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## **HoneySweet onions make waves at World Food Championships**

November 6, 2019

Last month, more than 1,400 chefs and home cooks descended upon Reunion Arena Park in Dallas for the World Food Championships. The event drew contestants from 42 states and 15 different countries, as well as nearly 25,000 foodies, attendees and buyers. J&D Produce sponsored the Top Ten Burger competition, and the company's HoneySweet onions took a starring role.



As the burger competition heated up, contestants were narrowed down to 10 finalists who all utilized HoneySweet onions in their artistic and creative burgers.

“We saw a wide variety of uses for the HoneySweet onion, and lots of creativity,” said James Bassetti, vice president of operations at J&D Produce and guest judge at the event. “There were bacon truffle and cheese stuffed HoneySweet onion rings, quick pickled HoneySweets, crispy fried onion rings topping burgers, bacon wrapped HoneySweets and more. It was amazing to see what these talented competitors could come up with.”

Since its debut in 2012, WFC has given birth to 30 TV food stars, awarded more than \$1.8 million in prize money, garnered more than 6.9 billion media impressions, and connected 150-plus food brands with food fans, food bloggers, and food media. This year's event included a \$350,000 prize purse, with the winning burger worth \$10,000 as well as a chance at a \$100,000 prize at WFC's Final Table

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challenge.

“These HoneySweet onions were phenomenal. I love the flavor profile,” said Chef Jay Ducote, celebrity chef and emcee of the burger competition. “They’re super sweet, with no tears at all while cutting them. You just don’t get that acidic burn that you get with a lot of onions, and with a high sugar content they caramelize beautifully.”

In the end, only one of the outstanding burger creations could be crowned the champion, and that honor went to James Cheek of Sweet Cheek’s Pit BBQ in Muscle Shoals, AL, for his Hometown Smashburger featuring caramelized HoneySweet onions.

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