

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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On The Move

Jennifer Zurko

Ball Seed

Virginia (Ginny) Hodgson is a new Sales Representative servicing Central and Northern Illinois (except Chicagoland). Matt Higgs, who has been in the territory, will transition to Kentucky and West Virginia to replace John Veigel, who recently retired after nearly 35 years with the company.

Ginny has 25 years of industry experience, most of it in sales. Most recently, Ginny was with Clesen Wholesale in Evanston, Illinois, where she was an account manager responsible for sales of annuals, tropicals and winter decorations. Previous to this, Ginny has been involved with buying and selling woody ornamentals, annuals and perennials, and also has extensive experience as a garden center manager at various operations in her new territory.

Ball has also created a new sales territory in Southern Oregon where John Crisp will be the new Ball Seed Sales Rep to cover the area. Previously, John was at Iwasaki Bros., Inc., in Hillsboro, Oregon, where he had been the facilities manager for the last two years. John has also been a grower, production manager and even an owner of his own operation. John is a fourth-generation horticulturist, having grown up in a family operation in Texas, but has spent more than 20 years in Oregon.

Dümmen Group

Tom Costamagna, previously director of plant quality for Mid-American Growers in Granville, Illinois, has joined the Dümmen Group Team. Tom will be assuming a newly developed position within the organization, the National Production Manager role. As National Production Manager, Tom will oversee the brand management team and production planning division for North America. Additionally, he will be responsible for monitoring rooting station and domestic stock production quality, consistency and reliability through direct interaction and support, in addition to development of protocols and accountability matrices for those programs.

Florikan

Florikan, a specialist in polymer-coated fertilizer technologies for the agriculture and horticulture industries, will be expanding operations to better serve the needs of the company's valued customers and partners. The relocation will occur in two stages. Effective July 1, 2014, Corporate Offices will be re-located to 6801 Energy Court, Suite 100, Sarasota, Florida.

Operations & Manufacturing will continue to operate from the current location at 1579 Barber Road and Distribution & Warehousing will continue to operate from the current location at 1523 Edgar Place (pick up will remain at this same warehouse location).

Second, in Summer 2015, Florikan's Manufacturing, Distribution and Warehousing facilities will be consolidated into a newly constructed, centrally located facility in Wauchula, Florida. A Grand Opening and additional details will be announced at a later date.

ForemostCo

ForemostCo announced that Andrew Britten has joined their team as Product Development Manager. Previously, Andrew worked with Dominion Growers in Virginia as Head Plug Grower and his career in the green industry continued to develop as he worked in Indiana for Heartland Growers as Head Plug and Propagation Grower. Andrew then moved to Florida as Head Grower for Suncoast Greenhouses. For the past 13 years, he was the Director of Propagation and Technical Services at Costa Color in Miami, Florida, where he also managed all offshore color stock production in the Dominican Republic. Andrew was also named Young Grower of the Year in 2005.

Greenstreet Growers

Greenstreet Growers announced the addition of Michaela Fralen to the position of Marketing Director. This position was created as a result of the company's growing emphasis on increasing the number and scope of special events at what are now three retail locations. In addition to the logistics of events, Michaela will also handle public and media relations to drive attendance and bring general awareness within the community.

A graduate of Quinnipiac University, Michaela has several years of experience in the field of marketing and events. She has worked for both the Baltimore Ravens organization, as well as Gaylord National Resort in National Harbor, where she honed her skills in marketing, public relations, event planning and promotions. Michaela will plan and orchestrate dozens of major events at Greenstreet Gardens throughout the year, including TomatoMania, Plant It Pink, Fall Festival and many other seminars and workshops, including Vera Bradley seasonal events.

Hort Americas

Dr. Steve Millett has joined Hort Americas as Technical Services Manager. Steve previously had been owner of The Plant Doctor LLC, acting as an industry crop advisor and plant diagnostician. As an industry consultant, Steve provided crop advice, disease and pest diagnosis, and recommendations to farmers, greenhouse edible and ornamental plant growers, university researchers and other commercial plant growers both domestically and internationally. Prior to operating his own business, Steve was a technical advisor at Hummert International in St. Louis, Missouri.

With a Ph.D. in plant pathology/nutrition and a background in botany, Steve relates well to both scientists and growers. He has worked extensively with hydroponic growers, edible and ornamental plant growers, urban farmers, traditional vegetable farmers, orchardists, and viticulturists. He has a passion for the local food movement and helping communities become food self-reliant.



Harvest Automation

Harvest Automation has launched its redesigned website at www.harvestai.com. Newly updated technology, product and news and events sections will make it easier to navigate and find case studies and information relevant to greenhouse growers, including a blog that contains industry insights to help and inform all of Harvest Automation's customers.

Lock Drives

Lock Drives announced that Brent Ford has joined the U.S. team to further develop the U.S. and Canadian horticultural and agricultural markets. Brent joins Lock Drives as National Sales Manager to continue the company's success in providing industry-leading natural ventilation and screening drive products to horticulture and agriculture customers throughout North America. Brent comes from Schaefer Ventilation Equipment, where he served as the Western Regional Sales manager. **GT**