

# Food Industry Pro Takes Over Marketing Role

**T**he California Avocado Commission hired food industry veteran Terry Splane to be the organization's new vice president of marketing, effective March 13, 2023.

Splane fills the role vacated by Jan DeLyser, who retired in mid-February after 25 years with CAC. Splane has had more than 30 years of sales and marketing experience in the foodservice and retail channels, most recently as head of partner success & strategy for Impossible Foods.

"We are very happy to have Terry Splane join the team and lead the Commission's marketing strategy and activities," said California Avocado Commission President Jeff Oberman. "Terry's deep experience in the fresh food industry and comprehension of multiple distribution channels including retail, club and foodservice, as well as his leadership in strategy, branding, advertising and public relations, align very well with our marketing team's needs."

Oberman continued: "In addition to Terry's demonstrated marketing proficiency, his industry leadership and mentorship are reasons that we're confident he will be a great fit with the California Avocado Commission. He will be leading a dedicated team of marketers and building upon our legacy of marketing innovation in the exciting avocado category."

Splane grew up in the Pacific Northwest and recalls spending many summers on the family farm in Pullman, which is in East Washington farm country. "I spent a good bit of time on the farm when I was younger helping my uncle harvest the crops, which included wheat, barley and peas," he said. "I look forward to supporting and helping California farmers market their avocados."

In fact, he said it was his love of avocados that attracted him to the CAC position. "First and foremost, I wanted to be involved marketing a product I love," he said.

After graduating from Washington State University in 1984, Splane started his career with Dart Container Corporation, which gave him solid experience in sales, including export, as well as research and analysis. He also was introduced to the world of marketing when he was promoted to the Ft. Lauderdale office in Florida to help develop the market for the company's packaging innovations. He stayed there for four years.

From the Southeast, he moved to the Northeast to take a director of marketing position with The Chinet Company, well known for its paper plates but Splane said the product line is much deeper than that. After six years, he jumped solidly into the food industry with a six-year stint at McCormick & Co., the leader in the retail spice world. That position introduced him to the geographic middle of the Eastern Seaboard as the company is based near Baltimore, MD.



*Terry and Traci Splane with their blended family on a family trip.*

A further dive into the foodservice business awaited Splane when he joined Ventura Foods, a massive company with dozens of retail and foodservice brands. As vice president of marketing, Splane mostly worked on the foodservice side of the business during his 13-year tenure with the Southern California-based company. The position also allowed him to move back to the West Coast, with California's Orange County serving as his home base ever since.

Splane's most recent position was with Impossible Foods, where he also began as director of marketing about five years ago and then developed the Partner Success and Strategy Department as the functional head. In those five years, he helped the company grow from a startup disruptive brand to the leading manufacturer in the Plant Based Meat category in both Retail and Foodservice.

Splane and his wife, Traci, live in Anaheim Hills, and have a blended family of three adult children. Brandon Splane lives in San Francisco and works for Anova Culinary, which provides smart cooking tools for the home. Cody Splane preceded his father into the produce industry as he works on the marketing team with Zespri International, the world's largest marketer of kiwifruit. Daughter Alex Jones also is in marketing for Mountain Land Design in Salt Lake City.

Terry and Traci love to combine hiking and traveling, often taking short trips to hiking paradises such as Zion National Park, the Sedona area in Arizona, and Joshua Tree National Park in the California desert. They also like their quick-hitter family trips to Mexico. Last year, the family went to Todos Santos on the Baja Peninsula, and this spring they are heading to Sayulita, near Puerto Vallarta on the west coast of Mexico's mainland. 🥑