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By Carl Collen

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Hanlin out, Phillips in at Sunkist



Current president and CEO Russ Hanlin will retire at the end of the fiscal year on 31 October

Sunkist Growers and Fruit Growers Supply (FGS) have announced the retirement of the long-serving Russ Hanlin, president and chief executive officer of the two cooperatives.

After more than 41 years of service, Hanlin will retire at the end of the 2019 fiscal year on 31 October, with the board selecting Jim Phillips – current president of Porterville Citrus – to succeed Hanlin at both Sunkist and FGS.

“Russ has made tremendous contributions to Sunkist Growers and the citrus industry overall,” said Gerald Denni, chairman of Sunkist’s board of directors. “We will certainly miss Russ’ leadership. On behalf of the board,

I would like to thank Russ for his dedication to our growers, shippers, employees, and customers, and to welcome Jim to the executive leadership team at Sunkist Growers.”

Phillips brings more than 30 years of experience in the agriculture industry to Sunkist Growers, having spent most of his career working with Sunkist-affiliated shippers in various leadership roles.

In addition, he has served on the Sunkist and FGS boards, and the California Citrus Mutual board, over the years since the late 1990s.

“Sunkist has been a fundamental cornerstone to the citrus industry for well over a century,” said Phillips.

“It’s my passion to grow and deliver exceptional quality fruit while getting the highest returns for our California and Arizona citrus growers. Sunkist has a talented group of people, and I’m excited to work alongside them to carry the iconic brand into the future.”

Phillips will come on board as CEO-elect on 1 July.

Hanlin added: “I look forward to working with Jim in the months ahead. I am confident he will take our two cooperatives to great heights in the future.”