

Arizona Department of Agriculture

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AZDA Leadership Update

PHOENIX, AZ -- Arizona Department of Agriculture Director, Paul Brierley, announced today that upon Jeff Grant's retirement on Friday, October 11 after 9 years as the agency's Deputy Director, he will be optimizing the leadership team to better support the agency, while allowing him to maximize his effectiveness both internally and externally.

AZDA is excited to announce the return of Sheldon Jones to serve as Deputy Director of Programs, and the promotion of Heather Flowers to serve as Deputy Director of Operations and Strategy, effective today.

Sheldon is an Arizona native who comes from the ranching and agricultural finance worlds. He served as the second Director of AZDA and as Deputy Commissioner of the Colorado Department of Agriculture, in addition to many other leadership positions in organizations like the Agribusiness & Water Council of Arizona, the Farm Foundation, and the Soil Health Institute.

Heather has served 3 years as Assistant Director of Strategy & Planning at AZDA and has a Master of Science degree in Industrial & Organizational Psychology. Prior to that she worked in the Arizona Government Transformation Office and served in several roles at ADEQ. Heather will retain her current assignments so her position will not be backfilled, thus these appointments will not create any new positions.

"With Sheldon's knowledge of both the agriculture industry and the role of the Department, and the valuable leadership in strategic planning and process improvement that Heather has provided to AZDA, I am excited for the improvements we will bring to our employees and the communities we serve," said Brierley.

AZDA's goal is to provide excellence through accountability and teamwork. This optimization of leadership will provide streamlined support for the administrative needs of AZDA's eight divisions, and for the agricultural community and the citizens of Arizona. Additional opportunities to maximize the Department's effectiveness will be evaluated and implemented in the coming months, with the assurance that no staffing reductions are intended.