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## **Steve Pinkston retiring from Sunny Valley International**

June 16, 2021

Sunny Valley International, headquartered in Glassboro, NJ, announced June 15 that Steve Pinkston will be retiring, effective June 20.



A 40-year veteran of the produce industry, Pinkston joined Sunny Valley as the director of business development in 2018 after spending nearly 25 years in various produce sourcing and procurement roles at Walmart. Prior to joining Walmart in 1994, he spent 18 years with Food Lion.

"We want to extend our sincere thanks to Steve for the work that he has done over the past three years to strengthen Sunny Valley International's relationships with retailers up and down the East Coast," said Francisco Allende, co-owner and general manager of Sunny Valley. "He has dedicated his entire professional career to the produce industry, and was able to use his vast network of contacts to strengthen many of Sunny Valley International's relationships with our existing customers and develop new business relationships."

For Pinkston, what he will remember most about his time in the produce industry are the many wonderful relationships he has forged along the way.

"The best part of this industry is the people. I will truly miss those daily interactions the most. I have made so many friends and acquaintances over the years who have helped and supported me," said Pinkston. "The many years I was able to spend with several of the major retailers allowed me to learn and understand both retail and the produce industry, and allowed me to meet and learn from some of the best grower-shippers in the business. To finish out my career, I had the distinct privilege to work with the great company Sunny Valley International. I personally want to thank Francisco, Tom and the team at Sunny Valley for their support and encouragement as I made the transition from retail to the shipper side of the business."

While Pinkston plans to make the most of his retirement by enjoying his many hobbies and becoming even more active in volunteer endeavors in his home state of North Carolina, he intends to remain actively involved in the produce industry, including his ongoing work in support of the Southeast Produce Council.

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