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For Immediate Release

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Download color and greyscale images: <http://jfs.co/ben-rough-pr>

J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. welcomes Ben Rough as CEO

Boring, Oregon - J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. has named Ben E. Rough to serve as Chief Executive Officer of the shade, flowering and specialty ornamental tree nursery headquartered in Boring, Oregon.

Rough's appointment to the leadership role of the family-owned nursery, founded in 1946 by Evelyn and J. Frank Schmidt, Jr., marks a new chapter for the storied nursery as its leadership transitions from second to third-generation family members. Rough brings more than 20 years of green industry experience to the company, which is recognized around the world as a leader in the development and production of improved shade and ornamental tree cultivars.

"I have deep respect for what has been built here at JFS over the past 74 years," Rough said.

"Even in this time of uncertainty I'm struck by the genuine appreciation that the Schmidt family has for employees, their emphasis on nurturing a family culture, their support of the community, and their vision for seeking and finding what's new and next on the horizon.

"While I recognize that the ongoing situation requires pragmatic decision making as it relates to managing our business, I am confident that J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. will benefit from having developed stronger bonds with our customers, vendors and employees during these challenging times," Rough noted. "I look forward to upholding the traditions and heritage of the nursery while guiding it to the next level and growing our position in the marketplace to its full potential."

Page 2 of 3 - JFS welcomes Ben Rough as CEO

A graduate of the University of Oregon, Rough earned an MBA from Marylhurst University. Plants have surrounded him since youth, when he helped operate the family floral business in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Rough worked his way from a customer service position with Glenn Walters Nursery of Cornelius, Oregon, to that of Vice President. He facilitated its sale to Ameriscape, where he served as Chief Operations Officer and ultimately Chief Executive Officer. Most recently, he served as Director of Sales and Distribution for DCA West Nursery of Banks, Oregon. A longtime resident of Tigard, he and Sarah, his wife of 28 years, have three children with whom they enjoy fishing, camping, cooking and other family activities.

Rough's hiring was announced on behalf of the Schmidt Family Ownership Council by J. Frank Schmidt III, past President & CEO. In his new role as Chairman of the Board, Frank will continue to play an active advisory role in production and sales matters.

"Ben's character, nursery experience and leadership skills are a perfect fit for us," Schmidt said. "His first day at JFS coincided with Oregon's stay-at-home decree and shutdown of all but critical businesses in response to COVID-19. He calmly took charge of preparing our company to continue operating within CDC guidelines while ensuring the safety of our employees, our customers and the community," Schmidt added. "His very challenging first week on the job leaves no doubt in our minds that he will do an exceptional job of guiding our family nursery into the future."

Longtime Executive Vice-President Jan Schmidt Barkley will also step away from day-to-day management duties to assume an advisory role in family business matters. She will continue to serve as Chair of the J. Frank Schmidt Family Charitable Foundation. The brother and sister team have been employed at the nursery since their teenage years, working their way from labor and production jobs to the top leadership roles at JFS. Their sister, Jean Schmidt Webster, also serves on the Schmidt Family Ownership Council along with three of the Founders' grandchildren: John F. Schmidt IV, Sam Barkley and Gordy Webster III.

Rough's guidance of the company will be overseen by a Board of Directors which is currently composed of the aforementioned six family-owner members and four independent advisory-members. The Board's role is to ensure that management sustainably pursues the family's long-term objectives and principles of growing the world's finest trees, growing new ideas, and growing community for generations to come.



Page 3 of 3 - JFS welcomes Ben Rough as CEO

J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. is recognized around the world as a leader in the development and production of improved shade and ornamental tree cultivars including more than 100 unique deciduous tree cultivars introduced or co-introduced to the marketplace. Founded on 10 acres in 1946 by Evelyn and J. Frank Schmidt, Jr., the nursery has grown to over 2,500 acres where more than 500 varieties and cultivars of deciduous trees and select conifers are propagated. Schmidt trees are distributed to an international customer base that includes wholesale growers, landscape distribution centers and garden centers.

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