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Next generation of organic leaders on display at OGS

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Up and coming leaders from three of the nations' most progressive organic growing operations have been confirmed as panelists for the Keynote presentation at the 2021 [Organic Grower Summit](#) presented by Western Growers and OPN Dec. 1-2, in Monterey, CA.



Dave Puglia

“Next Gen: A Conversation with the Next Generation of Organic Leaders,” will be moderated by Dave Puglia, president and CEO of Western Growers, with panelists for the discussion including Keith Barnard, senior vice president of sales and sourcing, Mission Produce; Bianca Kaprielian, CEO and co-owner, Fruit World; and Mike Valpredo, president and co-founder, Country Sweet Produce. Featuring candid commentary, this thought-provoking Keynote presentation will explore how these young leaders see the landscape of organic fresh produce today, the issues organic fresh producers need to address, and what the future of the multi-billion-dollar organic fresh produce industry may look like.

“As the future of the organic fresh produce industry rests with the next generation of growers and producers, they will face a wide array of opportunities and obstacles. While the sales and consumption of organic fresh produce items continues to grow, challenges from labor, water, regulations, and other hot button issues await these new leaders. It is important we hear their viewpoints and perspectives as it relates to the future of organic production and growth of our industry,” said Tonya Antle, co-founder of the Organic Produce Network.

The fourth annual OGS is designed to provide information vital to organic growers and producers, as

well as an overview of the opportunities and challenges in the production of organic fresh food. The newly announced Keynote presentation is part of an extensive educational program designed to inform and engage organic producers, their service providers, and supply chain partners.

Among other educational sessions slated for 2021 OGS are:

- Building Resilience through Organic Farming Systems
- SmartFarm: AgTech in the Field
- Organic Grower Perspectives on the Challenges of Scaling
- Growing and Selling in the Mexican Organic Market
- Are Regenerative and Sustainability Labeling Good for Organics?
- Organics at Retail—Performance and Consumer Expectations

OGS 2021 will be held Dec. 1-2 with exhibition and general registration currently open. Only two trade show booths remain available before the OGS trade show floor sells out, with exhibitors including companies involved with soil amendments, ag technology, food safety, packaging, and equipment connecting with organic field production staff, supply chain managers, pest control advisors, and food safety experts.

"In partnership with Western Growers, this year's OGS will provide up-to-date resources and information to support the continued success of organic producers, with an emphasis on the role of ag technology," said Antle. "From seed to soil to harvest, our goal is to present the most relevant information on the most important subjects and issues facing organic production."

Photo: Keith Barnard, senior vice president of sales and sourcing, Mission Produce; Bianca Kaprielian, CEO and co-owner, Fruit World; and Mike Valpredo, president and co-founder, Country Sweet Produce.

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