complicated business!

FPFC Connection: When I first started in the produce department, my vice president and senior buyer would mention FPFC quite often. I was able to attend one of the luncheons late last year at Castlewood Country Club in Pleasanton, CA where Rick Barry was the guest speaker. It was quite fun not only talking to him about the Warriors but about my new career in produce as well. A little while later, Senior Buyer Daniel Bell told me about the Apprentice Program and said it would be a good idea for someone new to the industry such as myself to get a more comprehensive look at what all goes into the food that we put onto peoples' plates. I had already been on a few tours of stone fruit growers in the Central Valley as well as a tour of Bolthouse Farms in Bakersfield, so I thought that being given the opportunity to further understand our industry at every level, as well as the networking connections made to others who work in different aspects of the industry, would be invaluable. Being relatively new to the industry, while having a sales background in a different one, I am ready to learn everything there is to offer. I have also seen my mother be highly involved in the Frozen Food Council, the Sales Managers Club of San Francisco, as well as The City of Hope, and am ready to be just as involved in my own industry and offer whatever I can.

Fun Fact: I've taken quite a heavy interest in motorcycles and motorcycle racing since my early teen years and have planned probably one too many trips around it. I was able to travel to the 2004 MotoGP British Grand Prix with my father, and was given the opportunity to study in Florence, Italy, conveniently 30 minutes' train ride away from Mugello, where the Italian Grand Prix is held. Many of my weekends there were spent at the track, and I even got a few other students studying with me hooked. In the past three years, I've gone to the Isle of Man for the TT motorcycle races twice, once with my father and last year with my wife. It is one of the few remaining races in the world still held on public roads, and if you haven't seen what it looks like, I suggest a quick peek at YouTube. It's something else!



Ryan Conlon

Sales Associate

Progressive Produce Corp.

Los Angeles, CA

Background: I grew up in Orange County, and currently live in Costa Mesa. I graduated from El Dorado High School where I played baseball. After a few injuries I decided to change my focus from solely baseball to my education. I graduated from Long Beach State with a BA in Journalism and Public Relations. While I was in high school and college, I worked in numerous restaurants as a server, bartender and manager. After 10 years I decided it was time for a change. I heard about an opportunity as a sales coordinator at Progressive Produce in September 2018. I applied and ended up being hired. This was my first job out of the restaurant industry, and I was very nervous. However, the fast-paced and dynamic environment of produce matches that of the restaurant industry and I felt very comfortable. After 10 months in my coordinator role I was blessed with an opportunity to move into a sales role.

FPFC Connection: I learned of the FPFC soon after my hiring due to Progressive's continuous support and have had the opportunity to attend numerous luncheons. Jose Morales, a coworker of mine at Progressive, was a 2019 Apprentice so I heard about the program through him, and saw how much the program has motivated and helped him. When Scott Leimkuhler and Dominic DeFranco asked me if I would be interested in applying, I jumped at the opportunity.

Fun Fact: I am a huge sports fan. Outside of work you will find me watching any game that is on. Most Saturdays I watch UFC fights as well as boxing. I also enjoy competing. I play in a softball league with a few coworkers and you will often find me playing pool.





Congratulations!

JUSTIN YATES



**2020 FPFC
Apprentice Program**



**GROCERY
OUTLET**
bargain market

groceryoutlet.com

Malinda Moore
Account Executive
Fresh Concepts
Durham, CA



Background: I grew up in the back of my family's small deli in Durham, CA. At the age of 5, I stepped in to do dishes and even serve food. By the age of 12, when the deli was double booked with caterings, I began to take over some events and manage them myself. I continued catering and working in the restaurant industry through high school. I traveled for a few years out of high school and landed in Taos, New Mexico. While in New Mexico I worked as a line cook at a well-known Bavarian Restaurant as well as a local restaurant creating local New Mexican style cuisine. My claim-to-fame during that time of my life was cooking a meal for Steven Spielberg and a group of his friends at the Bavarian Restaurant in the Taos Ski Valley. A few years later, after having my children, I relocated to Redmond, Oregon. I worked for a few foodservice establishments, before deciding to open my own catering business. By word of mouth, I became very popular in the area, catering events for many clients. After about five years of running this successful business, I was forced to close the doors due to some family turmoil and moved back to California. I enrolled in Butte College and studied business management, while continuing to work in foodservice and raising my two small children. After managing a couple of different establishments and running a mobile bartending business, I decided it was time for me to evolve and grow beyond serving the end-user and began a career in foodservice distribution. This experience opened my eyes to a whole new side of foodservice. My role was in sales, but after working my way to a management position, I worked closely with all departments, such as transportation and procurement to ensure our clients received top quality service. After six years, I looked elsewhere and began my career with Fresh Concepts. Fresh Concepts is a produce management company, serving foodservice clients across the U.S. and into Canada.

