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**K-VA-T FOOD STORES, FRESH ENCOUNTER
NAMED BEST-OF-SHOW IN ADVERTISING, MERCHANDISING
AT N.G.A. ANNUAL CONVENTION**

RESTON, Virginia (February 23, 2001) — K-VA-T Food Stores, Abingdon, Va., and Fresh Encounter, Findlay, Ohio, were named Best of Show in the advertising and merchandising categories of the fifth annual Creative Choice Awards, at the National Grocers Association Annual Convention in Dallas, Texas. The awards were hosted by the National Grocers Association (N.G.A.) and Food Distributors International (FDI) and sponsored by Unilever HPC and Georgia-Pacific. The Best of Show winner in advertising and the Best of Show winner in merchandising each won a grand prize trophy and a spa vacation for two including airfare supplied by the sponsors.

Serving as judges were Dr. Rich George and Dr. John Stanton, Professors of Food Marketing at St. Joseph's University; Dr. Frank Gambino, Professor of Food Marketing at Western Michigan University; and Jay Rosengarten, President of the Rosengarten Group. The judges chose the finalists for the Best of Show and they were voted on and selected by popular vote at the convention. The awards were emceed by Stanton and Gambino.

K-VA-T's winning entry in the advertising category, "Food City – The Food Experts," emphasized that they are the food experts and even though they do not sell general merchandise, they know food well. The judges felt that Food City's presentation was very complete and was a great tactic in defense of retailers competing with supercenters.

Fresh Encounter's winning entry in the merchandising category, "Mother's Day Flower Sale," was a full page presentation of floral. Fresh Encounter did a "Great job of execution," said Gambino. "They put together a full page ad, took that full page ad and executed well at store level. Great presentation of floral tying it all together for Mother's Day, to make a great event."

N.G.A. is the national trade association representing the retail and wholesale grocers that comprise the independent sector of the food distribution industry. An independent retailer is a privately owned or controlled food retail company operating in a variety of formats. Some are publicly traded but with controlling shares held by the family. Most independent operators are serviced by wholesale distributors, while others may be partially or fully self-distributing. Independents are the true "entrepreneurs" of the grocery industry and dedicated to their customers, associates, and communities. N.G.A. members include retail and wholesale grocers and their state associations, as well as manufacturers and service suppliers.