

# Pro\*Act sponsors inaugural Produce Excellence in Foodservice Award

By BRIAN GAYLORD

MONTEREY, CA — Las Vegas and the United Fresh Produce Association convention will be the site for the inaugural Produce Excellence in Foodservice Award, sponsored by Pro\*Act LLC, based here.

Pro\*Act President and Chief Executive Officer Steve Grinstead, who serves on the board of directors of United Fresh Produce Association, came up with the idea of the foodservice award.



Max Yeater,  
Pro\*Act chief  
operating officer

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The award, sponsored by Pro\*Act, honors chefs and their companies for their use of produce in the culinary arts.

"We are extremely honored to support the United Fresh Excellence in Foodservice Award program that recognizes the industry chefs who work passionately to incorporate fresh produce in their menu offerings," said Pro\*Act Chief Operating Officer Max Yeater.

Pro\*Act Marketing Manager Mary Wright-Rana said that the Pro\*Act award complements United's retail award, already in place.

This year's five winners were announced April 9 and were selected from nearly 100 nominations submitted by produce

companies and restaurants across the industry. Both the chefs and their corporate produce executives will be honored in each of five business categories.

The 2008 winners in each category are as follows:

**Fine Dining:** Chef Tony Baker of Montrio Bistro in Monterey, CA.

**Casual & Family Dining:** Chef Reinhard Dorhuber of Elephant Bar Restaurant in La Mirada, CA.

**Quick Service:** Chef Daniel Coudreaut, director of culinary

innovation at McDonald's USA in Oak Brook, IL.

**Business in Industry & Colleges:** Chef Jonathan Davey of Brigham Young University in Provo, UT.

**Hotels & Healthcare:**

Chef JP Hagot of Peconic Landing in Greenport, NY.

A panel of produce industry representa-

tives focused on the foodservice sector scored the nominees based on submissions that described how each incorporates fresh produce into menu development, uses protocols for correct storage and handling of produce, and builds an overall positive dining experience featuring fresh produce.

The winners will receive their awards from Mr. Grinstead at the annual Awards Banquet Tuesday evening, May 6. The chefs also will 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" at 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday at Bally's.

Ms. Wright-Rana said that Pro\*Act came up with the idea for the award in early 2008 and to "look for the categories to increase" in the future. Nominations for the 2009 Produce Excellence in Foodservice Award program will open next fall.