PFPC Connection: Last year was Fresh Concepts first year nominating an employee for this program. I learned about it almost immediately when coming on board. I talked to recent graduate Tom Rossi and discovered he had many great things to say about the program. I was flattered when my manager reached out to me and let me know that she wanted to endorse me and provide a letter of recommendation to be in the program. I applied for this program to learn as much as I can about the industry. I believe the Apprenticeship Program will help me become more of an asset to Fresh Concepts and look forward to being more well-rounded in the industry.

Fun Fact: When not working I enjoy hiking, being outdoors, sunshine, and good laughs. I also love watching my children shine in whatever they choose to excel in. During non-pandemic times, there is always a child's sports game or music performance to attend. I am a very proud mom and love being on the sidelines to cheer them on.

Spencer Smith
Sales Support Specialist
Calavo Growers
Santa Paula, CA



Background: I was raised in Los Angeles and currently live in Ventura County. I graduated from California State University, Channel Islands with a BA in Sociology. After college, I began my career working as a sales associate with a small company specializing in medical devices for two years. However, I didn't feel I was being challenged or growing on an intellectual or professional level. A close friend alluded to a new opportunity available at Sunkist Growers, which was my introduction to the produce industry. I was instantly intrigued by the fast pace environment and unpredictability that each day provided. After two years there, I had an opportunity to join Calavo Growers and quickly noticed the industry was a tight knit community of passionate, kind, energetic and approachable individuals. I have now been with Calavo since November 2018.

PFPC Connection: Calavo has been a continuous supporter of the PFPC and I was lucky enough to be exposed to the council within the first couple of months. I've been fortunate to have the opportunity to experience luncheons, and one of the annual expos. A Calavo colleague who also participated in the PFPC Apprenticeship Program felt it would be an excellent opportunity to gain exposure to all facets within the produce industry and opportunities for networking. She recommended that I apply.

Fun Fact: Outside of work I enjoy staying active with daily workout sessions and playing golf. I also enjoy the beach and take advantage of long early morning walks along the water when I can.

Allie Fafard

Associate Produce Buyer

Frieda's Inc.

Los Alamitos, CA



Background: I have lived in the South Bay area my entire life apart from my undergraduate studies in Davis, CA. Memories from childhood include outdoor activities such as hiking, sports, and many beach walks, typically followed by cooking and sharing meals with loved ones. I explored my interests in protecting earth, creating food, and contributing to a better society at UC Davis, where I earned a B.S. in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems and actively participated in the community. Aside from my great uncle, who grew strawberries and corn a few generations before me, I am the first in my family engaged in the produce industry. My passion for produce stems from my roots and grew in my studies, and my daily appreciation comes from the energy of those around me at Frieda's. I transitioned from an internship in production to product growth analysis and planning, and now continue to learn and grow in my current role as associate produce buyer.

FPFC Connection: An eager group of about 40 people came into the office in fall of 2018 (one of my colleagues, Paula Metheny, included in the group) to learn all about Frieda's. I shared my background and experience as a panel participant for this FPFC class touring that day. The bright and energetic apprentices were eager to learn, just like me. I participated in the panel the following year when the 2019 class toured, and began attending FPFC luncheons and connecting with previous apprentices. I knew this program would be an incredible opportunity to learn about the industry and develop the professional network and skillset that align with my career goals. Frieda's gladly supported me in pursuing this program, and I am beyond thrilled to participate in this year's class.

Fun Fact: Music is a hobby of mine. I love to dance, sing, and am learning to play guitar. I was in an acapella group in college (yes, it is just like Pitch Perfect). A dream of mine is to have a weekly gig at a local restaurant or coffee shop where I could provide music while people enjoy food and conversation.

Cherie Clark

Procurement Analyst

Fresh Concepts

Temecula, CA



Background: I grew up in a military family. My mom was in the Air Force for 22 years. We didn't move around as often as families in other branches, but it was enough. I went to two elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools. To keep this pattern going, I went to two on-campus colleges: UC Santa Barbara, and University of Colorado at Denver after my husband and I got married. My husband ended up joining the Air Force and I transitioned my studies online. After seeing him graduate basic training, I decided to pursue my desire of joining as well. I spent four years in the Air Force as an intelligence analyst. Leaving the military is a tough transition but it was the right decision for our family. My husband completed his term of service, and we moved back home to Temecula. I have a BA in Management and an Associates Degree in Intelligence Studies and Technology. I first took an accounting position with a company but then looked for a position with greater personal and professional growth. When the procurement analyst position with Fresh Concepts popped up, I applied though I had no produce experience and certainly didn't understand how dynamic this industry is. It has truly been a fantastic fit for me—the industry and the position!

