***President’s Message***

Keeping up and finding balance ... who can relate? The stresses of owning your own business; the countless hours spent at work; how do we manage it all? Most of you probably know me and believe that it looks from the outside that I have everything together. Honestly, my business is quite overwhelming right now. From keeping up with the harvest of a bountiful peach crop and doing our best to sell it, to the start of harvesting apples, to operating a Farm Market and Pick-Your-Own operation, to managing workers in the field and market … it keeps one busy, both mentally and physically. And that isn’t even to mention the most important priority … family.

How do we balance it all when the business demands so many hours of our time? The older I get, the more regrets of missed opportunities with family and friends accumulate. I am encouraging us all amidst the stresses of farming, researching, and working to always take time for the people around us. The work will always be there, whether we are here or not. I recently heard of a loved one passing away unexpectedly. We cannot ever get that time back. I LOVE the fruit industry and have a strong passion for it, but we need to be careful to keep our priorities straight. Let me be an encouragement to whoever may need it today. Do your best to avoid the regrets of not spending enough quality time with the ones around you.

Now as far as the harvest of this season, I understand it is going quite well with each crop holding steady prices. Apple season is starting, and it looks as though there is a plentiful crop out there, although I am still determining the quality. We have some good and some bad on our farms. Not quite sure of the reasoning of it all, but we will evaluate the crop as it comes in. It sounds as though the crop is smaller than last year, so I pray that we can sell our crops easier than last year’s crop.

I want to continue to encourage all of you who can help with the industry to please do so. As I have been involved for a few years now, I see our industry— the fruit industry—as being one of the strongest groups in the area. I am grateful we all work together as a team. I have seen other industries not work so well together.

That’s all for this month. Keep up the good work everyone and have fun doing it.

Corey McCleaf  
SHAP President