Media Release

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San Mateo County As Fresh as it Gets Winners Announced
Businesses Recognized for Fresh, Local Fare

Sixty-five restaurants, caterers, hotels, florists and companies were recognized in the annual San Mateo County As Fresh as it Gets awards ceremony at Dominic's at Oyster Point in South San Francisco on July 20. The awards program is the culmination of outreach efforts by the San Mateo County/Silicon Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau and the San Mateo County Farm Bureau, in cooperation with the San Mateo County Harbor District.   This year's efforts have, once again, been underwritten by the San Mateo County Agricultural Commission.

The annual awards event was held at Dominic's at Oyster Point, with growers, wineries and brewers represented. Guests were given As Fresh as it Gets grocery bags to remind them to look for the logo identifying fresh, locally produced products.

The As Fresh as it Gets Program was begun in 2005 as a partnership of the Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Farm Bureau, in cooperation with the San Mateo County Harbor District. The purpose of the program was to boost support of local farmers, fishermen, wine makers and brewers, rewarding restaurants that go out of their way to buy and serve fresh local products. "We started out wanting to promote our amazing, fresh, local food to visitors, and have expanded the outreach to residents, as well, over the years. We think people's awareness has definitely been raised" said Convention and Visitors Bureau CEO Anne LeClair. "We have some great partners in this effort and all pull together to promote our local products."

Every year since the program's inception, the Convention & Visitors Bureau and Farm Bureau have reached out to local chefs and restaurants owners, giving them a seasonal product calendar and lists of people and locations selling the products.   Restaurants, companies, and venues with onsite food operations are also sent applications for the award and asked to list the local products they buy, where they buy them and how they incorporate them into their menus.

Winners were given award plaques and each winning restaurant owner or manager an embroidered polo shirt designating him as a winner.   Commendations were presented from the offices of Congresswomen Jackie Speier and Anna Eshoo, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, Santa Clara County District 5 Supervisor Joe Simitian, State Senator Jerry Hill, Assembly Members Kevin Mullin and Rich Gordon, and various city councils. Some restaurants also received certificates from Well Kiddos, for having at least one healthy choice on their kids' menus.   The awards were presented by CVB Past Chair John Hutar, General Manager of Dinah's Garden Hotel in Palo Alto.

In addition to the regular As Fresh as it Gets award, there are two additional award levels: gold and platinum. The level of the award is based upon how many of the establishment's foods are local, whether or not the farm/provider is mentioned on the menu and whether local wines and/or beers are served.

Owners and managers and chefs from the winning restaurants and others are invited on a farm tour once a year to meet the growers, fishermen, nurserymen and wine and beer makers. The goal is that they will forge relationships and buy directly from the people they meet on the tour.

While winners are recognized formally only once a year, businesses may apply, qualify and receive a plaque for display at any time during the year.

A list of winners is attached. Here is a link to the event photos, taken by Edna Takeda Geller:

http://tinyurl.com/afaig-2016

The San Mateo County As Fresh as it Gets program is operated by the San Mateo County/Silicon Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau and San Mateo County Farm Bureau, in cooperation with the Harbor District and with the support of the San Mateo County Department of Agriculture. For more information on healthy, locally produced foods, local growers and farmers' markets, visit www.freshasitgets.com.