

Kagerer & Co., Freshpack win grand prizes

Kagerer & Co. of Munich, Germany and Freshpack of Saint Martin les Boulogne, France were announced as the grand prize winners in the Seafood Excellence Global awards.

Kagerer & Co. won the grand prize for best retail product for its Dim Sum – Quick 'n' Easy, which contains three types of dumplings that can be steamed or microwaved. Judges praised the distinctive flavor of the dumplings – har kao, shao mai and gyoza – which are served with their own dipping sauce.

For best hotel/restaurant/catering product, Freshpack won for its raw king crab meat. Freshpack uses a high pressure wash to shell king crab legs and vacuum-seals them whole, which the judges said offered restaurant operators and chefs convenience and flexibility.

This is the first year for the Seafood Excellence Global Awards, as the competition was previously known as the Seafood Prix d'Elite. The Seafood Excellence Global finalists were judged on taste and overall eating experience, packaging, marketability, convenience, nutritional value and originality. This year's winners were chosen from 39 finalists representing 15 countries and were announced at a reception on Tuesday, 26 April. Five other awards – for innovation, convenience, health and nutrition, retail packaging and seafood product line – were also handed out at the ceremony.

The award for innovation was given to La Famille Boutrais of Saint Coulomb, France for its "Gold Special Oysters 'Ostra Regal.'" These unique oysters are grown for a minimum of 36 months and feature deeply cupped, gold-flecked shells. Each box of the oysters contains a traceability certificate guaranteeing the oysters' origin and spawning date.

The Seafood Excellence Global special prize for convenience was awarded to Marine Harvest of Boulogne sur Mer, France for its "Mini Gourmandises," an appetizer-sized portion of creamy smoked salmon mousse and oak-smoked, diced salmon. According to the judges, the product stood out



Liz Plizga (on the right), from Diversified Communications welcomes all the winners of the first edition of the Seafood Excellence Global awards.

for its special black serving tray with angled sections that serves to both protect and display the individual portions of salmon.

In the health and nutrition category, L'huître Noisette from SAS Kermarec in Blainville sur Mer, France won for its oysters, which the company grows in the open sea on the west coast of Normandy. The company won praise from the judges for marketing its smaller oysters, which are rich in iodine and other important nutrients, to consumers who might find larger oysters as palatable. Its packaging – a wooden box with a rope handle – is another facet of the product that encourages wary consumers to try the company's oysters, judges said.

Marine Harvest France doubled its winnings with a second Seafood Excellence Global special award for

retail packaging. The company's product, "ASC Salmon Traiteur in Double Protection Packaging," demonstrates a new process used to allow the retailer to use a vertical display without leakage. The product's salmon fillet is skin-packed first with a gas-permeable but liquid-proof film, then given a second film. Finally, a modified atmosphere is added between the two films, which helps to retain moisture and extend shelf-life, according to the judges.

In the seafood product line category, Delpierre of Saint Aignan de Grand-Lieu, France was took top honors for its fresh fillets preserved with high-pressure pasteurization. The line includes seven different varieties – seabass, seabream, red mullet, cod, sardine, mackerell – that are skin-packed without preservatives. The

special pasteurization technique gives each of the varieties of products a shelf life of up to three weeks.

The judges for the 2016 Seafood Excellence Global competition were jury chairman Peter Joyner, food development director for Elixir in the United Kingdom; Patrick Louis, frozen food buyer for Auchan stores in Europe; Filip Keersmaekers, seafood category manager for Makro & Metro Cash & Carry in Belgium; Diane Camp, development chef with Reynold's Catering Supply in the United Kingdom; and Daniel Pape, seafood buyer for Kaufland stores in Germany. The judges' scores were verified by the accounting firm of Ernst & Young.

The winners and finalists are on display in the Patio, Stand P-4619 - 4635.

Cliff WHITE