

Michigan Celebrates Food and Agriculture Gala brings out the best in the industry

March 9, 2017 / by [Mike Turner](#)

It was the auto industry that imprinted Michigan on the nation's economic map.

The agricultural sector, meanwhile, continues to give the state something else to boast about.

Case in point: Earlier this year, National Geographic magazine named Detroit the top unexpected food destination in North America.

“Wait, Detroit? Yes,” wrote National Geographic writer Nancy Gupton. “The city better known as a center for automakers and manufacturing is revving its culinary motors.”

But for longtime Michiganders, a bustling restaurant scene and other agricultural activity is hardly a secret.

The vast food and agriculture industry, ranging from farmers who grow food to businesses that process it and serve it to consumers, is the second-largest economic sector in the state.

According to statistics compiled by the Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan produces more than 300 commodities, making our farm economy the second most diverse in the nation behind California.

In total, the agriculture industry contributes more than \$100 billion annually to the state's economy and employs more than 130,000.

To celebrate all that and more, *Corp!* magazine honors the companies that continue to make this industry a source of pride and economic growth with its annual Food and Agriculture Awards.

This year, 80 winners were feted during the Michigan Celebrates Food and Agriculture Gala held March 2 at the Greektown Hotel.

A note about our Food and Agriculture Awards criteria: In addition to honoring food producers and processors, *Corp!* also recognizes creativity and success within the food-related retail sector, including restaurants and other storefront operations. We consider them a vital part of the network that literally injects flavor into the lives of Michigan residents. We honor organizations in four categories: Agriculture, Industry Champions, Industry Innovators and Industry Leaders.

Here are the synopses of your 2017 Food and Agriculture Awards winners:

Industry Leaders

Chelsea Milling Co.

Chelsea

www.jiffymix.com

Chelsea Milling Co., the maker of prepared baking mixes for the retail, institutional and foodservices markets sold under the Jiffy and CMC brand names, has hired over 50 people in the last 20 months. “We are in addition completing work on a state-of-the-art new mixing and packaging facility, which will serve institutional and foodservice customers,” says Howdy Holmes, president and CEO. As a result, new skill sets and significant training programs will be required to operate and maintain the new facility. “There were many changes which challenged us throughout the year,” Holmes says of 2016. “We responded as necessary to serve our customers. Our employees benefit from unplanned changes because they value our customers and find a way to adjust to those changes as a team. That makes them proud and feel good.” Chelsea Milling makes the No. 1-selling brand in the United States in dry grocery and is aiming to extend that lead in 2017. “In addition, with the coming online of our new mix facility, we intend to make headway into the foodservice channel,” Holmes says.



Howdy Holmes

Mike Turner



Mike Turner, a graduate of Michigan State University, has worked as a business writer and editor for daily and weekly newspapers and other publications throughout Michigan. He now operates a freelance editing and writing business and works as a public relations specialist and copywriter.

Full article:

<https://www.corpmagazine.com/food-and-agriculture/michigan-celebrates-food-and-agriculture-gala-brings-out-the-best-in-the-industry/>