

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Certified American Grown Now a Trade Association

Chris Beytes

Now it's confirmed: Certified American Grown, which had been a marketing arm of the California Cut Flower Commission (their "Field to Vase" dinners were under the CAG umbrella), is now a full-fledged, bonafide independent trade association representing cut flower and greens farmers nationwide. CAG replaces CCFC, which California growers voted to discontinue earlier this year.

As a trade association, CAG will continue its efforts to lobby on behalf of cut flower and greens farmers in Washington, D.C., sponsor American Grown Flowers Month in July, host the annual American Grown Field to Vase Dinner Tour, and give consumers confidence in the source of their flowers and greens by providing the only third-party guarantee in the floral industry validating that the bouquets and bunches purchased were actually grown right here in the USA.

Rita Jo Shoultz, owner of Alaska Perfect Peony, was elected the first Chair of the new organization. Other members of the CAG Formation Board are:

- Mike A. Mellano, Mellano & Company, Vice Chair
- Ko Klaver, Botanical Trading Company, Secretary
- Rene Van Wingerden, Ocean Breeze Farms, Treasurer
- Benno Dobbe, Holland American Flowers
- Diana Roy, Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers
- Lane DeVries, Sun Valley Floral Farms
- FJ Trzuskowski, Continental Floral Greens
- Frank Arnosky, Texas Specialty Cut Flower
- Michael Genovese, Summer Dreams Farms
- Andrea Gagnon, LynnVale Studios
- David Register, Fern Trust
- Erik Hagstrom, Albin Hagstrom & Son

“This will be an innovative group to watch and I look forward to an exciting future for our new, independent association,” said Dave Pruitt, administrator of the association. “We’re excited to continue to connect people to the amazing flowers and greens grown right here in the U.S. and to grow consumers’ bond to a product that connects and brings joy to so many.”

Want to be part of the “refreshed” organization? Reach out to Anna Kalins at info@americangrownflowers.org for more information. **GT**