



For Immediate Release
October 12, 2022

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**Mark Jansen – Blue Diamond Growers President and CEO – Announces Plans to Step Down
Following More than a Decade of Leadership and Remarkable Business Growth**
Board of Directors Initiates National Search for New Chief Executive Officer

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Blue Diamond Growers President and CEO, Mark Jansen, today announced that he intends to step down from the role he has held with the agricultural cooperative and global consumer packaged goods leader since September 2010. Jansen has decided to step away after a successful 12-year tenure as CEO because he believes the organization is well-positioned for future growth and the timing is right for him to make the change.

“Together, we have been fortunate to accomplish what we committed to do – and more,” said Jansen. “Helping the great people of Blue Diamond thrive has been an honor and privilege.”

Specific Blue Diamond Grower achievements under Jansen’s leadership include:

- Opening a new 200-million-pound manufacturing facility in Turlock, Calif.
- Expanding into five innovative new almond product categories
- Creating a global network of licensee partners for Almond Breeze® that enabled it to grow into the largest almondmilk brand in the world
- Driving dynamic growth of the flavored snack nuts category that has earned 50% market share in the United States and global distribution in more than 60 countries
- Achieving double-digit compounded annual growth of Blue Diamond’s branded business

“Mark promised us 10 years and gave us 12, and we greatly appreciate his significant contributions to all the stakeholders of Blue Diamond,” said Dan Cummings, Chairman of the Board, Blue Diamond Growers.

“Under Mark’s leadership, Blue Diamond has transformed into a leading \$1.6 billion global branded business and one of the most consistent and fastest-growing food and beverage companies in the world. He has built an incredibly strong and experienced executive team that has delivered healthy year-over-year revenue growth resulting in increasingly superior returns to our grower-owners.”

According to Cummings, the co-op’s Board of Directors has established a CEO Succession Committee and is working with executive search and leadership advisory firm, Egon Zehnder, on a nationwide search, open to both internal and external candidates.

“Blue Diamond is a growth company by choice, driven in large part by a complete dedication to a single ‘good for you’ product, vertical integration, extensive partnerships, and a continual investment in marketing and innovation,” Cummings said. “This is a phenomenal leadership opportunity for the right executive who shares our strong values and commitment to our loyal growers, employees, and customers.”



Jansen affirmed he is committed to supporting the search for a successor and plans to stay on until a new CEO has been selected and begins working to help ensure business continuity and a smooth leadership transition.

“The Blue Diamond Growers co-op knows how to get almonds from growers’ farms to families worldwide better than anyone,” said Jansen. “We’re growing with an accelerated focus on sustainability and a continued commitment to giving back to the stakeholders we serve. As it was for me, this will be a great opportunity for the next CEO, and I look forward to supporting our Board, growers, and work family throughout this transition.”

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About Blue Diamond

Blue Diamond Growers, a grower-owned cooperative representing approximately 3,000 of California’s almond growers, is the world’s leading almond marketer and processor. Established in 1910, it created the California almond industry and opened world markets for almonds. Blue Diamond is dedicated to delivering the benefits of almonds around the world and does so by providing high-quality almonds, almond ingredients, and branded products. Headquartered in Sacramento, the company employs more than 1,800 people throughout its processing plants, receiving stations and gift shops. To learn more about Blue Diamond Growers, visit www.bluediamond.com and follow the company on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).