

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release



Food Processing Companies Honoured by the BC Food Processors Association

Abbotsford, BC, June, 2010. *Avalon Dairy Ltd.* received the *BC Food Processors Hall of Fame Award* at FoodProWest on Friday June 4th, 2010. The *Leadership Award* went to **Dave Hood** of *The Original Cakerie*, and the *Rising Star Award* went to **Thomas Haas** of **Thomas Haas Fine Pastries & Desserts Ltd.** while **Nature's Path Foods Inc** was awarded the *Energy/ Sustainability Award*.

Avalon Dairy Ltd. began as a small dairy in Vancouver in 1906. The company has flourished under President Gay Hahn. Gay was one of the first to recognize the emerging demand for organic milk. Avalon now offers a full line of organic milk products including milk, whipping cream, eggnog, yogurt and soon, sour cream. The company still markets milk and cream in recyclable glass bottles. While maintaining the original dairy on Wales St. in Vancouver, Avalon Dairy recently opened a 50,000 square foot processing plant in Burnaby. *Avalon Dairy Ltd.* joins *Purdy's Chocolates* and *Freybe Gourmet Foods* in the BC Food Processor's Hall of Fame.

This award was sponsored by [KPMG](#).

Beginning in 1979 as an industrial bakery producing desserts for local restaurants, **Dave Hood** has led *The Original Cakerie* to become the largest privately owned dessert manufacturer in Canada. The company now distributes its frozen desserts throughout North America. The company recently opened a large new plant in London ON. Last year's winner was Peter Joe, *Sunrise Soya Foods*.

Other finalists for the Award were:

- Brian Brousson, *Silver Hills Bakery*.
- Joe Zallen, *Que Pasa Mexican Foods*

The *Leadership Award* was sponsored by [Revenue Services Group](#).

The *Rising Star Award* celebrates a processor who has demonstrated innovation, shown leadership in industry and the community. **Thomas Haas** and his wife Lisa founded **Thomas Haas Fine Pastries & Desserts Ltd.** in 2000. Starting with a storefront in North Vancouver, Thomas Haas Chocolates now has a factory and a new retail location in Kitsilano. Originally from Germany, Thomas is an award winning pastry chef and comes from a long line of pastry chefs.

Other finalists for the *Rising Star Award* were:

- Peter Springmann, Country Prime Meats, and
- Bill Vanderkooi, Nutriva Food Group

The *Rising Star Award* was sponsored by [Reliance Insurance Agencies](#)

The *Energy/Sustainability Award* recognizes a processor which has demonstrated energy conservation and sustainability in their operations. Arran Stephens and Jyoti Stephens accepted the award for Nature's Path Foods. Jyoti is Nature's Path Foods' Director of Sustainability and Stewardship. Nature's Path has re-packaged their cereals in boxes that are 30% smaller but with the same volume of cereal. Jyoti works across company departments to help manage sustainability goals and reduce the unnecessary use of resources.

Other finalists for the *Energy/ Sustainability Award* were:

- Vantage Foods and
- Sunrise Soya Foods

The *Rising Star Award* was sponsored by [BC Hydro](#).

The awards were presented at FoodProWest, the premier annual gathering of BC food processors. The event included a breakfast keynote by David Ian Gray, DIG 360, sponsored by Meyers Norris Penny. A breakfast buffet featured *Nature's Path* cereals. The morning included breakout sessions on Certificate of Recognition (Food Industry Occupational Safety Association); Packaging Trends (IDEON Packaging) and Alternative Financing (RBC Royal Bank). During the day, attendees browsed the trade show with over 25 exhibitors.

A highlight on the lunch plate was a skewer of *Gardein Chick'n Scallopini* (Garden Protein Int'l). With over 25 years in food processing, the keynote speaker, Yves Potvin (Garden Protein International)—perhaps the highlight of the day—candidly shared the triumphs and disappointments he has enjoyed over the years of building (and sometimes selling) food companies.

The day concluded with a lively Industry Leaders Forum sponsored by the Premium Brands Group. Gay Hahn of *Avalon Dairy Ltd.*, Lloyd Bernhardt of *Ethical Bean Coffee Co.* and Arran Stephens of *Nature's Path Foods* shared an insight in their worlds as leaders of their companies.

"We are delighted with the caliber of people who participated and the stature the event has achieved", said Robin Smith, BCFPA President and Chair of the Board. "Avalon, Nature's Path, Dave and Thomas are worthy and inspiring winners. We are delighted that we could honour them in this way."

"This is the second year of FoodProWest," added Nico Human, BCFPA CEO. "We built it out of the successful BCFPA Professional Development Day. We are very happy to see the event grow; up to 235 participants from around 120 in 2008. Our proceeds of the event are used to leverage funding for industry projects that will benefit the entire industry. The event therefore not only celebrates the industry and brings its participants together, it also raises funds for the betterment of the industry as a whole.

"We are already working on FoodProWest 2011," Human added. "The provisional date is June 3, 2011. Please pencil (or "Blackberry") the date in immediately!"

-30-

The **BCFPA** is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to represent all segments of the food, beverage and nutraceutical processing industry, and to coordinate common industry activities and resources under one umbrella. The Association represents micro, small, medium, and large processing companies.

For more information, including photographs of the nominees and winners, contact:

Adam Ford

BCFPA, 35707 Sunridge Place, Abbotsford, BC, V3G 1E5

Tel 604-504-4409 Fax 604-746-4409

adam@bcfpa.ca