

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

7/31/2026

On the Move

Jennifer Zurko

McHutchison

McHutchison has hired Don Golema as its new Southern California sales representative. Don has more than a decade of experience in business development and enterprise account management across the precision agriculture and emerging technology sectors. Most recently, he supported the horticulture lighting segment with Philips Lighting and Signify, where he worked closely with growers and industry partners to advance innovative solutions for horticulture production.

Midwest Groundcovers

Midwest Groundcovers announced the promotion of Chris Plane to the position of Vice President of Nursery Operations, where he'll provide strategic leadership for nursery production, inventory management, operational systems, facilities, maintenance, purchasing and other key operational functions. He'll also work closely with fellow company leadership to align production strategy, operational capabilities and long-term business objectives.

Since joining the company in 2014, Chris has served in a variety of operational and leadership roles of increasing responsibility, most recently as Production Manager. Throughout his career at Midwest Groundcovers, Chris has led major initiatives involving production systems, inventory management, operational planning, technology implementation and continuous improvement. He was instrumental in the company's Lean Flow implementation efforts and played a key leadership role in Midwest Groundcovers' successful transition to Microsoft Business Central.

Prior to joining Midwest Groundcovers, Chris gained horticultural industry experience in both the retail garden center and commercial landscape segments.

PanAmerican Seed

Mike Alden has been hired as a Culture Research Manager for PanAmerican Seed. In this role, Mike will provide leadership for the company's culture research program, focusing on developing commercial crop culture for both existing and newly developed varieties. He will also gain firsthand insight into real-world crop production challenges through customer visits, helping translate practical research findings into actionable solutions.

Mike holds a Ph.D. in Plant and Environmental Sciences from Clemson University and previously served as a Plant Health Manager for Everde Growers. **GT**