



a cooperative of family farms since 1893™

news release

Contact: *Joan Wickham*
661-290-8777
jwickham@sunkistgrowers.com

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Sunkist Growers Announces Sixth Straight Billion-Dollar Revenue Year and Second Consecutive Billion-Dollar Grower Payment

February 23, 2016, Valencia, Calif. — Sunkist Growers announced the cooperative’s sixth consecutive billion-dollar revenue year at the company’s annual meeting on February 17. Moreover, for the first time in Sunkist’s history, for two consecutive years the organization has issued grower payments of over a billion dollars.

“Sunkist has made many advancements to keep the cooperative well-positioned in the current business environment and last year’s results demonstrate the positive impact of those improvements,” said Sunkist President and CEO Russell Hanlin.

Notable changes in the past few years include the implementation of the cooperative’s Grower Distribution program. “We made our third distribution to growers in 2015, and are committed to increasing these distributions annually. This program was accomplished through an effective cost containment plan and revenues from our for-profit businesses,” added Hanlin.

Sunkist’s juice processing joint venture with Ventura Coastal has yielded positive results for the organization. Now in its fourth year, the business partnership continues to generate improved by-product earnings, more timely payments and greatly contributes to grower distributions. Sunkist’s robust licensing program and global sourcing business is also advancing. With 49 licensees in total, the Sunkist brand is used to market approximately 700 products in 77 countries. “All of these businesses continue to contribute to positive revenue streams and also help strategically position Sunkist for future growth,” said Hanlin.

Another significant event for the cooperative was Sunkist's headquarter relocation to Valencia in 2014, which strengthened Sunkist's financial position and also geographically centralized its business operations to the cooperative's grower base.

"The positive changes and growth we have achieved in recent years has been accomplished with the leadership and dedication of Sunkist's Board of Directors, chaired for the past five years by Mark Gillette. His commitment and leadership has been instrumental to our organization, and we are thankful for his valuable contributions to Sunkist," said Hanlin.

As his term as Chairman of Sunkist's Board of Directors comes to a close, the contributions of Mark Gillette, President of Sunkist-affiliated Gillette Citrus Inc. of Dinuba, Calif. were recognized during the meeting. Gillette served as Chairman of the Board for five consecutive terms, the maximum time allowed under Sunkist by-laws.

Gerald Denni, General Manager of Golden Valley Citrus, Inc. in Strathmore, Calif. and co-owner of Mittman-Denni Citrus Management, was elected to his first term as Chairman of the Board following the meeting.

Elected by the Board to Vice Chairmanships for 2016-17 include Mark Gillette, Dinuba, Calif. (District 1), James Finch, Ojai, Calif. (District 2) and Nicholas Bozick, Mecca, Calif. (District 3).

The meeting welcomed this year's incoming Directors, including Norman Evans, Terra Bella, Calif., Amy Fukutomi, Oxnard, Calif., Jim Layes, Riverside, Calif., Tony Lombardi, Terra Bella, Calif., Randy Vogt, Visalia, Calif., and Scott Wiley, Terra Bella, Calif. as well as Steve Cutting, Manhattan Beach, Calif. and Robert Grether, Somis, Calif., who have previously served on the Board.

Enduring members of the 2016-17 Board include Craig Armstrong, Thermal, Calif., Ron Arnott, Mentone, Calif., Allen Camp, Ventura, Calif., Donald Dames, Oxnard, Calif., Burt Fugate, Santa Maria, Calif., Curt Holmes, Fresno, Calif., Gary Laux, Porterville, Calif., Brad Leichtfuss, Fillmore, Calif., Robert Linderman, Visalia, Calif., Warren Lyall, Pauma Valley, Calif., Samuel Mayhew, Oxnard, Calif., Eric Meling, Ivanhoe, Calif., Cecilia Perry, Yuma, Ariz., Kevin Riddle, Orosi, Calif. and Kevin Severns, Orange Cove, Calif.

Sunkist also honored the service of outgoing Directors John Kalender, Woodlake, Calif., Russell Katayama, Orosi, Calif., John Matthiessen, Visalia, Calif., Martin Mittman, Porterville, Calif., Thomas Mazzetti, Riverside, Calif., Richard Pidduck, Santa Paula, Calif. and Randy Veeh, Visalia, Calif.

Founded in 1893, the Sunkist cooperative of family farms offers more than 40 fresh citrus varieties and remains a brand that has been trusted by customers and consumers for over a century. With thousands of grower members in California and Arizona, the Sunkist cooperative reflects the values and legacy of its over 120-year history: family-owned farms where traditional growing practices, stewardship of natural resources and a dedication to innovation are proudly passed through the generations.

Founded under the principle that more can be accomplished by working together, Sunkist continues to promote a culture of family and collaboration with growers and customers to drive beneficial results for all. Sunkist offers a full range of cartons, bags, display masters, bins and reusable plastic containers (RPCs) which have been designed with customers' needs in mind. The company provides customer-specific creative marketing and promotional support to retail and foodservice trade designed to build consumer excitement, demand and sales.

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*Sunkist Growers is a citrus marketing cooperative, founded in 1893,
which is owned by and operated for thousands of family farmers growing citrus in California and
Arizona.*

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