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### **Las Vegas Chef Crowned Champion in Inaugural Global Cuisine Competition Using Italian-Style Cheeses From California**

Tracy, Calif. – December 19, 2022 – The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB) today announced the winners of the inaugural Global Flavors Culinary Competition, a foodservice event that celebrates the broad application of Real California cheese and dairy products in global cuisines. This year’s competition showcased “A Taste of Italy,” with a focus on developing classic and innovative recipes highlighting Italian-style cheese and dairy products from California in two categories: Il Classico and Il Fresco.

Chef Ismaele Romano of Las Vegas, Nev., captured the grand prize in both categories with his creative take on veal lasagna in Il Classico and his innovative eggplant tortino in Il Fresco, taking home \$10,000 for his efforts. Chefs Gustavo Rios of Calistoga, Calif., and Jose Gutierrez of Las Vegas, Nev., were named runner-up winners and each received \$2,500.

The new foodservice competition featured six professional chefs selected from an invited group of culinary experts from throughout the U.S, who competed for \$27,000 in cash prizes and recognition as a global culinary leader in a cook-off event at the Culinary Institute of America at Copia in Napa, Calif. in early November.

The chefs used Real California cheese and dairy products as central ingredients in two recipes, which were traditional Italian entrees in the Il Classico category and either Italian desserts or appetizers in the Il Fresco category. The chefs and dishes entered included:

CHEF	HOMETOWN	IL CLASSICO	IL FRESCO
Ismaele Romano	Las Vegas, Nev.	Costa D'Oro Veal Lasagna *	La La Land Eggplant Tortino *
Gustavo Rios	Calistoga, Calif.	Mushroom Ricotta Gnudi **	Butterscotch Budino
Jose Gutierrez	Las Vegas, Nev.	Four Cheese Potato Gnocchi	Cheese Aracini **
Jay Adams	San Francisco, Calif.	Chicken Parmesan	Ricotta Cake & Mascarpone Crema
Giuseppe Musso	Long Beach, Calif.	Capelletti Romagnoli	La Cascata Bianca
Freedom Rains	San Francisco, Calif.	Fried Sage & Chantarelles Ricotta Gnocchi	Bloomsdale Spinach Sformato & Fonduta

\* Winner / \*\*Runner up

The event was judged by three nationally recognized chefs, scoring dishes in each category based on taste, innovation, commercial viability, and creative use of Italian-style cheeses and dairy products made with Real California Milk. The judges for the 2022 Global Flavors Culinary Competition were:

- Nick Barrington, Executive Chef, East Lake Golf Club, and President of the American Culinary Federation, Atlanta Chefs Association
- Neil Doherty, Corporate Executive Chef – Sr. Director of Culinary Development, Sysco
- David Kamen, Former Executive Chef, Current Director – Client Engagement, Culinary Institute of America (CIA)

“Pizza chefs are very familiar with California cheeses. This event was created to bring greater recognition to California’s leadership in Mozzarella and Italian-style cheese production to restaurant operators and chefs,” said Mike Gallagher, Business and Market Development Consultant for the CMAB. “This special group of chefs and their dishes truly captured the essence of what California cheese can bring to Italian cuisine.”

Details about the competition, categories, chefs, and all featured recipes are available at <https://caglobalcompetition.realcaliforniamilk.com>.

California is a reliable, consistent source of sustainable dairy products used by chefs throughout the world. As the nation’s largest dairy state, California boasts an impressive lineup of award-winning cheesemakers and dairy processors who are helping to drive dining innovation. California is the leading producer of fluid milk, butter, and ice cream as well as Mozzarella, the premier Italian-style cheese for foodservice. California milk and dairy foods can be identified by the Real California Milk seal, which certifies they are made exclusively with sustainably sourced milk from the state’s dairy farm families.

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### **About Real California Milk/the California Milk Advisory Board**

The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB), an instrumentality of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, is funded by the state’s dairy farm families who lead the nation in sustainable dairy farming practices. With a vision to nourish the world with the wholesome goodness of Real California Milk, the CMAB’s programs focus on increasing demand for California’s sustainable dairy products in the state, across the U.S. and around the world through advertising, public relations, research, and retail and foodservice promotional programs.

The Foodservice Division of the CMAB supports foodservice operators and distributors that use Real California dairy products. The CMAB offers marketing and promotional support for foodservice operators that purchase dairy products with the Real California Milk seal, which means they are made with 100 percent milk from California's more than 1,100 family dairy farms, using some of the most sustainable dairy practices in the nation.

For more information on sourcing cheese from California, contact the foodservice team at 209.883.6455 (MILK), [businessdevelopment@cmab.net](mailto:businessdevelopment@cmab.net) or [RealCaliforniaMilk.com/Foodservice](http://RealCaliforniaMilk.com/Foodservice), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).