

THE PRODUCE NEWS

Vol. 112, No. 40

COVERING FRESH PRODUCE AROUND THE GLOBE SINCE 1897

Week of October 5, 2009

Cameron leaves Trinity, forms marketing partnership with Warmerdam Packing

By RAND GREEN

John Warmerdam, chief operating officer of Warmerdam Packing LLC in Hanford, CA, and Maurice (Mo) Cameron, sales manager of Trinity Fruit Sales Co. in Fresno, CA, jointly announced Tuesday, Sept. 29 in exclusive interviews with *The Produce News* that Mr. Cameron would be leaving Trinity Fruit "probably effective October 1" and forming a partnership with Warmerdam to market the company's cherries, stone fruit and other fruit beginning with the 2010 season.



Mo Cameron



John Warmerdam

The new marketing company, which will be headquartered at the Warmerdam facility in Hanford, will be called Flavor Tree, a name that "ties back to [Warmerdam's] old-time brand, 'Sun Tree,'" a brand "which certainly we are going to keep," Mr. Cameron said.

The name for the new company also reflects the focus on flavor, which Mr. Cameron said is primarily what drives demand for stone fruit and cherries. People buy what they want to eat, and being successful involves being able "to produce that in a profitable manner," he said. "We like devel-

Continued on page 28

Produce defies inflation trend

FFVA Merchandiser of the Year



At its 66th annual convention held Sept. 27-29 at the Breakers in Palm Beach, FL, the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association named Sweetbay Supermarkets its Merchandiser of the Year. Steve Williams, director of produce and floral for the Tampa, FL-based chain, accepted the award. Additional coverage from the convention appears on page 178.

(Photo by Chip Carter)

INSIDE

Dole relaunching bagged salads

Dole Fresh Vegetables is putting its years of in-store and in-home consumer research to work in relaunching its bagged salad line that will now include on-pack information designed to measure the specific taste and texture characteristics of each blend.



Page 34

From humble beginnings

Andy Caneza began packing garlic in his mother's basement in New Orleans in 1949. Today, Spice World Inc., based in Orlando, FL, is a global enterprise



SCROLL DOWN TO PAGE 2 FOR REST OF ARTICLE

Cameron forms marketing partnership with Warmerdam

Continued from page 1

oping varieties that have great flavor" and believe that producing fruit that tastes good is "really important" to keeping the company economically sustainable.

Trinity Fruit has handled the sales of Warmerdam's fruit since Trinity's founding by David White in 1999. Mr. Cameron, who was previously with Lester Distributing in Fresno, CA, joined Trinity in May of that year.

"We had a good 11 seasons with Trinity, and by and large

they did a good job for us throughout that time," said Mr. Warmerdam, whose father, William (Bill) Warmerdam, founded the family business in 1965.

"But we have become somewhat isolated from customers," he said. "I guess what I am looking for is to renew some of the relationships that we have had with customers over the years that predate our association with Trinity."

In addition, "there are some special projects that require an in-house sales staff to do the

job right and get the feedback from customers and to help develop some of the new products that we have in mind," he said.

Warmerdam has had great success with its proprietary Sequoia cherry variety and looks to replicate that success with other new products. Some of those will be coming into production for the 2010 season. Others are "a few years out but nonetheless need development with our customers," he said.

Having more direct contact

with customers is "one of my goals," Mr. Warmerdam continued. "Personally, I think that in order for us to succeed as a grower-packer-shipper, we need to have a [first-hand] knowledge of what customers are looking for, and the only way we can do that is by being in contact with them." It is becoming "increasingly difficult" to satisfy customers' needs, "so we need to be in touch with them as much as possible," he said.

"I'm very excited" about the new opportunity, said Mr. Cameron. "I was asked by Warmerdam Packing to do the marketing for them, and it will be my job to be the marketer. But it is also my job to include them in the marketplace ... and allow them to interact" with customers so as growers, packers and shippers they can better understand "what the market is expecting of them."

Mr. Warmerdam will be "an important part of the new company," Mr. Cameron added.

Over the next six months or so before the start of the spring harvest, Flavor Tree will be putting together a marketing team consisting of people "whose strengths will complement my own," he said. By starting the process now, "it

will give us some time" to find the right people who are "the right fit and to have a good team up and going in the early part of 2010."

Mr. Cameron began his produce career in 1984, concurrently with his senior year in college, at Lester Distributing, where he worked closely with Sadoian Bros., a family-run tree fruit farming and packing organization. His main focus over the past 25 years, both at Lester and at Trinity, has been "on export programs of California cherries, peaches, plums, nectarines and grapes, while maintaining relationships with several quality retailers in the United States," according to a written statement. He is a graduate of California State University-Fresno's school of business.

Mr. Warmerdam, a third-generation stone fruit grower who grew up spending summers working on the family farm, graduated from the University of California-Davis in 1998 with a bachelor of science degree in crop science and management, with an emphasis in pomology. He has worked full time with Warmerdam since graduation and has served as chief operating officer since 2005.

Agriwise completes successful traceability pilot

AgriWise Inc., an international provider of software services for grower-based businesses, announced in a Sept. 30 press release that it has successfully conducted a commercial pilot program with one of the leading U.S. grocery retailers that demonstrates the effectiveness of the harvest traceability features provided by AgriWise's Business Intelligence Software.

Working closely with The Giumarra Cos. and iTradeNetwork, AgriWise conducted a full-scale pilot in September that involved tracking California peaches from orchard to store using AgriWise's PTI-compliant software.

"Everyone came away impressed by how seamlessly the technology worked with existing harvest and distribution practices," Jimmy Moir, AgriWise chief executive officer, said in the press release. He added that the pilot program not only completed a full traceback and forward of

the peaches but also used the GTIN-LOT number carried by iTradeNetwork in the advanced shipping notification to allow the retailer to view a full history of the product through a private and secure web portal.

"Our message to agricultural businesses is that traceability does not have to be an added cost in the supply chain," Mr. Moir said in the release. "Instead, it should be part of an information-gathering system that helps growers, packers and shippers improve their operating margins and see higher return on investment while providing retailers with the traceability they expect."

"Collaboration and timely visibility into product movement were critical to the success of this pilot and we are proud that iTradeNetwork was part of the solution," Rob Bonavito, CEO of iTradeNetwork, said in the release.