SEPC announces 2021 Next Generation Award nominees
Every member of the Southeast Produce Council puts in extra time on the job because of the satisfaction that a better yield in crops, businesses and relationships brings them. But there are a select few who stand out among them who unite the region through tireless effort, extraordinary instinct and a genuine love for the produce industry.

The Southeast Produce Council is pleased to recognize several outstanding individuals who have been nominated for this year’s Next Generation Award.

This prestigious award honors an SEPC member 39 years or younger who has been employed in the produce industry for at least four years and has made a significant contribution to the industry. To qualify for the award, members must be in "good standing" with the SEPC through regular attendance and contributions to the council.

The following SEPC members have received a nomination for the 2021 Next Generation Award:

- Sydney Allison of IMG Citrus.
- Ethan Basore of TKM Farms.
- Matthew Carroll of BJs Wholesale (nominated posthumously).
- Sabrina Castillo of Fresh Directions.
- Anthony Consalo of The Fresh Wave LLC.
- Brandon Deforest of Todd's Tomatoes Inc.
- Meghan Diaz of Sprouts Farmers Market.
- Cody Dolan of J&J Family of Farms.
- Rebecca Fanion of Stop & Shop.
- Grayson Ferrell of Vick Family Farms.
- Austin Hamilton of Southern Valley Fruit & Vegetable.
- Heather Hart of The Fresh Market.
- Chris Kaszanits of Southeastern Grocers.
- Patrick Kelly of The Produce Industry Podcast.
- Anna Kirsch of Avocados From Mexico.
- Caitlin Kleefeld of Zaxby’s Franchising LLC.
- Hilary Long of Frey Farms.
- Blaine Markley of Rainier Fruit Co.
- Rebecca Meyers of Harbinger Group LLC dba Misionero.
- Desiree Morales of WP Produce.
- Noah Robbins of Ark Foods.
- Brick Rooks of Southern Belle Organics.
- Clark Roper of Piggly Wiggly.
- Charles Sinks of Sage Fruit Co.
- Carlos Sotomayor of Seald Sweet.
- Thomas Wescott of Honeybear Brands.
- Jessica Williams of Titan Farms.
- Mackenzie Wortham of DMA Solutions Inc.
- Ines Zejcirovic of Giant Food.
"It is an honor for the SEPC to be able to recognize the next generation of produce leaders," said David Sherrod, the council's president and chief executive officer. "These young individuals have proven to their peers that they are ready to take our industry to greater heights than ever before. We are thankful for all their current contributions and their future endeavors to make our world healthier."

The 2021 Next Generation Award recipient will be announced at Southern Innovations on Friday, Sept. 10, during the general session and keynote luncheon.