



groundswell strategy

strategic approach to a regulated world

Randy Russell and Carmen Rottenberg Announce Groundswell Strategy, a New Agriculture Consulting Firm

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(Washington, D.C., March 24, 2020) -- Randy Russell, President of The Russell Group, Inc. and Carmen Rottenberg, former Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service, are excited to announce the launch of Groundswell Strategy, a new consulting firm focused on customizing strategic approaches for clients that interact with regulatory agencies.

"I'm grateful for my experience as a policymaker and leader of a food safety regulatory agency, and look forward to helping clients navigate the regulatory maze in a more strategic way," said Carmen Rottenberg, Managing Director of Groundswell Strategy. "It's an exciting time in the U.S. food and agriculture sector, as the U.S. government focuses on innovation and modernization, in order to ensure that we can safely feed and clothe a rapidly growing world. I look forward to working with stakeholders who want to leverage this movement into strategic success, as they seek to improve and expand their influence across the U.S. government and the world."

In her new role, Carmen Rottenberg serves as Managing Director of Groundswell Strategy, overseeing day to day operations and client development. Randy Russell will serve as Chairman of the Board and is excited to be an equity partner with Carmen in this new business venture.

"Throughout my over 40-year career in the agriculture and food arena, covering both government and advocacy work, my philosophy has been to build long term relationships," said Randy Russell, Groundswell Strategy's Chairman of the Board. "Having worked with Carmen Rottenberg over the course of the last decade, I know she shares this philosophy and commitment. My equity investment in Groundswell Strategy is an investment in the future of agriculture consulting. Carmen is uniquely positioned to develop comprehensive strategic approaches to the regulated world in which we live."

Background

Carmen Rottenberg recently departed USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service after thirteen years of service. She held several leadership roles at the Department, including as Acting Deputy Under Secretary for USDA's Office of Food Safety from August 2017 through January 2019, and Administrator from May 2018 to March 2020. From April 2016 to August 2017, Carmen served as FSIS Deputy Administrator. Carmen is credited with spearheading and implementing several key agency initiatives in recent years including modernizing food safety inspection systems, implementing Siluriformes inspection, and establishing and updating pathogen performance standards. Through her leadership and oversight, an unprecedented level of collaboration was achieved with federal, state, and municipal agencies, as well as other stakeholders.

Carmen began her federal career in the Federal Trade Commission's Office of General Counsel, and has experience working in the public and private sector. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science and Philosophy from Hope College in Holland, Michigan, and a Juris Doctor Degree from American University's Washington College of Law.

Randy Russell is the President of The Russell Group, a food and agriculture government affairs firm. Prior to joining the firm in 1986, Randy served in a number of agricultural policy positions, both inside and outside of government, including Chief of Staff for Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economics at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Vice President for Agriculture and Trade Policy at the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, Director of Government Relations for The Pillsbury Company, and the 1981 Farm Bill Coordinator for USDA. Russell also served on the Senate Agriculture Committee staff for former Senator Rudy Boschwitz (R-MN).

Randy attended George Mason University where he did both his undergraduate studies in Public Administration and graduate studies in Economics.