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## Costa Receives National Produce Award

### The Packer's and Produce Concepts Magazine's Third Annual Foodservice Achievement Award

Monterey, CA: The Packer, the produce industry's leading national publication and Produce Concepts Magazine, in conjunction with the Produce Marketing Association, has awarded Manny Costa of Costa Fruit & Produce Company its third Annual Foodservice Achievement award in a ceremony held in Monterey, CA on July 25<sup>th</sup>.

At the awards ceremony, Robb Bertels, Vice President of Vance publishing, heralded Costa's many achievements, innovations and accolades in advancing the safety and popularity of produce in the foodservice and hospitality marketplace. Bertels first cited the success of his company which has grown from three million to one hundred million since assuming its helm after graduating from Boston University. Bertels noted Costa's innovative marketing approach of market specialization achieved through innovative team sales concept that heightens specialization not by territory but market segment. They are: Team Fresh which handles both multi-unit hotel and restaurant chains, College & University dining and other non-commercial venues; SchoolPro's which specializes on child nutrition programs; Real Meal Solutions, an innovator in home meal replacement for both retail and foodservice and its newest sales team; Chef Central catering to upscale hotels and restaurants in and around Boston and vicinity.



Manny Costa accepts Foodservice Achievement Award

Bertels added that while the growth and success of Costa Fruit & Produce is well-known through the industry, Manny has been an extremely active contributor to the advancement of produce nationwide. In 1990, Costa has amongst the founders and past Chairman of the Board of PRO\*ACT, a national purchasing and marketing collective of independent produce distributors. Since its founding, Costa has played an integral role in advancing PRO\*ACT from a handful of founding members to the nation's largest produce distribution network with 50 member distribution locations and annual sales which now exceed 2 billion dollars annually. Costa has also served in various industry association posts. He is the former Chairman of the International Fresh-cut Produce Association and has served both on the Foodservice and Main Board of the PMA. In these capacities he

has made a definite contribution to the safety and education of produce at the operator level. For these and other efforts, in 2001 Costa has been awarded ID Magazines Innovator of the Year award inducted into the National Restaurant Association's Hall of Fame.

On the local front, Bertels noted that Costa is also very active as Chairman of the Massachusetts Restaurant Committee's Associate Committee and is member and recent recipient of the Epicurean Club of Boston's, Perpetual Purveyor Award. He is also an active member of the Chaine des Routisseurs and Les Amis d'Escoffier.

Lastly Bertels noted Costa's revolutionary new child feeding program, imove in relation to its impact on public health and the produce industry. The imove program, aimed at combating the epidemic of child hood obesity, is a reward program that, through a point system, rewards children for choosing healthy meals and snacks in the school lunch setting. Costa in conjunction with United Way hope to bring the program to many local schools this coming fall.

Costa in his acceptance speech said he was both 'humbled and honored' by the award while citing his career as a 'labor of love' on behalf of an industry which he owes much to. For more information about Costa log on to [freshideas.com](http://freshideas.com)