



## **News Release**

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**Media Contact:** Amy Philpott (202) 303-3400 ext. 425, [aphilpott@unitedfresh.org](mailto:aphilpott@unitedfresh.org)

### **New Award Program Will Honor Chefs, Companies For Use of Fresh Produce in the Culinary Arts**

#### ***New Program to Debut at United Fresh, Las Vegas Show***

**Washington, DC** – The competition is underway to honor companies and chefs among the foodservice industry's top produce performers in the United Fresh Research and Education Foundation's new [Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards](#), thanks to a major grant from Pro\*Act LLC.

"There are thousands of chefs who work hard every day to include fresh produce in their offerings to diners. The demand from consumers for more fresh produce in restaurant meals is increasing every day, and this is a great way to highlight outstanding performance," said Tom Stenzel, president of United Fresh. "With Pro\*Act's generous support, we're delighted to honor individuals and companies that are committed to incorporating fresh produce into menu offerings and who deliver the highest level of customer satisfaction in their restaurants and foodservice operations," he said.

Both the chefs responsible for menu development and their corporate produce executives will be honored in each of five business categories: Fine Dining Restaurants, Casual and Family Dining Restaurants, Quick Serve Restaurants, Business in Industry/Colleges and Hotels/Healthcare Operations. Nominations must be submitted before March 24, and a nomination form will be available online at [www.unitedfresh.org](http://www.unitedfresh.org).

Either individual chefs or companies can be nominated. Winners will be selected based on examples of how nominees incorporate fresh produce into menu development, use protocols for correct storage and handling of produce, and build an overall positive dining experience featuring fresh produce. Winners will be selected by a panel of United Fresh member representatives focused on excellence in the foodservice sector.

The five winning chefs and their corporate executives will receive complimentary airfare, two nights hotel accommodations, and registrations to the United Fresh show, May 5-7 in Las Vegas. The winners will receive their awards at the Annual Awards Banquet Tuesday evening, May 6. The chefs will also participate in United Fresh's convention education program to share their views on produce trends in foodservice in the "Produce Marketing Track - Foodservice Trends to Explode Produce Sales" on Tuesday morning at Bally's.

The new United Fresh Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards are sponsored by Pro\*Act, LLC. "Pro\*Act is delighted to support this great new program honoring chefs who make it a point to incorporate fresh produce into their menu items," said Steve Grinstead, president and CEO of Pro\*Act. "More and more people are eating out, and it's clear that they want to eat great-tasting, healthy fruits and vegetables. So it's important that our industry recognizes those who are working to deliver a great consumer experience with fresh fruits and vegetables when they eat away from home."

"The Produce Excellence in Foodservice Award is our way of telling chefs around the country that the produce industry appreciates what they do to help to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables," said Amy Philpott, United Fresh vice president of marketing and industry relations. "Honoring these chefs in Las Vegas at the United Fresh May 2008 show is an important way to emphasize produce among senior foodservice management," she said.

For more information about the award program, please contact Amy Philpott at [aphilpott@unitedfresh.org](mailto:aphilpott@unitedfresh.org), 202-303-3400 ext. 425.

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