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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Massachusetts Restaurant Association Names Manny Costa, *Purveyor Executive of the Year*

Boston, MA; April 20, 2006—The **Massachusetts Restaurant Association** has named **Manny Costa, President of Costa Fruit & Produce**, as **Purveyor Executive of the Year** for 2006. Costa, along with other leaders in the restaurant trade industry, was honored at an awards ceremony held in conjunction with the New England Foodservice & Lodging Show, the largest trade show of its kind in New England, on April 10.

Costa was honored for his leadership, innovation and commitment to the foodservice and hospitality industries in the areas of education, marketing and food safety.

Introduced by Bryan Silbermann, President of the Produce Marketing Association. A global trade association that strives to sustain and enhance an environment that advances the marketing of produce and related products.

Mr. Silbermann spoke about many of the cutting-edge initiatives pioneered by Costa Fruit & Produce such as;

Pro*Act, a food buying cooperative of 40 produce companies that is now the largest produce procurement group in the country;

Fresh Ideas, a regional manufacturing division producing over 500 fresh-cut fruit and vegetable line items, including custom blended salads, prepared vegetable and pasta salads, stir-fry and julienne vegetable blends;

Salad Bar Sensations, a turnkey value added program offering unique real meal solutions for retail and foodservice salad bars;

Imove, a nationally recognized child nutrition program that encourages children to make healthy nutritional choices through education and fun;

Greenhouse Gourmet, an ever-expanding program committed to offering chefs the finest and widest variety of specialty and exotic produce and specialty foods;

Past honors, such as *ID Magazine's* Innovator of the Year, the National Restaurant Association's Hall of Fame, the Epicurean Club of Boston's Perpetual Purveyor Award and *The Packer's*

Foodservice Achievement Award, while important, are of lesser personal significance to the Massachusetts native than this type of local recognition.

“It’s always nice to be recognized for hard work, and this is certainly no exception,” said Costa. “For the Massachusetts Restaurant Association, a highly-influential industry organization in my home state, to stand up and take notice of initiatives that my company and I believe are truly important, makes this honor even more meaningful to me.”

In his acceptance speech, Costa thanked his customers, employees and family for their dedication and their essential role in the accolades bestowed upon him and his company.

Costa Fruit & Produce was founded in 1940 by Costa’s father, Manuel Costa Sr. Shortly upon graduating from college, Costa Jr. joined his father’s business. His natural aptitude for creativity, paired with his entrepreneurial spirit, infused new life into the company that is now recognized as a leader and standard for excellence in the industry.

About Costa Fruit & Produce:

A privately owned company, Costa is a produce specialist servicing all of New England. They offer a complete line of fresh products that include, fresh fruits and produce, dairy, and value added fruits, vegetables and prepared salads. In addition, over 3500 frozen food and grocery items are part of their product mix. Costa services a wide range of foodservice customers consisting of hotels, restaurants, contract feeders, healthcare, K-12 schools, retail, and college and university dining. For more information about Costa Fruit & Produce, visit: <http://www.freshideas.com>.

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