

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Growers Express ushers in the new year with Capurro Farms as partner**

#### ***Partnership weds respected brands with market leader in safety, marketing***

**SALINAS, CA** – Capurro Farms, an 83-year family farming operation and owner of some of the most respected brands in the produce industry, will become a partner in Growers Express, a leading marketer of fresh produce and an industry innovator.

The partnership brings two traditions of family operations together in a strong company with wide market reach, innovative products and a rich and diverse farming base.

“In today’s rapidly changing produce marketplace, growers and shippers need to have significant production and shipping resources, a diverse line of products and an ability to innovate,” said Jamie Strachan, Growers Express president and CEO. “This expansion of our partnership gives our members the scale and expertise to be market leaders.”

The combined entity will operate more than 50,000 acres stretching from Santa Cruz and San Benito counties to southern Monterey County, as well as in Imperial County, Riverside County, Arizona and Mexico. The partnership puts all production under a united system of food safety recognized as a leader in the produce industry.

Capurro Farms brings to the partnership a family of brand names including the well known "*Topless*" brand, which is among the most respected in the industry. Capurro also brings industry-leading expertise in products that will expand Growers Express’ offerings, marketed principally under the Green Giant Fresh™ brand. The company is renowned for excellence in growing artichokes and Brussels sprouts, and for the innovative value-added consumer packs it recently brought to the marketplace.

In addition to compatibility from a business perspective, the similar cultures and traditions of Capurro Farms and the Growers Express partners made the decision to join forces an easy one.

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Capurro Farms joins existing partners Mission Ranches, Gill Ranch and Mesa Packing. Like Capurro, these are family-based operations with generations of farming experience in the Salinas Valley and surrounding regions. Capurro Farms is co-owned by third-generation farmers and grandsons of the founder – Frank and Kristopher Capurro and John and Mike Manfre. Each has more than 30 years experience in the fresh vegetable business.

“This partnership brings together local, family-based companies, each with long traditions of customer service, respect for employees and commitment to the communities where we do business,” said Frank Capurro. “This partnership preserves and enhances those traditions.”

A hallmark of integrating the two companies will be protecting the interests of customers, leaders of the two companies said.

“Customers of both companies will be able to access the same brands, do business with the same sales representatives and use the same processes they’ve come to trust over the years,” said Manfre. “This commitment to the customers will drive our decisions on how to integrate operations in the months ahead. The practices that work best for our customers are those that will go forward.”

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