



NEWS RELEASE

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Chefs to Earn Top Honors for Produce Excellence at United Fresh 2016

Seven Chefs to be Awarded for Innovative Use of Fresh Produce

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 20, 2015) – United Fresh has opened the nomination period for the 2016 Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards Program which honors the foodservice industry's most innovative produce performers.

The program, sponsored by PRO*ACT, LLC since its launch in 2008, has honored 44 different chefs and foodservice operators for their exceptional work in incorporating fresh produce in menu development, proper food safety and handling, engaging in community outreach and building an overall positive dining experience with fresh produce as a centerpiece.

"Thousands of talented chefs work hard every day to find innovative ways to delight diners with menu items featuring fresh produce," said Tom Stenzel, United Fresh President and CEO. "With PRO*ACT's continued generous support, we are proud to recognize chefs who are committed to making produce the centerpiece of the meal."

Chefs will be honored in each of the following business categories: Business in Industry, Casual and Family Dining, Colleges and Universities, Fine Dining Restaurants, Hotels and Healthcare Industry, K-12 Foodservice and Quick Service Restaurants. Winners are selected by a panel of United Fresh member representatives. Nominations must be submitted by January 15, 2016, and nomination information is available online [here](#).

"Fresh produce continues to drive success for the foodservice sector, and chefs play a critical role in encouraging consumers to explore produce items," said Max Yeater, President of PRO*ACT. "We are proud to continue to support this exceptional program and honor leading chefs who are making fresh produce the highlight of their menus."

The seven winning chefs and their corporate executives receive complimentary airfare, hotel accommodations and registrations to United Fresh 2016, June 20-22 in Chicago. The winners will be honored at the Retail-Foodservice Celebration Dinner, and the chefs also will participate in the education program at United Fresh 2016 to share their views on produce trends in foodservice. In addition to their support of the program, PRO*ACT also will make a donation to a charitable organization of each winner's choice.

The 2015 winners in each category were:

- **Business in Industry:** Chef Tim Galligher, Executive Chef at Sodexo – Blue Cross Blue Shield, Omaha, NE

- **Casual and Family Dining Restaurants:** Chef Ype Von Hengst, Executive Chef & Co-Founder, Silver Diner, Rockville, MD
- **Colleges and Universities:** Chef Bob Patton, Executive Chef, Aramark – Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA
- **Fine Dining Restaurants:** Chef Tony Marchetto, Chef Owner/Proprietor, Prasino's, St. Charles, MO
- **Hotels and Healthcare:** Chef Rick Laughlin, Chef de Cuisine, Ritz Carlton, Amelia Island, FL
- **K-12 School Foodservice:** Brenda Robinson, Director of Nutrition Services, Bakersfield City School District, Bakersfield, CA
- **Quick Service Restaurants:** Chef Erik Roth, Executive Chef, TownHall, Cleveland, OH

For more information about the award program, contact Miriam Wolk, United Fresh Vice President of Member Services, at mwolk@unitedfresh.org or 202-303-3410.

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About United Fresh Produce Association

Founded in 1904, the United Fresh Produce Association serves companies at the forefront of the global fresh and fresh-cut produce industry, including growers, shippers, fresh-cut processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, industry suppliers and allied associations. From its headquarters in Washington, D.C. and Western Regional office in Salinas, Calif., United Fresh and its members work year-round to make a difference for the produce industry by driving policies that increase consumption of fresh produce, shaping critical legislative and regulatory action, providing scientific and technical leadership in food safety, quality assurance, nutrition and health, and developing educational programs and business opportunities to assist member companies in growing successful businesses. For more information, visit www.unitedfresh.org or call 202-303-3400.

About PRO*ACT, LLC

PRO*ACT is North America's leading distributor of fresh food to the foodservice and retail industries, sourcing from premier national, regional and local farmers. PRO*ACT streamlines the produce supply chain, offering significant cost benefits and an easy, one-call solution to source the freshest produce from more than 70 third-party inspected, independently owned, local distribution centers across the United States and Canada. PRO*ACT provides category cost management through commodity contract pricing, in-house consultation services and integrated produce program distribution management.