

# ACHIEVERS REWARDS SCOTLAND'S WHOLESALERS, SUPPLIERS AND PEOPLE IN 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR





**SCOTLAND'S** most forward-thinking, resilient and innovative wholesalers have been recognised and rewarded by the industry at the annual Scottish Wholesale Achievers Awards.

Achievers, celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2023 and organised by the Scottish Wholesale Association, highlights excellence across all sectors of the wholesale industry and the achievements that have made a difference to individuals, communities and businesses over the last year.

A record number of guests attended the Achievers gala dinner and awards presentation, hosted by TV sports presenter Amy Irons, at the event's new venue, the O2 Academy Edinburgh, on Thursday, 23 February.

Twelve wholesaler categories were up for grabs across retail, foodservice, licensed, technology and community-focused sectors.

Suppliers were also recognised for their support of the wholesale sector with awards in six categories including Best Overall Service, Best Foodservice Supplier and Local Supplier of the Year.

Recognising the importance of people within the wholesale industry, Achievers shone a spotlight on the people who play such an integral part in the success of wholesale and supplier businesses with awards for wholesale Employee of the Year and Rising Star of Wholesale – with the wholesaler deemed Great Place to Work also rewarded.

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***“The wholesale industry is not for the faint-hearted. We’ve shown grit and determination as we’ve stumbled out of a pandemic – and into a new set of challenges and turbulence for the food and drink industry”***

Colin Smith, SWA chief executive

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Wholesalers had an opportunity to impress the judges with their Best Marketing Initiative, show how they are involved at local level in the Community Service Award category, and demonstrated their commitment to the environment in the Sustainable Wholesaler of the Year category.

Multiple winners on the night included CJ Lang & Son – picking up Best Delivered Operation – Retail, Best Symbol Group and Best Marketing Initiative – while Faílte Foods also won three categories: Community Service Award, Best Delivered Operation – Foodservice and Rising Star of Wholesale for Bethany Kennedy.



Colin Smith, SWA chief executive with TV sports presenter, Amy Irons



The O2 Academy Edinburgh was the new venue for this year's ceremony



The awards were hosted by TV sports presenter, Amy Irons





The Best Delivered Operation – Foodservice award went to **Faílte Foods**, one of their three awards on the night



**Mark Violet, Kepak**  
Supplier Sales Executive of the Year



**David Hadden of Booker Edinburgh A1**, Employee of the Year



**Bethany Kennedy of Faílte Foods** received the Rising Star of Wholesale award



**United Wholesale (Scotland)** received the award for Best Technology Initiative



**Summer House Drinks** won the Local Supplier of the Year award



**Four Loko, Red Star Brands**, winner of this year's Project Wholesale award



The Community Service award went to **Faílte Foods**



United Wholesale (Scotland) won three awards: Best Cash & Carry for its depot in Queenslie, Glasgow, Best Licensed Wholesaler and Best Technology Initiative.

Two categories were claimed by Lomond Foods – Sustainable Wholesaler of the Year and Great Place to Work.

There was a special cheer as the audience raised the roof for David Hadden of Booker Edinburgh A1, the recipient of Employee of the Year.

Celebrating the support of suppliers to the wholesale industry and recognising the great people who work for them, Achievers crowned Kepak's Mark Violet as Supplier Sales Executive of the Year.

The new Local Supplier of the Year award went to Aberdeenshire-based Summer House Drinks with Colin Smith, SWA chief executive, revealing that such has been the success of the SWA's 'Delivering Growth Through Wholesale' programme that Achievers 2024 will present a new award for Wholesale Local Food Champion.

This award complements the 'Delivering Growth Through Wholesale' programme, which is designed to not only increase the amount of local sourcing by Scottish wholesalers but strengthen the wholesale supply chain for all.



*Best Delivered Operation – Retail award went to CJ Lang & Son*



*Winner of the Best Overall Service award was AG Barr*



*This year's Best Marketing Initiative award went to one of the evening's multiple award winners, CJ Lang & Son*



*Unilever Food Solutions picked up the award for Best Foodservice Supplier*



*Best Cash & Carry was one of three accolades awarded to United Wholesale Scotland*



*Lomond Foods picked up this year's Great Place to Work award*



Meanwhile, long-time wholesale channel supporter, soft drinks firm AG Barr, won both the Best Overall Service and Best Advertising Campaign categories.

Project Wholesale was won by Red Star Brands for its Four Loko initiative while Unilever Food Solutions claimed the Best Foodservice Supplier category.

Colin Smith said: “This is our 20th year of these prestigious awards and we have a lot to celebrate, from the remarkable individuals who go above and beyond in their day-to-day duties to make a real difference in our industry and in their communities, to the wholesalers and suppliers that go the extra mile to provide exceptional customer service to get food and drink delivered the length and breadth of Scotland.

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Colin Smith, SWA chief executive

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“The wholesale industry is not for the faint-hearted. We’ve shown grit and determination as we’ve stumbled out of a pandemic – and into a new set of challenges and turbulence for the food and drink industry. Rising inflation, falling food supplies, spiralling energy costs and the search for skilled workers.

