



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release, March 16, 2016

Contact: Mary Coppola

mcoppola@unitedfresh.org

202-303-3425

Winners of 9th Annual Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 16, 2016) – Seven of the country's most exciting chefs and foodservice professionals representing an array of culinary styles and backgrounds will be honored this June as part of the United Fresh Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards Program. Sponsored by PRO*ACT LLC, and now in its ninth year, the program honors chefs and their companies for their innovative and influential use of fresh produce in the culinary arts. Winners will be honored guests at the United Fresh 2016 convention and trade show, June 20-22 in Chicago.

"Year after year, these honorees continue to impress us with their creativity and ingenuity," said PRO*ACT President & CEO Max Yeater. "We are so proud to be the sponsor of the Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards and we thank all of the nominees and all of the chefs who dedicate their efforts to increase the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables."

"These seven winners are using fresh fruits and vegetables on their menus in very innovative ways. We are proud to honor them for the important role that they play in showcasing our industry and introducing their customers to fruit and vegetable trends and new products," said United Fresh CEO Tom Stenzel. "We appreciate their tremendous commitment and recognize PRO*ACT's continued generosity and support in honoring these winners and their positive impact on our nation's dining habits."

The 2016 Produce Excellence in Foodservice Award winners are:

- **Business in Industry:**
 - Chef Craig Tarrant, Culinary Director; Chef Elijah Coe; Executive Chef Café 16 and Chef Zach Therioakes; Executive Chef Studio H Café, Dining at Microsoft, Redmond, WA
- **Casual & Family Dining Restaurants:**
 - Chef Steven Sturm, Corporate Executive Chef, Firebirds Restaurants, Charlotte, NC
- **Colleges & Universities:**
 - Chef Anthony Lauri, CEC, AAC, ACE, Executive Chef, Chartwells at University of Miami, Miami, FL
- **Fine Dining Restaurants:**
 - Chef Leonard Hollander, Arbor, Chicago, IL
- **Hotels & Healthcare:**
 - Chef Nazim Khan, CEC, Executive Chef, Bryant Health System, Lincoln, NE
- **K-12 School Foodservice:**
 - Marilyn Hughes, PhD, RD, Director, Nutrition Department, Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta, GA

- **Quick Service Restaurants:**

- Chef Oliver Plust, Executive Chef & General Manager, Tender Greens Hollywood, Hollywood, CA

These winners were selected from more than 120 nominations submitted by produce companies and foodservice operations across North America. A panel of produce and foodservice industry leaders reviewed each nominee's incorporation of fresh produce into menu development, use of food safety protocols for proper storage and handling of produce, leadership in produce related community service and special events and recognition by their company and industry peers.

The winners, along with an executive from their company, will attend United Fresh 2016 in Chicago. They also will be featured in a panel discussion on the United Fresh 2016 trade show floor in the Fresh Marketplace Learning Center on Wednesday, June 22, and will receive their awards at the Retail-Foodservice Celebration Dinner that evening.

Co-located with FMI Connect, the International Floriculture Expo, and the new Global Cold Chain Expo, United Fresh 2016 will bring together retail, fresh produce, floral and cold chain logistics leaders who are searching for unique products and looking to enhance relationships with valuable business partners. Registration is available at www.unitedfreshshow.org.

For more information about the Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards Program, contact Miriam Wolk, Vice President, Member Services, at 202-303-3410 or mwolk@unitedfresh.org. United Fresh will start accepting nominations for 2017 beginning this fall, with winners to be honored at United Fresh 2017 in Chicago.

###

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.

About [PRO*ACT](#):

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.