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Equity firm looks to produce investments

By **Andy Nelson (/users/andynelson)** November 12, 2015 | 12:07 pm EST



A California equity firm hopes to invest in fresh produce companies.

Visalia, Calif.-based AGR Partners recently opened a Chicago office to expand its national coverage and to explore new opportunities in produce and other food and agribusiness companies, said Ejnar Knudsen, a managing partner in the firm.

AGR invests capital provided by institutional pension investors. In the past two years, the company has invested more than \$150 million in equity and sub-debt into five companies.

AGR has invested in the grain, poultry, dairy and other agricultural industries, and now has its sites set on produce, Knudsen said.

“We’re working on three or four deals now,” he said Nov. 10. “We hope to eventually invest \$25 (million) to \$75 million.”

Knudsen and other AGR officials have attended the Produce Marketing Association’s Fresh Summit show the past four years to talk with produce executives about investment opportunities.

One advantage of AGR, Knudsen said, is that the firm doesn’t require a control position in the companies it invests in.





About the Author:



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Andy Nelson joined The Packer as a staff writer in 2001. He became the paper's Handling & Distributing editor in 2005 and markets editor in 2006. Before joining Vance, Nelson was a staff writer for The Kansas City Star.