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QAI Staff Receives Marie Kelso Memorial Award

San Diego, CA – PMCA, an international non-profit trade association of confectionary companies, has awarded Quality Assurance International (QAI) staff the tenth **Marie Kelso Memorial Award**.

The award was given to three QAI staff for an industry paper, which was co-authored by **Ellen P. Holton**, QAI sales/marketing director and **Jessica Walden**, QAI technical specialist, and presented by **Joe Smillie**, QAI senior vice president.

Established in honor of Marie Kelso, secretary to the production conference for 38 years, the award is given to the author of a paper that significantly contributes to industry knowledge. The QAI team received the Marie Kelso award for their paper, *The U.S. Organic Confectionery Marketplace: Regulatory Compliance, Certification Requirements, Challenges and Opportunities for Sweet Success*. The paper was presented at the 60th Annual Production Conference on May 2, 2006.

The award will be given to QAI at the 61st Annual Production Conference on April 17, 2007 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center during the Tuesday Evening Banquet.

“This is a real honor for QAI and a tribute to the teamwork that has made QAI the foremost authority on organic certification,” said Kristen Holt, QAI President. “I congratulate the team for their commitment to protecting the integrity of organic products and advancing the growth of the organic industry.”

The QAI team joins an exclusive group of leaders that have received the prestigious Marie Kelso Memorial Award:

- Edward S. Sequine, Guittard Chocolate Company
- Susan L. Hefle, Ph.D., University of Nebraska
- Richard W. Hartel, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Marlene B. Stauffer, Blommer Chocolate Company
- Harold H. Schmitz, Ph.D., Mars
- Nicole Staniec, Firmenich, Inc.



- Bill Dyer, Blommer Chocolate Company
- Greg Ziegler, Pennsylvania State University, and
- Jeffrey Fine, AarhusKarlshamn USA on a large memorial plaque displayed at the PMCA office.

PMCA's Board of Directors established the award in 1997. It is given each year in honor of Marie Kelso for her faithful dedication and unwavering belief in the value of the Production Conference for the industry. Marie Kelso served as secretary to the Production Conference Committee for 38 years. Her name has become synonymous with the event itself.

Quality Assurance International (QAI, Inc.), the global leader in certification services, has operations in the U.S., Canada, Japan and the European Union. Clients include agricultural producers, food processing facilities, integrated manufacturing operations and contract packing operations, traders, distributors, retailers, and other unique food operations. QAI's Programs are designed to verify compliance at every link of the product handling chain, thus assuring consumers that product integrity is preserved in the marketplace. For further information about QAI, visit the Company's website at www.qai-inc.com or contact Ellen P Holton, Director of Marketing at ellen@qai-inc.com.