

Contact: Ron Margulis
Ram Communications
(908) 232-3230

**FRESH ENCOUNTER, COBORN'S INC.
NAMED BEST-OF-SHOW IN ADVERTISING, MERCHANDISING
AT N.G.A. ANNUAL CONVENTION
Companies Win for Public Service Entries**

ARLINGTON, Virginia (February 14, 2003) — On February 3, 2003, **Fresh Encounter, Inc.**, Findlay, Ohio, and **Coborn's Inc.**, St. Cloud, Minnesota, were named **Best of Show** respectively in the advertising and merchandising categories of the annual **Creative Choice Awards**, at the National Grocers Association Annual Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. The awards were hosted by the National Grocers Association (N.G.A.) and sponsored by Unilever HPC North America 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 at a luxurious resort and two airline tickets to anywhere American Airlines flies in the contiguous U.S.

Serving as judges were Dr. Richard 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 the winners were voted on and selected by popular vote at the convention. The judges reviewed entries, which numbered in the hundreds, for creativity, clarity of message, and results generated.

In the advertising category, Fresh Encounter's winning advertising entry, "**Safe Kids Workshop**," came from the Best Public Service Campaign. In the merchandising category, Coborn's winning entry, "**Neighbors Helping Neighbors**," came from the Best Charitable Cause Merchandising Event.

"We all agreed that these entries were extremely well done and served a greater purpose than simply selling product," said Judge Richard George. "They both contained important messages to the consumer about helping out their friends and neighbors and creating a safe environment for their children."

To view a complete list of all Creative Choice Awards winners, please visit the N.G.A. website at www.nationalgrocers.org.

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 and others are employee owned. 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.