“Whether it’s retail, hospitality, tourism, sustainability, economic transformation, or health and wellbeing – that’s why here tonight we are joined not just by our wholesale and supplier members but our colleagues and partners from across industry, and from within the Scottish Government. Colleagues that we work closely with and who help us to help you.”

Smith pointed to how Achievers has evolved over the years yet has retained its clear point of difference as the only awards scheme for the wholesale industry which has an independent judging panel.

“We are very proud of Achievers,” he said. “We have strived every year to improve the awards based on your feedback, and we have created new award categories that reflect changes that have already happened, and that we wish to encourage, in our industry.

“And such is the success of our ‘Delivering Growth Through Wholesale’ programme that the Scottish Government has provided funding for us to create 40 Wholesale Local Food Champions, and I am delighted to announce that for Achievers 2024 there will be a new award for our top ‘Wholesale Local Food Champion’.”



*This year’s Best Licensed Wholesaler award went to United Wholesale (Scotland)*



*Lomond Foods received the award for Sustainable Wholesaler of the Year*



*Best Symbol Group was SPAR, CJ Lang & Son*



*The Best Advertising Campaign award went to Irn-Bru for their ‘Let’s Just Agree It Tastes...’ (Prom)*











# Scottish Wholesale Achievers Awards 2023

Celebrating 20 years of Achievement



# Winners

## GREAT PLACE TO WORK

SPONSORED BY PERNOD RICARD

- **WINNER: LOMOND FOODS**
- Runner-up: Booker Dundee
- Highly Commended: United Wholesale (Scotland)

## BEST CASH & CARRY

SPONSORED BY PHILIP MORRIS

- **WINNER: UNITED WHOLESALE (SCOTLAND), QUEENSLIE**
- Runner-up: Batleys Sher Glasgow
- Highly Commended: Booker A1 Edinburgh

## BEST DELIVERED OPERATION – RETAIL

SPONSORED BY JUUL

- **WINNER: CJ LANG & SON**
- Runner-up: JW Filshill
- Highly Commended: United Wholesale (Scotland)

## BEST SYMBOL GROUP

SPONSORED BY BUDWEISER

- **WINNER: SPAR, CJ LANG & SON**
- Runner-up: KeyStore, JW Filshill
- Highly Commended: Day-Today, United Wholesale (Scotland)

## BEST TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

SPONSORED BY TWC

- **WINNER: UNITED WHOLESALE (SCOTLAND)**
- Runner-up: Lomond Foods

## COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

SPONSORED BY AG BARR

- **WINNER: FAÍLTE FOODS**
- Runner-up: CJ Lang & Son

## BEST DELIVERED OPERATION – FOODSERVICE

SPONSORED BY PREMIER FOODS

- **WINNER: FAÍLTE FOODS**
- Runner-up: Lomond Foods
- Highly Commended: Brakes Scotland and Dunns Food & Drinks

## BEST LICENSED WHOLESALER

SPONSORED BY HALEWOOD

- **WINNER: UNITED WHOLESALE (SCOTLAND)**
- Runner-up: Alison Wholesale
- Highly Commended: Gordon & MacPhail

## BEST MARKETING INITIATIVE

SPONSORED BY SUNTORY

- **WINNER: CJ LANG & SON**
- Runner-up: Brakes Scotland
- Highly Commended: United Wholesale (Scotland)

## EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

SPONSORED BY RED BULL

- **WINNER: DAVID HADDEN, BOOKER EDINBURGH A1**
- Runner-up: Karen Clark, Brakes Scotland
- Highly Commended: Scott Robertson, Booker Galashiels

## BEST ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

SPONSORED BY SWA

- **WINNER: IRN-BRU**
- **'LET'S JUST AGREE IT TASTES...'** (PROM)

## LOCAL SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

SPONSORED BY DUNNS FOOD & DRINKS

- **WINNER: SUMMER HOUSE DRINKS**
- Runner-up: Millers Larder
- Highly Commended: Toll House Spirits

## PROJECT WHOLESALE

SPONSORED BY BESTWAY WHOLESALE

- **WINNER: FOUR LOKO, RED STAR BRANDS**
- Runners-up: Suntory Beverage & Food GB&I and Swizzels
- Highly Commended: Juul Labs

## BEST OVERALL SERVICE

SPONSORED BY SWA

- **WINNER: AG BARR**
- Runner-up: JTI
- Highly Commended: Juul Labs

## BEST FOODSERVICE SUPPLIER

SPONSORED BY SWA

- **WINNER: UNILEVER FOOD SOLUTIONS**
- Runner-up: Highland Fine Cheeses
- Highly Commended: Premier Foods

## SUPPLIER SALES EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

SPONSORED BY UNITAS WHOLESALE

- **WINNER: MARK VIOLET, KEPAK**
- Runner-up: David Walker, Heineken UK
- Highly Commended: Richard Garden, BrewDog

## RISING STAR OF WHOLESALE

SPONSORED BY KP SNACKS

- **WINNER: BETHANY KENNEDY, FAÍLTE FOODS**
- Runner-up: Calum Brown, Brakes Scotland
- Highly Commended: Jordan Mclay, United Wholesale (Scotland)

## SUSTAINABLE WHOLESALER OF THE YEAR

SPONSORED BY JTI

- **WINNER: LOMOND FOODS**
- Runner-up: Booker
- Highly Commended: Brakes Scotland