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### **Ohio Grocers Induct Joe Dager into Hall of Fame**

(GRANVILLE, Ohio)- Joe Dager of Velvet Ice Cream Co. was inducted into the Ohio Grocers Hall of Fame today at a lunch event at the Granville Inn in recognition of his iconic success throughout the dairy and retail food industries.

“Joe is a great example of hard work and cultivating a truly remarkable family-run operation,” stated Kristin Mullins, President & CEO of the Ohio Grocers Association. “Joe Dager has dedicated his life and passion to the Ohio food industry and the communities he has served. He is most deserving of OGA’s highest honor.”

Dager is the third generation family member who led the 102-year-old ice cream manufacture in Utica, Ohio. His grandfather Joseph Dager, who was a 1903 immigrant from Lebanon, was amazed with the American Dream and started selling the company’s first basic flavors of ice cream: vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry, out of a basement confectionary in Utica.

Throughout the many of years the company began to expand dramatically by increasing its production of Velvet Ice Cream per month. Charles Dager who was the second-generation owner decided to open up the company’s first distribution center in Bucyrus, Ohio in 1937. With the company expanding at tremendous rate Velvet Ice Cream Co. began to open up chains and dipping parlors in Mid-Columbus in 1966. Then tragically a fire destroyed Velvet’s Ye Olde Mill. The Dager family had to rebuild the landmark, and it didn’t reopen until 1987. Now the company is run by his daughters who are the fourth generation of the Dager family. This includes president Luconda, and vice presidents Joanna and Andre Dager.

Over the years, Dager was heavily involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters organization, Utica Historical Society, Newark Catholic Association and Licking Memorial Hospital. Dager is still actively a part of Licking Country community, which truly makes him a great inductee into Ohio Grocers Hall of Fame.

Since its inception in 2000, induction into the Ohio Grocers Hall of Fame is granted to individuals who have dedicated their lives to the Ohio food industry. Inductees are nominated by fellow Ohio members and approved by a nominating committee. “The entire OGA board congratulates Joe and the entire Dager family on this achievement,” Mullins said.

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The Ohio Grocers Association, founded in 1899 in Springfield, has served the Ohio Food Industry for over 100 years. The Ohio Grocers Association (OGA) is a non-profit trade association representing approximately 400 grocers, wholesalers, brokers and associate members. OGA’s purpose is to represent the membership through legislative and regulatory efforts, with an effective government relations program; to be the resource for industry education and communication; to work with industry partners and alliances to best serve the membership; and to operate as a professional income-generating business dedicating its resources to the membership.