



By Liam O'Callaghan

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Merger creates new Australian alliance

Fresh produce trader BGP International has announced it will merge with Australian-owned Fresh Solutions Group



Neil Barker and Adam Leslie

Australian owned fresh produce company, Fresh Solutions Group, will acquire Melbourne-based exporter BGP International as a wholly owned subsidiary, growing the footprint of both companies.

Fresh Solutions Group while based in Australia has a network of fresh produce suppliers that covers Australia, the US, South America and Asia while BGP International exports of fresh produce from Australia, Egypt, South Africa, the US, India and China.

The merger of these companies will result in a stronger and enlarged group well positioned to continue to assist their extensive range of suppliers. BGP will continue to operate under its own name as a separate entity.

Neil Barker, chairman of BGP International will continue his active role and assist in the integration of both companies over the next two to three years and will also become a director of Fresh Solutions Group.

Adam Leslie of Fresh Solutions Group will continue in his role as chief executive and managing director of the enlarged group and Prudence Barker, currently chief executive of BGP International, will become the chief operating officer of both Fresh Solutions Group and BGP International.

"I think this can be a positive move for both of us, the synergy between the two companies is really good, there is no duplication of what we both do," Neil Barker said.

"We are strong in exports and Fresh Solutions Group is strong domestically in Australia. We are looking forward to working together to identify and develop potential opportunities together."

Adam Leslie said he was just as excited for the two companies to join forces.

"Both companies didn't have any crossover in customers and supply lines so it was a lovely vehicle to look at," Leslie said.

"If we had one weakness in our business it was obviously in export and the brand and the currency that Neil has built with BGP is very impressive and it has a lot of integrity and that was very important for us."

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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