FPFC Connection: I first learned about the FPFC shortly after I started with Fresh Concepts. Our director of national contracts invited me to accompany her to the FPFC Expo in the Summer of 2018. I discovered the FPFC Apprentice program shortly thereafter when I was doing research on professional development opportunities. It has been on my bucket list since then! I applied for the program because I am constantly seeking ways to be better and to do better. I want to continue to bring value to Fresh Concepts and any future opportunity that comes my way.

Fun Fact: Last summer, I started taking the kids on beach cleanups, which were really fun. We'd do the clean up and then hang out at the beach for a little bit. Last year my daughter, mom, and I started to do annual girls' trips. We went to San Diego last year and we're hoping our Huntington Beach trip this summer will go according to plan. We especially love the beach and Disneyland. Since we've been at home, we're really trying to make the most of it. We did an at home Disneyland day. My husband and I have finally had a chance to play chess together again. I love listening to leadership and motivational podcasts when I'm doing things that don't require a lot of mental attention. We bought a Nordictack bike in January and it's been so nice to have right now. Someday I would like to learn calligraphy or hand-lettering, and go swing-dancing again with my husband.



Consumers can easily find Zespri's new 1-lb custom-designed clamshell that sits vertically on the display for greater shopper visibility and purchase as consumers look for fruit with a lot of vitamin C, which is known to support immunity.

ZESPRI KIWI GETS OFF TO FAST START

Zespri kicked off its kiwi season in early May following an excellent growing season. Zespri's goal is to support retailers as shoppers look for fruits with a lot of vitamin C, which is known to support immunity. Shoppers are looking for options during these unprecedented times as online searches for Vitamin C and related combinations including food, fruits and supplements continue to increase.

"We are glad that our season is starting so we can provide consumers with a healthy fruit option," reported Sarah Deaton, Zespri's shopper marketing manager. "We are dedicated and working hard to get our fruit to the market. Serving to serving, our SunGold Kiwifruit has more vitamin C than an orange and the same amount of potassium as a banana. Because of its sweet, tropical flavor, kids love the taste so that helps parents fuel themselves and their children with a nutrient-rich fruit to help support their immune system."

In addition to delivering SunGold Kiwifruit to stores, Zespri is offering retailers a 360-degree approach to services, which help consumers locate SunGold and also reinforces sell-through with an extensive consumer digital campaign that includes social media, email campaigns, coupons, online videos and display advertising. The marketing initiatives were rolled out at the start of the season.

"We are increasing our consumer messaging through a variety of vehicles to educate consumers about the nutritional benefits and unique flavor of Zespri SunGold," stated Deaton. "We are continuing our successful 'Let Your Taste Wander' campaign that we launched last year. Consumers enjoy the excitement of the promotional offers and the eye-

catching graphics and animation. Consumers in our test market enjoyed the sense of escape the campaign offers during these trying times."

According to scan data, the SunGold Kiwifruit has been a growth engine for retailers, delivering 112 percent dollar sales growth over the past two years and early indications from retailers and consumers indicate strong growth to continue in 2020. Additionally, the SunGold is packaged in a new one-pound, custom-designed clamshell that sits vertically on the display for greater shopper visibility and purchase. The plastic clamshell also encourages sales because products enclosed in packaging tend to sell better than open product at this time.

Zespri is committed to strict standards that produce the best-tasting kiwifruit that is consistently sweet, nutritious and delicious. To ensure exceptional quality and safety measures, Zespri has developed a comprehensive, multi-stage process to ensure that only the highest standards are met. The more than 2,500 growers worldwide supply retailers with the perfect kiwifruit maintained with a secure supply chain with numerous checks and best-practices food safety measures. The same measures are used for all Zespri fruit including the Organic SunGold and Zespri Green.

Zespri is one of the world's most successful horticulture marketing companies and the Zespri brand is recognized as the world leader in premium quality kiwifruit. Based in Mount Maunganui, New Zealand, the company is owned by current or past kiwifruit growers. Zespri distributor partners include Oppy, Awe Sum Organics, Trucco and Catania Canada. For more information on Zespri North America, please visit zesprikiwi.com/en-US. 🌱

FPFC Luncheon & United Fresh Town Hall

Cerritos, CA
March 5, 2020

Thank You Sponsors!



Julio Alvarado of Coast Tropical with Town Hall participant, Dr. Jennifer McEntire of United Fresh Produce Association.



Master of Ceremonies,
Alfonso Cano of Cardenas
Markets.



