



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

QCS Leadership Conference Continues to Deliver Exceptional Value and Provide Tools to Collaboratively Address Industry Issues

Three-day conference wraps up with awards dinner and gala.

CHICAGO, Illinois, Nov. 4, 2019 — There was a lot of excitement and networking among the member-owners and supply partners who attended the annual Leadership Conference in Nashville, Tennessee, October 27-29, 2019. The QCS Leadership Conference provided a forum where food and beverage manufacturers and suppliers from throughout the United States and South America could learn new information, ideas and strategies for remaining competitive in the consumer packaged goods (CPG) industry. The conference theme, "Turning Complexities Into Competencies," addressed the challenges the member-owners have in purchasing, production quality, food safety, human resources, and sales and marketing. This year's conference had record attendance, including 75 first-time attendees.

According to QCS Purchasing President Ken Klug, "Our role is to provide our member-owners and supply partners tools they can use to collaboratively address the complexities of the ever-changing food and beverage industry."

QCS Purchasing, LLC, and Quality Chekd Dairies, Inc., wrapped up the three-day conference with an awards dinner and gala that recognized outstanding service to the industry, production excellence, exceptional marketing and excellence in leadership.

The top award of the evening, the Quality Chekd Irving B. Weber Distinguished Award for Quality Excellence, which recognizes overall quality, was awarded to Hiland Dairy Foods Company of Kansas City, Missouri. The processing plant earned the award through its strong commitment to quality excellence in the categories of leadership, culture, production, sustainability and business ethics.

Three dairy processors received Quality Chekd Production Excellence Awards, based on criteria that include a plant audit, as well as evaluation of all plant processes and systems for product quality evaluation results:

- Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc., Anderson, Indiana: Production Excellence Award, Fluid Milk Category
- Umpqua Dairy Products Company, Roseburg, Oregon: Production Excellence Award, Cultured Products Category
- Umpqua Dairy Products Company, Roseburg, Oregon: Production Excellence Award, Ice Cream Category

The 2019 QCS Leadership Awards recognize the member companies and supply partners that, over the previous calendar year, have done the most to support the vision of QCS Purchasing. The 2019 QCS Leadership Award was given to two member companies:

- Nuestro Queso Hispanic Cheese Makers, Chicago, Illinois
- Producers Dairy Foods, Inc., Fresno, California

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One supply partner company was also given the 2019 QCS Leadership Award:

- W.W. Grainger, Lake Forest, Illinois

QCS Purchasing also introduced the Best Collaboration Award for 2019. This award celebrates partnerships between a member and a supply partner to solve a problem or achieve a desired outcome and goes to a variety of joint efforts such as a new packaging innovation, a new product launch, a cost-saving effort, or an operational improvement. The 2019 QCS Best Collaboration Award was given to two member companies and one supply partner whose collaboration resulted in a new bulk merchandising solution:

- ORBIS Corporation, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin
- Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc., Edwardsville, Illinois
- United Dairy, Inc., Martins Ferry, Ohio

Finally, the 2019 QCS Outstanding Marketing Awards recognized member and supply partner organizations that launched solid, creative efforts and campaigns between Aug. 1, 2018, and July 31, 2019. QCS awarded Outstanding Marketing Awards to the following category winners:

Member Marketing Awards:

- Alquería Dairy, Bogotá, Colombia, Outstanding Marketing Campaign (tie)
- Hiland Dairy Foods Company, Springfield, Missouri, Outstanding Marketing Campaign (tie)
- Hiland Dairy Foods Company, Springfield, Missouri, Best Print Collateral
- Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc., Edwardsville, Illinois, Best Digital Marketing
- Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc., Edwardsville, Illinois, Best New Packaging

Supply Partner Marketing Awards:

- W.W. Grainger, Lake Forest, Illinois, Outstanding Marketing Campaign
- International Food Products Company, Fenton, Missouri, Best Digital Marketing

Next year's QCS Leadership Conference will be in San Diego, California, Oct. 11-13, 2020. For more information about the QCS Leadership Conference, please visit www.qcsleadershipconference.com.

About QCS Purchasing, LLC

QCS Purchasing, LLC, is a member-owned, not-for-profit buying group for companies engaged in food and beverage production. By aggregating purchases of common supplies, QCS Purchasing provides members with access to high-quality goods and services at the lowest possible total cost. Established in 2005, the number of purchases QCS Purchasing manages has increased each year of its existence. More than 150 national supplier-partners provide solutions to a wide variety of categories. For more information about the QCS Purchasing organization or membership, please visit QCS Purchasing.com.

About Quality Chekd Dairies, Inc.

Quality Chekd works on behalf of dairy processors by providing them with services to improve business success, as well as providing consumers with safe, delicious dairy products. Food safety is first, and Quality Chekd has established quality assurance (QA) measures and evaluations, laboratory resources, and employee training and planning that include and surpass government regulations. Members have access to human resources tools, marketing trends and information, and purchasing opportunities to help them maintain costs. All of these services are part of the Quality Chekd trademark, which signifies product excellence. For more information about the Quality Chekd organization or membership, please visit QChekd.com.

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