



*The Academy Awards of the Ontario meat industry.
MPO Red Carpet Awards Gala 2019!*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GUELPH, ON - October 30, 2019 - Family was at the heart of the 2019 Red Carpet Awards Gala. We celebrated family businesses that produce award-winning, artisan meats for Ontarians and we honoured the family of people that make up our industry association and their commitment to our organization. The night concluded with the crowning of Ontario's Finest Butcher, in the sixth year of this annual competition.

"This evening's award celebration plays an important role in bringing our industry together where we pay tribute to our members, recognizing their innovation and excellence," says Franco Naccarato, executive director, Meat & Poultry Ontario (MPO), in his opening remarks. "Tonight is a time to celebrate our accomplishments and to acknowledge our champions."

We honoured Karlovo, Farm Credit Canada, Sheik Halal Farms, Webers Food Group Limited, Longo Brothers Fruit Markets, Eddystone Meat Products, Wagener's Meat Products and Agram Meats as they received their 10-year membership plaque, followed by Malabar Super Spice and Windcrest Meat Products who were honoured for 25 years of loyal MPO membership.

Since the awards' inception in 1995, MPO has presented only 12 prestigious **Lifetime Member Awards** to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to industry. This year we inducted Doris Valade, formerly of Malabar Super Spice, into that respected club.

The **Associate Member Recognition Award (AMRA)** is given to an associate member company that, judged by the membership, is deserving of recognition for their contribution to the association and to the industry. This year Reiser Canada, Burlington, was honored with this distinction and accepting the award on behalf of Reiser was Terry Rees.

Fifty-one awards were presented in the 2019 **Ontario Finest Meat Competition™** crossing 16 categories with placing for Silver, Gold, and Platinum in each (see attached for list of all categories and winners).

The **Ron Osborne Award of Excellence** was presented to Halenda's Meats, Oshawa for the most points accumulated in the competition. The **Diamond Award** was presented to Speducci Mercato, Toronto for producing the item with the top score across all products, Wild Boar Prosciutto.

Brent Herrington from Herrington's Quality Butchers in Port Perry took home the title of **Ontario's Finest Butcher**. Facing off in the final round that afternoon on the trade show floor against Doug Easterbrook, Townsend Butchers, and Steve Toms, Fortinos, all finalists received two chickens, a leg of lamb, and a beef rib, to prepare several incredible-looking display-ready items in the short half hour

they were given. The judge's scores combined with the attendee's votes determined it was Brent that would carry the honour.

"The awards we gave out this evening are not going to just any company, they are going to family businesses. Family businesses that sacrifice every day to put the highest quality and safest foods out for Ontarians across the province," says Carol Goriup, president, MPO. "I am proud to represent this group of independents to give them a place of belonging and to let them know that they are not alone."

-30-

About MPO

Meat & Poultry Ontario is the heart of Ontario's meat industry. Our members are independent businesses proud to serve the communities they live and work in. They can be found across the province, involved in every stage of the meat industry from harvesting to retail.

No matter where they are located or the type of products they produce, Meat & Poultry Ontario members are committed to creating delicious, healthy and nutritional foods for Ontario families. In addition to providing food for your table, your local butcher is a strong economic driver in urban and rural Ontario. Ontario's meat and poultry sector employs 25% of Ontario's food and beverage processing industry — the single largest manufacturing employer in Ontario — and generates \$8.8 billion of the province's \$42 billion food and beverage processing industry revenue.

Media Contact

Heather Nahatchewitz
Marketing and Communications Director
Meat & Poultry Ontario
(519) 763-4558 x225
heather@oimp.ca

Encl: Speducci Mercatto – Wild Boar Prosciutto photo, Halenda's – Platinum winner Craft Beer and Cheddar Sausage photo, Brent Herrington – Ontario's Finest Butcher photo (in photo L to R: Franco Naccarato, MPO Executive Director; Brent Herrington, Owner, Herrington's Quality Butchers; Carol Goriup, MPO President), Ontario's Finest Meat Competition 2019 Winners