CELEBRATING FRESH

REVIEW OF 2019 SHOW & CONFERENCE

THE NEW YORK PRODUCE SHOW AND CONFERENCE

Presented by
EASTERN PRODUCE COUNCIL AND PRODUCE BUSINESS
‘ONE-DAY MBA’ IS AS BENEFICIAL AS IT SOUNDS

Touted as a “one-day MBA” in the fresh produce industry, the Cornell/Produce Business Foundation Excellence Program, held at the New York Hilton on December 10, lived up to its reputation.

Led by 4th generation produce industry icon, Jim Prevor, and six university professors from Cornell’s Food Industry Management Program, the packed room of future leaders in the industry was immersed in the latest food industry trends, analyses of industry issues and overviews of the global economic scene.

In addition, career and professional advice was given by a panel of industry luminaries who included Ron Bautista, Purple Carrot, Needham, MA; Gabriela D’Arrigo, D’Arrigo Bros. Co. of New York, Bronx, NY; Shay Myers, Froerer Farms Inc. DBA Owyhee Produce, Nyssa, OR; John Pandol, Pandol Bros., Delano, CA; Tim York, Markon Cooperative, Salinas, CA.
GLOBAL TRADE SYMPOSIUM: PATHWAYS TO GLOBAL SUCCESS
By Mira Slott

A powerhouse of diverse industry executives and influential thought leaders gathered from all corners of the world to share insights and bolster common interests to drive their businesses, and more broadly, to elevate the fast-changing, interconnected global supply chain to new plateaus.

Perhaps, one of the most important parts of the Global Trade Symposium, though, was conveyed in the opening remarks from Jim Prevor, Produce Business editor-in-chief:

“The impact of international trade reverberates across the industry,” said Prevor, kicking off a full day of stimulating presentations and interactive Q&A sessions, extending into dynamic networking breaks.

Simon Gunzburg, research analyst, Euromonitor International, unveiled dense new research on global consumption trends.

Jim Jefcoate, director, UK-based Hurdletree Associates Ltd, and formerly senior director of IPL/Walmart, used case studies to explore the rise of discount retailers, strategies on how retailers can compete and how suppliers can prosper in this new retailing environment.

Jacqui Green, former chief executive of Kent, England-based Berry Gardens, laid out what’s needed for effective private label branding. “As consumers become more demanding, it is all the more critical that messaging of why a retailer’s label is the right choice becomes loud and clear — and right now there is a distinct dumbing down of any such message.”

In an exclusive, highly-anticipated luncheon keynote presentation, Catherine Powell, former president of Disney Parks Western Region (Walt Disney World, Disneyland Resort and Disneyland Paris), captivated everyone as she reflected on her extraordinary global career and leadership journey, capped off by an intriguing one-on-one conversation with Prevor about what makes a great leader and team, while sparking valued takeaways for achieving a meaningfully balanced work and personal life.

Few trends are more important to the future of the fresh produce industry than the growth of proprietary produce, but the business model by which breeding innovations are brought to consumers’ tables may be even more important. Premier expert on the topic, Susan Brown, professor, Cornell University School of Integrative Plant Science, explored the political and economic
than the growth of proprietary produce, but the business model by which breeding innovations are brought to consumers’ tables may be even more important. Premier expert on the topic, Susan Brown, professor, Cornell University School of Integrative Plant Science, explored the political and economic realities of apple breeding, genetics and marketing.

In a rapid-fire exchange of 10 critical topics facing the produce industry, John Pandol, director of special projects of Delano, CA-based Pandol Bros, and Prevor squared off on hot topics ranging from global supply chain dynamics to packaging and food waste to genetics and other touchpoints, analyzing key issues and amusing a highly-engaged audience of industry insiders.

To round out the event, an expert panel with in-depth knowledge of the Latin American produce industry addressed the biggest opportunities and challenges facing the region while exporting to operations in the North American market. Panelists included Manuel Jose Alcaino, president, Decofrut (Chile); Markus Felman, general manager perishables, Palpina/DSV, based in Hedehusene, Denmark; John Pandol of Pandol Bros; and Michael Castagnetto, vice president of sourcing for Robinson Fresh, Eden Prairie, MN.

Moderator Gustavo Yentzen, general manager of Freshfruitportal.com shared an insight that shed light on one of the most appreciated aspects of the Global Trade Symposium: “Before this event, the people on this panel didn’t know each other, but here they find out they have much in common.”