United Fresh Produce Association team – Robert Guenther; Miram Wolk; Dr. Jennifer McEntire; Tom Stenzel; FPFC 2020 Chairman, Brian Cook of Pete's; Master of Ceremonies, Alfonso Cano of Cardenas Markets; David Durkin and Amy Philpott.



Myisha Nathaniel of Raley's Supermarkets, Tom Stenzel of United Fresh Produce Association and Jan DeLyser of California Avocado Commission.



Edward Guerro of Calmich Produce, Keith Slattery, Peter Perez, and Ashley Abate of Stonehill Produce.



John Fujii of Gelson's Markets stops to catch up with Kellee Harris of Giumarra and Steve Hattendorf of Chilean Fresh Fruit Association.



Madie Johnson and Kori Martin of the Oppenheimer Group with Carol Lotich and Erin Wagner from the Wonderful Company.

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Briana Giampaoli of Live Oak Farms catching up with Mike Dittenber of Warren Packaging.



David Durkin and Tom Stenzel of United Fresh Produce Association participating in the Town Hall discussion.

FPFC LUNCHEON

CELEBRATING THE FRESH FUTURE
OF WOMEN IN PRODUCE AND FLORAL

Pleasanton, CA
February 19, 2020

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*Nannette Anderson
of HS&R Fresh with
Michael Schutt of
Raley's Supermarkets.*



*Bryan Burkhalter and Alexis
Hartman of Tosca, Ltd.*



Featured panelist, Alex Jackson Berkley of Frieda's with Natalie J. Machado of FreshSource, Rachelle Schulken of Renaissance Food Group, and panel moderator Myisha Nathaniel of Raley's Supermarkets.



Dave Cruz of California Avocado Commission with Brian Carter of Mollie Stone's and Carolyn Becker from, California Avocado Commission.



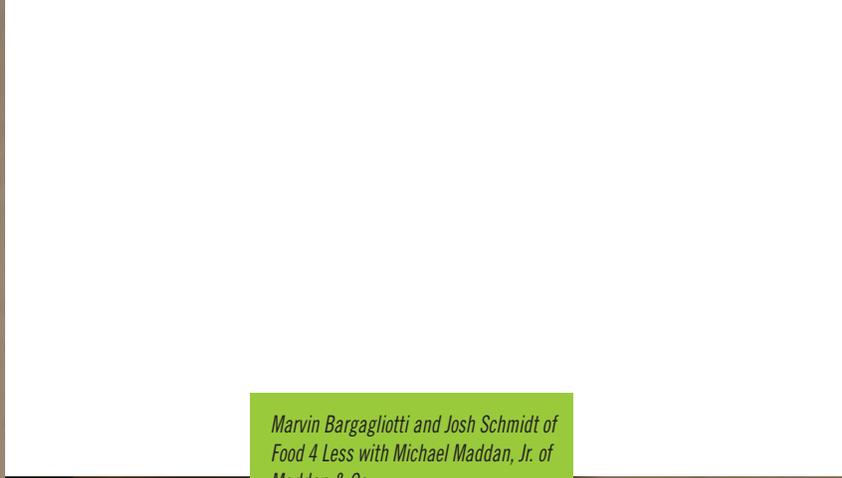
2019 Apprentices Amanda Nojadera of Progressive Produce and Jeffrey Fish of Western Mixers.



Ben Lopez of CDS Distributing, Gary Ruggiero and Laurie Fitch of Raley's Supermarkets, and Don Brumley of Bonduelle.



*Geoffrey Ratto of Ratto Bros.,
Leanne Morris of Albertsons,
and Marvin Quebec of Quebec
Distributing Co.*



*Marvin Bargagliotti and Josh Schmidt of
Food 4 Less with Michael Maddan, Jr. of
Maddan & Co.*



*Michael Schutt of Raley's
Supermarkets with Kristyn
Lawson of Chosen Foods.*



*Shawn Dagen HS&R Fresh,
Rodney D'Acquisto, Jamie
LaChapelle and Reyes
Noriega of CDS Distributing.*



Erin Cavaletto of Pressed Juicery, Catherine Gipe-Stewart of DOMEX Superfresh Growers, Jamie LaChapelle and Jan Garrett of CDS Distributing.



Dan Acevedo of GreenFruit Avocados with Luncheon panelists, Myisha Nathaniel of Raley's Supermarkets and Melina Leija-Stevens of Bolthouse Farms accompanied by Lisa Marquez of Sunrise Produce.



Nannette Anderson of HS&R Fresh, Amanda Sains of Joolies, Ed St. Clair and Taylor Buich of Taylor Farms.



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