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**Blue Diamond Growers Highlights Innovation and Growth at 114<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**

*The farmer-owned cooperative held its annual farmer-member meeting, releases annual report*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Blue Diamond Growers, the world’s leading almond company, held their 114<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on Nov. 20 in Modesto, Calif. President and CEO, Kai Bockmann, highlighted the farmer-owned cooperative’s successes over the last year and the progress made against its strategic growth plan. Blue Diamond Grower, Bill Brush of Modesto, received the Chairman’s Grower Ambassador of the Year Award, presented by Blue Diamond Chairman Steve Van Duyn – also of Modesto.

With nearly 1,000 farmer-owners in attendance, Bockmann and Van Duyn reflected on the year noting that despite continued challenges facing the industry, Blue Diamond achieved great successes against its strategic plan to deliver a competitive return to its growers.

“This year, amidst the challenges, Blue Diamond has fought for its members by tapping into every opportunity to strengthen our portfolio and increase demand for our almonds,” said Van Duyn. “I am confident that through the excellent leadership of our Board of Directors and the Blue Diamond team good times are ahead.”

Alongside several company executives – Carmen Bourgaize, Chief Commercial Officer, Tony Laurenzana Senior Vice President, Ingredients and Branded International Sales, Steve Schult, Vice President, Supply Chain, and Mel Machado, Vice President, Member Relations – Bockmann shared how the Cooperative is strengthening its core business while creating new opportunities for growth by expanding its international footprint and product portfolio.

“What drives us every day is to deliver the highest return for your almonds,” said Bockmann. “Our ability to adapt swiftly to changing market conditions, paired with our strategic planning and forward-thinking approach, enabled us to navigate through difficult circumstances and see positive returns from our strategic plan.”

Over the last year, Blue Diamond drove strategic investments in key international markets including Canada, Mexico, Japan, Europe and the Middle East. A new partnership with Japanese company, Kagome®, is set to position Japan to be a top international market for Blue Diamond’s Almond Breeze® almondmilk. The Cooperative successfully launched their large format for club stores in Mexico and established a new distributor in the Middle East, catering to markets across the region. In Europe, new flavored almonds are being introduced, offering customers additional flavors and forms.

Domestically, Blue Diamond’s focus on innovative offerings continues to make an impact in the market, captivating consumers with their unique flavors and textures. Broadening its presence in the grocery store, Blue Diamond released two new product lines – a tasty array of almond and almond fruit blends

for retail produce departments and Almonds and More mixed nut products. A new snack nut, Ranch flavor, launched and was picked up by major retails across hundreds of stores, while consumer favorites Chile n' Lime and Snickerdoodle launched nationwide.

“Blue Diamond’s products have tremendous value to offer consumers – innovation, flavor, nutrition, and convenience,” said Carmen Bourgaize, Chief Commercial Officer. “We are leveraging these strengths to entice consumers and drive consumption.”

In addition to outlining progress made on the strategic plan, the executive panel noted the company’s focus on maximizing efficiencies across the business. Investing in state-of-the-art equipment has optimized operations across all facilities, while energy conservation initiatives improved air compression inefficiencies to achieve energy savings.

Bockmann concluded the business meeting expressing optimism for Blue Diamond’s future and the company’s key differentiator – its people. Supporting more than 4,400 families between its farmers and team members, Blue Diamond is steadfast in its commitment to continued growth and progress for the Cooperative.

“It all comes down to one thing: build a bigger, better stronger Blue Diamond that provides the best return for our growers’ almonds. This is only the beginning of us Growing Together,” said Bockmann.

### **Blue Diamond Chairman’s Award**

At this year’s annual meeting, Blue Diamond’s Board Chairman Steve Van Duyn presented the 2024 Chairman Award to Bill Brush. Brush, a Blue Diamond grower for more than 40 years, is an agronomist, water expert and plant nutritionist. Through his consulting business B&B Ag Consulting, Brush has assisted farmers throughout the world with soil fertility and water treatments. More recently, he has continued his work of educating the agricultural community through his podcast, “Agriculture in a Nutshell.” Brush is a steadfast advocate for agriculture and the almond industry serving more than 18 years on the Almond Board of California.

### **Blue Diamond Annual Report Now Available**

In conjunction with the Annual Meeting, the Blue Diamond Growers 2024 “Growing Together” Annual Report is now available on the Blue Diamond website at [www.bluediamond.com](http://www.bluediamond.com).

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### **About Blue Diamond Growers®**

Blue Diamond Growers, a grower-owned cooperative representing nearly 3,000 of California’s almond growers, is the world’s leading almond marketer and processor. Established in 1910, it created the California almond industry and opened world markets for almonds. Blue Diamond is dedicated to delivering the benefits of almonds around the world and does so by providing high-quality almonds, almond ingredients, and branded products. Headquartered in Sacramento, the company employs approximately 1,400 people throughout its processing plants, receiving stations and gift shops. To learn more about Blue Diamond Growers, visit [www.BlueDiamond.com](http://www.BlueDiamond.com) and follow the company on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).