As the event wrapped up and everyone headed to the opening reception in the New York Hilton Midtown’s ballroom, one suspected new relationships might have been unfolding for life.
IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MEET AND GREET — AND MAKING MERRY IN THE FLURRY OF FESTIVITY

Whether long-time friends, industry colleagues or co-workers, the New York Produce Show’s opening cocktail party at the Midtown Hilton brought out a host of smiles, robust conversations and plenty of catching up.

With a backdrop of nostalgic tunes that struck a spark, attendees enjoyed adult beverages of choice and rounds of Steamship Beef, Peking Duck Moo Shu, Short Rib Spring Rolls, Crispy Korean Vegetable Dumplings, Mushroom Profiteroles and a Make-Your-Own taco station.

The event, sponsored by New York Apple Association, Hunts Point Market and Famous Software, which kicked off at sundown, left growers, retailers, wholesalers, foodservice operators, industry executives and shippers enough time to enjoy an array of dazzling city attractions that Manhattan has to offer out-of-state visitors by night.
The yearly Perishable Pundit “Thought-Leaders” Keynote Breakfast Panel, held in the Midtown Hilton’s famed Trainon Ballroom, featured perspectives from top produce industry members on key trends in retail and foodservice.

Following sponsor videos, an invocation by Tony Mirack of McAffrey’s and the national anthem sung by Grammy-award winning Gospel singer, Karen Rampersad. Eastern Produce Council (EPC) president Marianne Santo provided an overview of EPC.

Produce Business president and editor-in-chief Jim Prevor followed with the Chandler Copps award given to McAffrey’s’ Mirack for his contribution to industry improvement, and recognition of the Joe Nucci Award for Innovation, which went to Markon Cooperative for its Ready-Cycle Packaging.

This year’s thought-leader panelists of foodservice and retail executives shared insights on innovation, the plant-forward future and best practices to help elevate the produce industry:

- **RICH DACHMAN**
  Chief Executive, Brighter Bites

- **KELLY DAVIS**
  Director of Produce & Floral, Allegiance Retail Services

- **WILL HOROWITZ**
  Chef & Co-owner, Ducks Eatery

- **TONY MIRACK**
  Produce/Floral Buyer Merchandiser & Procurement, McAffrey’s Markets

- **STEVE OATES**
  Vice President/Produce/Floral, Lucky’s Market

- **JULIE OLIVARRIA**
  Sr. Director Produce, Sysco

- **STEVE OROSZLANY**
  Procurement Manager for Produce and Floral, Wakefern

- **MATT REEVES**
  Vice President of Produce Grocery Outlet

- **TIM YORK**
  President, Markon
Approach the New Year with resolve to find the opportunities hidden in each new day.
NON-STOP BUSINESS AND EDUCATION IN ONE PLACE

“Seven hours of business-to-business speed dating,” was how one national retailer walking the show floor of the New York Produce Show described his day. Though he wished to remain anonymous to reporters, most exhibitors had a chance to meet with him and other high-level supermarket and foodservice executives on December 12 from 10am – 5pm at the Jacob Javits Center.

With the show organizers’ goal to keep attendees on the show floor all day — entertained by vibrant chef demos from New York’s top chefs, educated by top ag school professors, nourished through the day at strategic food and beverage stations, and, of course, “pounding the flesh” with 350-plus exhibitors – the trade show portion of the event was the largest and the busiest ever.

JOURNALISTS ‘CONNECT WITH FRESH’

During the show, 50-plus consumer journalists met with exhibitors and convened for a 2-hour “Connect with Fresh” program sponsored by Melissa’s/World Variety Produce. This year’s event, once again with the collaboration of the Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) and Produce Business magazine, the invite-only luncheon was followed by a lively panel focused on ways the produce industry merits focus in the plant-forward dialogue. Industry participants included:

• Jim Prevor, Perishable Pundit
• Will Horowitz, restaurateur;
• Wendy Reinhardt Kapsak, Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH);
• Roger Peperle, Stemilt Growers, LLC;
• Tanya Steel, International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP); and
• Robert Schueller, Melissa’s Produce

DEMONSTRATIONS BY CHEFS AND CULINARY STUDENTS

Throughout the duration of the trade show, prominent NYC chefs and culinary students from Johnson and Wales and the Culinary Institute of Michigan staged demonstrations featuring produce foraged from the show floor.

