

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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On the Move

Jennifer Zurko

Ball Seed

Rafael Barajas has joined the Ball Seed Sales Force, supporting customers in Southern California. Prior to joining Ball, Rafael was at Monrovia, where he worked for the last nine years, most recently in outside sales covering a territory in California. Prior to that he worked for his family's retail garden center for 14 years.

Dramm

Dramm has hired Danny Graham as its new Northeastern Technical Representative. In his new role, Danny will oversee distributor relationships and support commercial sales throughout the Northeastern region. This region encompasses the Northeastern quarter of the United States. He'll work closely with customers across North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Maine and Rhode Island, focusing on solutions that include hand watering tools, complete irrigation systems, chemical application, horizontal airflow systems, humidity management tools and integrated water system design.

As a grower, Danny worked for multiple greenhouses in the Twin Cities area, and most recently, he supported growers as a distribution partner.

To support this hire, DRAMM has restructured its U.S. Sales Territories to strengthen service and support. Scott Sterling will manage the Western U.S. Region and Jason Grimmatt will manage the Southeastern U.S. Region.

Dramm also announced two retirements. General Manager Jeff Bucher is retiring after 23 years with the company, remaining a Dramm employee through December 31, working at the upcoming retail trade shows. Jeff began his career with Dramm in September 2003. At the time, the company employed 55 people; today, Dramm employs over 90 people and has grown to six times the sales volume.

Shipping Department Supervisor Wendy Ansorge is also retiring after nearly 24 years of dedicated service. As a member and leader of the Shipping Department, Wendy has made sure Dramm products are packed correctly, shipped on time and delivered to customers around the world.

EHR

EHR has welcomed Kelly Gallagher, Alison Hollingsworth and Seena Hagen to its national sales team. Collectively, the three bring 38 years of horticulture sales experience, along with backgrounds spanning commercial growing, independent garden center retail and green goods distribution. The appointments strengthen EHR's customer support across the Great Lakes, Northeast, the Carolinas and Central Plains regions.

Kelly Gallagher began her connection to horticulture on her parents' farm. She later returned to the industry professionally, spending 10 years in green goods sales with BFG Supply. Based in northern Ohio, Kelly will serve customers in Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania, along with select accounts nationwide.

Alison Hollingsworth holds a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Horticulture from The Ohio State University and brings 24 years of horticulture sales experience from BFG Supply. Alison resides in northern Ohio and will serve customers in North Carolina, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania, as well as select accounts elsewhere in the country.

Seena Hagen began her horticulture career at an independent garden center and spent the past four years as a territory manager for BFG Supply. Based in North Dakota, Seena will serve customers in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota and Kansas, along with select accounts nationwide.

Monrovia

Monrovia has hired Celeste Porter as the company's new Chief Financial Officer. Celeste began her new role in June and takes over for Frank van Straalen, who retired in July. Frank joined Monrovia in 2014 and helped direct the company financially through years of change and growth. Celeste brings a wealth of knowledge gained in the agriculture industry, most recently with Grimmway Produce Group and Tasteful Selections LLC, where she served as CFO.

Proven Winners

Proven Winners announced the addition of Tara Blunt as a regional account representative. In her new role, Tara will be responsible for inside liner sales in Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania, all retail ready sales in Michigan and Ohio, and inside retail ready sales in Indiana. Tara has extensive experience in the horticulture industry, including 12 years at Four Star Greenhouse (now operating as Proven Winners Carleton) and, most recently, six years at MasterTag.

Suntory Flowers

Suntory Flowers announced it has hired Rebecca Lusk to its North American team. In her new role as Commercial Director for Retail Market Development, Rebecca will lead Suntory's retail-facing commercial strategy and program development, with a focus on big box national accounts and independent retailers. Rebecca brings more than 25 years of experience optimizing the grower-to-retail pipeline, including roles at Dümmer Orange and, more recently, McHutchison.

Unex, Inc.

Unex Inc., a Dutch exporter of bareroot perennials and bulbs, announced the appointment of Joey Wiseman as its new Head of North American Sales and Operations. In this role, Joey will lead Unex's continued perennial sales and distribution efforts throughout the North American market, working with plant brokers, large-scale growers and retailers. She'll also serve as the primary contact for all North American business and new varieties emerging from Unex's bareroot perennial and bulb programs. Joey is well known throughout the industry for her work in developing ThinkPlants, where she served as director for nearly nine years. **GT**