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WEB EXCLUSIVE

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Nominations Are Now Open for the CEAs

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I am thrilled to announce we are launching our third annual CEAs—Cultivating Excellence Awards in conjunction with Indoor Ag-Con and award sponsor Premier Tech, with winners to be announced at the Gala Luncheon at Indoor Ag-Con March 24 at the Westgate in Las Vegas. The nomination forms are open now. But wait, what the heck are the CEAs again? Let me refresh your memory!

This is the third year we've partnered with Indoor Ag-Con to offer up awards that highlight the best in growing operations and product innovation, and last year we began the Trailblazer Award to recognize the people who paved the way early on. Here's a full description of each award:

The **Operational Excellence Award** recognizes a commercial CEA grower that consistently delivers quality products while distinguishing itself through innovation in production, technology, marketing and overall strategy. Judges will evaluate candidates based on their achievements in growing market share, sustaining product quality and developing practices that set them apart in a competitive landscape. Finalists will receive an All-Access Pass to Indoor Ag-Con and be invited to attend the awards luncheon. The winner will be honored with their very own *Inside Grower* cover story! Last year's winner was BrightFarms.

The **Product Innovation Award** highlights the newest and most innovative products that solve critical industry challenges and drive customer value. Open to all industry manufacturers and suppliers, this award will celebrate products that demonstrate the forward-thinking, problem-solving spirit of the CEA industry. Last year's winner was Jiffy Gel from Jiffy Group.

The **Trailblazer Award** honors one individual who has a profound impact on CEA during their time in the industry—someone who explores the unexplored, asks the questions no one else has, and pushes research and CEA application into new arenas. The inaugural honor went to retired University of Arizona Biosystems Engineering Professor Dr. Gene Giacomelli, a longtime researcher, educator and industry supporter. Do you

have a recommendation for a Trailblazer? Email me at jpolanz@ballpublishing.com.

Join us at Indoor Ag-Con March 24-25 at the Westgate in Las Vegas, where we will hold the CEAs Gala Luncheon on March 24 and announce our winners! Register today at indoor.ag.