

Why Care is at the Core of UnitedAg

CEO Kirti Mutatkar Takes Well-Being Personally



"If it seems there is no solution, we will find a solution." - Kirti Mutatkar

That declaration epitomizes the leadership approach that Kirti Mutatkar takes as President and Chief Executive Officer of UnitedAg. Now in the 10th year of her role, she encourages and models innovative problem-solving to meet the health and wellness needs of the association's 55,000 agricultural workers and 1,100 agriculture-affiliated member organizations across California and Arizona.

One of the largest organizations in the region that has tripled in size over the past few years, UnitedAg lives up to its name and its logo of leaves sprouting off branches. Mutatkar emphasizes unity and is guided by the idea of strong roots and potential for expansion. "It's constantly evolving – we learn, and we grow," she explains.

Mutatkar's leadership style was formed early in her career, after she emigrated from India at age 20. "I didn't know anyone in The U.S, and left with \$1,000 in my pocket," she recalls. Trained as a microbiologist, she thrived on jumping into new projects and "trying to figure it out."

Flash forward more than 30 years and almost every day at UnitedAg, she still spends time figuring things out for others, whether working with her team to secure acute mental health care for a woman whose doctor wasn't part of the plan, calling an underwriter to get relief to a grower whose land had been decimated by record flooding or starting a tele-doc program with multi-lingual providers. Her dual qualities of determination and thoughtfulness also spurred her to create a program for female ag leaders.



"It's about taking the risk and making the impossible happen. We do that day in and day out as we change the conversation around health care," says Mutatkar, who takes the most pride in hearing back from members that UnitedAg lives up to its mission and values. She also values partnerships with vendors, especially as they share similar values and goals.

To provide the best care possible to members, UnitedAg continually looks for solutions via in-person and virtual care while simultaneously advocating for agriculture with lawmakers and

helping members comply with regulations. Mutatkar views the group as a three-legged stool, supported by a financially stable UnitedAg, its employer members and their members working in agriculture. Without one of the pillars, she adds, the stool won't work as designed. "When you are providing care, you stand with people and go through the issue with them. That is who UnitedAg is, and that is my fulfillment from a personal standpoint," she says, adding that these fundamental principles keep the group and its people resilient for the future. "It's the seeds of tomorrow."



United Ag is based in Irvine, California and has offices in Salinas and Santa Maria, along with wellness centers throughout Central and Northern California.

