



NEWS RELEASE

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United Fresh Announces Winners of the 2018 Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 27, 2018) – Eight of the country's most innovative 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 eleventh 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 2018 convention and expo, June 25-27 in Chicago.

"Our coast to coast network of fresh food distributors have the privilege of working with accomplished, creative, local chefs in every foodservice sector. Each chef's determination to develop fresh menu offerings that keep their patrons coming back, inspires and challenges us to keep meeting and exceeding their expectations," says PRO*ACT CEO/President Max Yeater. "We're proud to continue supporting these chefs every day, and to celebrate these winners through eleven years of Produce Excellence in Foodservice Award sponsorships."

"These eight 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 introducing their customers to fruit and vegetable trends and new products and applaud their commitment to advancing fresh consumption," said United Fresh President & CEO Tom Stenzel. "We also recognize PRO*ACT's continued generosity and support in honoring these winners and their positive impact on our nation's dining habits, and we look forward to celebrating with them at United Fresh 2018 in Chicago."

The 2018 Produce Excellence in Foodservice Award winners are:

- **Business in Industry:**
 - Chef Julie Pearson, Food Service Director - Anthem Richmond, Compass Food Group-Eurest Services, Richmond, VA
- **Casual & Family Dining Restaurants:**
 - Chef Michael Rypka, Executive Chef/Vice President of Culinary Marketing-Company Founder, United States Success Foods Management Group, LLC DBA Torchy's Tacos, Austin, TX
- **Colleges & Universities:**
 - Chef Mark Bedzik, Culinary Art Facility & University Chef/Greenhouse Manager, Culinary Institute of Virginia, Norfolk, VA
- **Fine Dining Restaurants:**
 - Chef Daniel Asher, Executive Chef/Partner, River & Woods, Boulder, CO

- **Hospitals & Healthcare:**
 - Chef Damon Mangano, Executive Chef/District Chef, ARAMARK, Hillcrest Hospital Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland, OH
- **Hotels & Resorts:**
 - Chef Graham Lockwood, Executive Chef, Fairmont Copley Plaza, Boston, MA
- **K-12 School Foodservice:**
 - Eric Goldstein, Chief Executive, School Support Services, New York City Department of Education, New York, NY
- **Quick Service Restaurants:**
 - Ryan Krebs, Director of Foodservice, Rutter's, York, PA

These winners were selected from more than 100 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 2018 in Chicago and will be presented with their awards during the Retail-Foodservice Celebration Breakfast Wednesday morning, June 27.

Once again, United FreshMKT Expo and United FreshTEC Expo will co-locate with the Global Cold Chain Expo and the International Floriculture Expo, and new this year, the debut of the SmartFood Expo™ focused on fresh, healthy and better-for-you foods. The total event will bring together the retail, foodservice, fresh produce, floral, healthy food and perishable industries to embrace shared interest in providing high quality, colorful, fresh and safe products to consumers. The co-located events offer unprecedented value and access to the latest industry innovations. Register 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 2019 beginning this fall, with winners to be honored at United Fresh 2019 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.

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.