



CALIFORNIA  
TABLE GRAPE  
COMMISSION

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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 13, 2024

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## **Domenick “Cookie” Bianco Celebrated with Lifetime Achievement Award**

Fresno, CA – The California Table Grape Commission (commission) and the California Fresh Fruit Association (CFFA) Boards of Directors recently honored Domenick “Cookie” Bianco with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his dedication to the California table grape industry.

With a planned retirement from board leadership in 2025 at the age of 90, Bianco will have served on the commission board for 39 years, including as a member of the inaugural board in 1968. Anthony Vineyards, the company he and his brother Robert “Bobby” Bianco founded in 1972, has been a member of the California Fresh Fruit Association since 1975.

The joint resolution from the commission and CFFA notes that “Cookie is an icon in the table grape industry, someone who is revered for his passion and commitment, for his belief in taking the fight to the enemy – whoever that enemy might be – for his savvy survival skills which include living to fight another day, and for his belief in working with his neighbors and competitors through industry organizations.” The resolution expresses “deepest admiration for all that Cookie has achieved over a lifetime of hard work and for the examples he has provided of what it means to be of steadfast service to a family, a community of growers and employees, an industry, and a state.”

*A photo of Cookie Bianco (pictured with Kathleen Nave, commission president) and a copy of the Lifetime Achievement Award resolution are included with this release. High resolution copies are available upon request.*

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# Lifetime Achievement Award

*HONORING*

**Domenick “Cookie” Bianco**

**WHEREAS**, beginning at age of “almost 16” when his father assigned him work in a table grape vineyard in Bakersfield, California, Domenick “Cookie” Bianco has dedicated himself to the growth of his family’s farming operation and to the development of a world class table grape industry;

**WHEREAS**, amidst the heartbreaking loss of the family business through unfair actions of outside actors, Cookie, in partnership with his brother Robert “Bobby” Bianco and the support of his wife and life partner Edith Bianco, found the courage to start over by working for others, slowly saving money to buy land of their own;

**WHEREAS**, years of hard work turned the shared family vision of a reclaimed legacy into a multi-commodity, vertically integrated, farming operation that contributed to the development of a world class table grape industry while providing economic opportunity for workers and generations of growers with an example of what vision, hard work, long-term planning, smarts, and perseverance can achieve;

**WHEREAS**, Cookie has lived his belief that growers must work together to address issues too big for any of them to manage successfully alone and accordingly by his retirement from service in 2025 will have served on the California Table Grape Commission board for a total of 39 years and will have been a member of the California Fresh Fruit Association for 48 years;

**WHEREAS**, Cookie is an icon in the table grape industry, someone who is revered for his passion and commitment, for his belief in taking the fight to the enemy – whoever that enemy might be – for his savvy survival skills which include living to fight another day, and for his belief in working with his neighbors and competitors through industry organizations;

**HEREBY LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT**, the California Fresh Fruit Association and California Table Grape Commission Board of Directors, express their deepest admiration for Domenick “Cookie” Bianco – for all he has achieved over a lifetime of hard work and for the examples he has provided of what it means to be of steadfast service to a family, a community of growers and employees, an industry, and a state.

**PRESENTED THIS 11<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH, 2024**

**WAYDE KIRSCHENMAN, CHAIRMAN  
CALIFORNIA FRESH FRUIT ASSOCIATION**

**JON ZANINOVICH, CHAIRMAN  
CALIFORNIA TABLE GRAPE COMMISSION**