This unique give-and-take of current and up-and-coming culinary professionals and industry not only moves the needle on ways to utilize produce in restaurants, but informs produce suppliers about new ways to approach the foodservice industry with items that lend themselves to new applications.

MICRO SESSIONS: RICH IN LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Show attendees were again gifted the opportunity to hear topics of interest presented by speakers from major universities. Conveniently held on the show floor, the 45-minute educational sessions ran concurrently with the show.

The following professors spoke on topics that are sure to open minds and spark further discussions:

• Brad Rickard and Aaron Adalja, Cornell University — Produce Implications and Lessons Learned from the Wine Industry.
• Regina O’Brien, Rutgers University — Controlled Environment Agriculture: Understanding Flavor Profiles and Consumer Demand for Baby Leafy Greens.
• Ben Campbell, University of Georgia — Consumer Messaging on GMO’s, CRISPR, Organic, and Pesticides Impacts Purchasing Behavior.
• John Bovay, Virginia Tech — What Are the Overall Implications of Rising Organic Demand for Fruit and Vegetable Consumption?
• D. Adeline Yeh, Cornell University — Signaling Impacts of Mandatory GMO Labeling on Fruit and Vegetable Demand.
• John L. Stanton, Ph.D., St. Joseph’s University — Generation Z and Fresh Mango Usage.

AG STUDENT IMMERSION

As part of the University Interchange Program, prominent ag schools brought many of their top students to the New York Produce Show. Industry mentors met with the students during the trade show hours and shared stories of their paths to success in the industry.

LARGEST PRODUCE DONATION IN HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITY

Though the trade show was quite active all the way till the closing bell at 5pm, dozens of volunteers wearing City Harvest’s green T-shirts converged on the floor to glean leftover produce.
DAY 3 - TRADE SHOW

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UNRAVELING THE MAGIC OF MENU R&D ONE STEP AT A TIME

Adding new options to the menu, especially produce-centric items, is often considerably more complex than restaurant guests could possibly imagine. The process can be invigorating, distinctly creative and frustrating all at the same time.

To that end, deconstructing the menu playbook was the order of the day for the IdEATion Fresh Foodservice Forum, which was held at the Hilton Midtown.

Kicking off the discussion was Cathy Holley, publisher and editor-in-chief of Flavor and the Menu. Holley set the tone for what was to follow with her exploration of what’s new in produce-centric dishes on menus across the country.

Holley was followed by three dynamic and creative panels on menu R&D: The Big Idea — How To Get There; Narrowing The Field — Working Out The Kinks; and Signed, Sealed And Delivered — Ready For The Close-Up?

With an attentive audience comprised of chefs, culinary students, produce buyers, distributors, growers and industry insiders, the day’s agenda was chock full of creativity, ideation, open communications and audience participation.

Following lunch, where an interactive ideation session involving students and attendees further stimulated a robust dialogue, Panera Bread received the First In Fresh award, which is bestowed annually to a company menuing innovative produce items on the menu.
BUS TOURS WELL WORTH THE RIDE

One of the many perks of the New York Produce Show and Conference is getting to know fellow travelers while visiting a cross-section of produce industry establishments in the metro area.

This year, attendees took five very different bus tours, getting an inside look at everything from the retail stops in Manhattan, Brooklyn and New Jersey; to “urban agriculture” in the suburbs; to the bustling terminal rows at Hunts Point Market in the Bronx to the gleaming Philadelphia Produce Market.

Featured stores on the MANHATTAN stop included Morton Williams, Whole Foods, Essex Street Market and D’Agostino.

In BROOKLYN, attendees toured the Gowanas Whole Foods, 3 Guys from Brooklyn, Wegmans, Brooklyn Fare and the greenhouses of Square Roots and Small- hold Mushroom Farm.

The NEW JERSEY TOUR of Morton Williams, A&J Sabra, and a new Whole Foods showed a vibrant retail and produce economy, while a stop at the Aero Farms headquarters gave attendees insights into this Controlled Agricultural Environment.

The HUNTS POINT TOUR had all of the wholesalers on the market showcasing their products, and the PHILADELPHIA bus tour included a stop at the popular Wegmans supermarket after its visit to the Philly Wholesale Market.
DELICIOUS MATERIALS TO PROMOTE APPLES

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