



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Mary Coppola

[mcoppola@unitedfresh.org](mailto:mcoppola@unitedfresh.org)

202-303-3425

## **United Fresh Names 25 Retail Produce Manager Award Honorees**

*2015 Marks 11<sup>th</sup> Year of Honoring Outstanding Retail Produce Managers*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 14, 2015) – Marking its 11<sup>th</sup> year of recognizing exceptional retail produce managers, United Fresh announced the honorees of its 2015 Retail Produce Manager Awards Program. The group of 25 produce managers represents 23 different supermarket banners, commissaries and independent retail stores in 19 states. They will be the honored guests at the United Fresh 2015 convention and trade show, June 8-10 in Chicago.

Sponsored this year for the first time by Dole Food Company the program pays special recognition to produce managers working every day to increase sales and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. Over the course of the 11 years of the program, more than 280 retail managers, representing more than 80 retail banners, have been honored for their contributions to fresh produce merchandising.

“Produce managers are on the front lines, educating consumers in the produce department – a critical touch point for the fresh produce industry,” said United Fresh CEO Tom Stenzel. “We are grateful to Dole Food Company for their sponsorship of this program and partnership in recognizing these 25 deserving honorees.”

The 2015 Retail Produce Manager Award Winners are:

- Scott Baker, Harris Teeter Supermarkets, Chapel Hill, NC
- Mario Branco, Lucky Supermarkets, Oakley, CA
- Tom Dubrowski, King’s Food Markets, Cresskill, NJ
- Tony Gilliam, K-VA-T Food Stores, Inc., Weber City, VA
- Gary Gillispie, Altus AFB Commissary, Altus, OK
- Bernadine Godeck, Pick’N Save, Eagle River, WI
- Martin Gomez, Grocery Outlet, Chehalis, WA
- Esteban Gonzalez, Rouses Supermarkets, Gretna, LA
- Juan Graciano, Safeway, Inc., Redding, CA
- Tom Johnson, Hannaford Bros. Company, Taunton, MA
- Brad Johnston, Brookshire Grocery Company, Shreveport, LA
- Chuck Kauffman, Andronico’s Community Markets, San Francisco, CA
- Sue Knop, Food Pride, Ida Grove, IA

- Henry Kryeski, River Valley Market, Northampton, MA
- Michelle Lee, Ball Foods, Ball, LA
- Justin Lorson, Weis Markets, Inc., Lewisburg, PA
- Anthony Machado, Raley's Family of Fine Stores, Granite Bay, CA
- Cedric Patrick, The Kroger Company, Atlanta, GA
- Dale Schoenefeld, Hy-Vee, Inc., Watertown, SD
- AJ Sleasman, Price Chopper, Clifton Park, NY
- Ryan Tanner, Raley's Family of Fine Stores, Reno, NV
- Ron Tarini, Big Y Foods, Inc., Brandford, CT
- Josh Teifel, Food Maxx, Concord, CA
- Kevin Thalken, Hy-Vee, Inc., Blue Springs, MO
- Mike Underwood, Coborn's Inc., New Prague, MN

"Dole is proud to honor produce managers across this country, who are making a daily commitment to the success of our industry," said Howard Roeder, President of Dole Fresh Vegetables. "These men and women work to ensure the best presentation through produce merchandising and engage and educate their consumers at every turn. They truly are the face of our industry and we're honored to recognize them with this achievement."

The winners were selected from hundreds of nominations submitted by retailers and produce suppliers across the industry. Nominations were evaluated on a number of criteria, including efforts to increase produce consumption through excellence in merchandising, special displays and promotions, community service and commitment to customer satisfaction.

All winners, along with their corporate produce directors, will be honored at United Fresh 2015 during the Retail-Foodservice Celebration Dinner, Wednesday, June 10 at the Sheraton Chicago. In addition to their awards, five Grand Prize recipients will receive an additional \$1,000 cash prize.

The Produce Retail Manager Award winners will be featured in a panel discussion on the United Fresh 2015 trade show floor in the Fresh Marketplace Learning Center, Wednesday, June 10 from 1:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. A panel of the winners will share their perspectives on creative produce merchandising strategies during this special education session.

Co-located with [FMI Connect 2015](#) and the [International Floriculture Expo](#), United Fresh 2015 will bring together retail, fresh produce and floral leaders who are searching for unique products and looking to enhance relationships with valuable business partners. Registration is available at [www.unitedfreshshow.org](http://www.unitedfreshshow.org).

For more information about the Retail Produce Manager Awards Program, contact Jessica Mosley, Director of Education, at 202-303-3417 or [jmosley@unitedfresh.org](mailto:jmosley@unitedfresh.org). United Fresh will start accepting nominations for 2016 beginning this fall, with winners to be honored at United Fresh 2016 in Chicago.

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**About United Fresh Produce Association**

Founded in 1904, the United Fresh Produce Association brings together companies across every segment of the fresh produce supply chain, including growers, shippers, fresh cut processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, industry suppliers and allied associations. We empower industry leaders to shape sound government policy. We deliver the resources and expertise companies need to succeed in managing complex business and technical issues. We provide the training and development individuals need to advance their careers in produce. Through these endeavors, we unite our industry with a common purpose – to build long-term value for our members and grow produce consumption.