



The Foodservice Conference

INTERNATIONAL
FRESH PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

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IFPA celebrates outstanding exhibitors from Foodservice 2023

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The International Fresh Produce Association celebrated four standout winners at the Foodservice Conference Expo on July 28. The winners, announced on the expo floor, reflected on their wins.



Best of Show first place winner Rijk Zwaan.

“The energy on the floor this year was unmatched,” said Director of Trade Shows Kyle McMillan. “Much of that was influenced by the passion, creativity and excitement brought by our many exhibitors. We are so happy to be able to celebrate a few of these exhibitors who stood out to our judges. Congratulations to our winners, and to all our exhibitors who made the judging such a difficult job.”

The annual contest highlights Best of Show winners (first and second place) as well as Best Product Promo winner. Foodservice Award-winning chefs also chose the winner of the new Chef’s Choice Award. Booths are judged on staff performance (engagement, professionalism, communication), booth attraction (design, clarity, ability to welcome) and products/messaging (eye appeal, communication, promotion).

This year, the exhibitors were encouraged to get creative and showcase innovative ways to incorporate produce into their menus. The Chef’s Choice award was judged by the winning Chefs of the Excellence in Foodservice Award. The chefs loved exploring the floor and walked away with a list of new menu ideas, and were able to provide real menu-developer feedback to the exhibitors.

Best of Show – First Place: Rijk Zwaan

“We had a wonderful experience at the Foodservice Conference this year. There was a buzz in the air, and you could feel the energy walking through the show floor. Encouraging exhibitors to have tastings in their booth lifted the bar and everyone came out to play. It felt amazing to win Best in Show! We wanted to create a colorful space to show the many possibilities of cauliflower. We received great feedback on our white Romanesco and green and purple varieties. We are excited to see what comes of all the interest!” - Alyssa Wilson, specialist marketing communication

Best of Show – Second Place: Sun Orchard

“The opportunity to exhibit in the Foodservice Conference, meet with customers, connect with old friends or make new ones in Monterey is always amazing! To me it’s a vital part of who we are as ‘foodservice people,’ we want to create an experience, a memory, an opportunity for people to connect with each other and build relationships. It always feels good to win, no doubt. We have a great team that wanted to create a fun environment where they could connect with customers. I am very proud of them and happy they were recognized.” - Jeff DeBoer, chief commercial officer

Best Product Promo: Califresh – Fresh Green Chickpea hummus

“This show was, as always, a success in that we love to see the positive reactions to the flavor profile and unique texture using Fresh Green Chickpeas gives to our hummus. What we didn’t expect was to hear our name announced as the 2023 Best Product Promo award winners! This was a great way to wrap up this year’s conference, and it gave us great joy to be recognized! We invite all to visit our booth next year, where ‘Good Taste Always Matters!’” - TJ Risco, vice president of sales and marketing

Chef’s Choice: Ocean Mist Farms – Baby artichoke risotto

“The IFPA Foodservice Conference is one of our favorite events each year. It’s our industry’s only conference that focuses on and connects the foodservice channel with the fresh produce business. The conference attracts the very best foodservice distributors and operators in the industry. And the relaxed, yet professional, atmosphere of the conference gives us plenty of time for quality engagement with our customers and potential customers. When it comes to fresh artichokes, we know that many consumers will taste artichokes for the first time in restaurants, so we see our foodservice customers as a vital partner in expanding awareness of – and appreciation for – fresh artichokes.” - Joe Angelo, director of sales

“Our exhibitors are a critical part of growing produce consumption through foodservice,” McMillan said. “As always, we’re floored by the creativity, the passion and the fun our exhibitors have sharing their products each year in Monterey.”

The next IFPA Foodservice Conference is July 25-26, 2024 in Monterey, CA. The 2023 [booth applications are open](#). This conference anchors IFPA’s year-round resources for the foodservice supply chain.

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