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New appointments at Apeel

Jim Smits named as vice-president of retail advisory while CEO James Rogers lands IFPA role



Self-life extension technology specialist Apeel has today (10 November) announced the hiring of Jim Smits as vice-president of retail advisory, a new role designed to align its solutions with the needs of retail grocery executives in operations, merchandising, marketing, and fresh produce.

Smits will lead Apeel's effort to help retailers capture consumer demand for fresher, longer-lasting and more sustainable fruits and vegetables.

He brings 40 years of retail experience, including more than 20 years in executive level leadership roles at nationally-recognised grocers including H-E-B, Albertsons, Ahold, and Dollar General.

"The shopping habits of consumers are rapidly changing," said Smits. "They desire more convenience, better value, and innovative products, especially in fresh. These changes are making the retail landscape more competitive than ever before.

"I'm proud to join Apeel as our innovations align perfectly with the needs of today's consumer, while reducing waste," he continued. "Together with our retail partners, we'll deliver an exceptional fresh produce experience online and in-store, and develop consumer programmes that highlight a differentiation in quality, shelf life, freshness, and environmental sustainability."

Meanwhile, Apeel CEO James Rogers has been appointed technology council chair for the newly formed International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA), which is poised to become one of the most influential produce governing organisations in the world.

According to Apeel, these new roles will enable it to collaborate with executive and thought-leaders in the fresh food system who are focused on the urgent need to reduce waste while serving the needs of fresh produce consumers.

"The retail sector is looking for partners

to help meet today's complex needs, while securing their operations against disruptions," said Rogers. "Based on years of working with the top retailers and suppliers across the globe, we have a deep understanding of the needs of the food system and have seen first-hand how technology can make the food ecosystem better.

"One of the needs Apeel has addressed through technology is to put time back on the industry's side and provide insights that help our partners optimise distribution," he added. "The ever-evolving food landscape is going to require ongoing adoption and integration of new technologies in the coming years, and I'm honoured to support the International Fresh Produce Association in their mission to put technology to work for the food industry."

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