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OPN announces virtual event

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The Organic Produce Network (OPN) has announced a virtual online event featuring Stew Leonard, Jr., president and chief executive officer of Stew Leonard's and Scott Schuette, vice president of produce and floral for Fresh Thyme Market, discussing how the organic fresh produce industry has fared at retail in 2020, sales and consumer purchasing behavior, merchandising opportunities and a preview of what to expect in 2021.



Stew Leonard, Jr.

The exclusive online event will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 10 AM PDT. Registration to view the session will open on Friday, Oct. 23.

In the first discussion, moderator and OPN co-founder Tonya Antle will talk with Fresh Thyme's Schuette on how Fresh Thyme is using organic produce as a point of difference in driving sales at store level, and exploring the challenges and opportunities the Midwestern retailer has faced this year. Schuette will also discuss the upcoming holiday season, merchandising opportunities and areas for improvement throughout the organic fresh produce industry. Fresh Thyme has 73 stores in 11 states throughout the Midwest.



Scott Schuette

The session will be followed by an exclusive interview with Leonard, hosted by Kevin Coupe of MorningNewsBeat. Stew Leonard's, a chain of seven supermarkets in CT, NY, and NJ is widely known for its commitment to customer service. The chain is also recognized for their management philosophy: "Take good care of your people and they in turn will take good care of your customers." It is this philosophy that has helped earn Stew Leonard's ranking on FORTUNE Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work for in America" list for 10 consecutive years.

"This has been a year unlike any other, with a variety of challenges, uncertainty and resolve by retailers across the country. We are excited to have a pair of leading regional retailers share their thoughts on this year in terms of organic fresh produce sales and consumer purchasing behavior heading into the holidays, and provide a look into what next year may look like," said Antle.

The OPN event is sponsored by Homegrown Organic Farms.

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