

**“THE SUPERMARKET GURU®” PHIL LEMPERS JOIN WALGREENS’ COLIN WATTS TO PARTNER WITH PRODUCT OF THE YEAR USA 2010**

***Product of the Year Announces Strategic Partnership to Encourage Manufacturers to Promote Product Innovation***

**NEW YORK, Sept. X, 2009** – Product of the Year USA, the only consumer product award voted on by consumers to recognize product innovation, today announced that Phil Lempert, The Supermarket Guru®, will reprise his role for the second year as spokesperson for Product of the Year, along with media partners *Adweek Media Group*, *Supermarket News* and TNS, the world’s largest global market information and insight group. Lempert, an expert analyst on consumer behavior, marketing trends, new products and the changing retail landscape, will host the Product of the Year Awards Gala set for February 2010. Phil is best recognized as the consumer products trends editor and correspondent for NBC News’ *Today* show, and his regular appearances on ABC’s *The View*, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *20/20*, CNN, CNBC, Discovery Health and MSNBC. Additionally, Colin Watts, Chief Innovation Officer at Walgreens Corporation, will serve as the jury chair for the second-annual Product of the Year USA Awards.

“Over the past eighteen months we have seen a new shopper in stores. Smarter, savvier and more equipped to buy what is right for them. They compare product attributes and prices online before they walk through a retailer’s door because these shoppers are relying more on word-of-mouth recommendations. While many websites offer a handful of comments about a particular product, consumers are demanding more. That’s why the power of the Product of the Year Award is more important to brands than ever before. Having more than 100,000 consumers vote on which products are the most innovative, makes the decision of which product to buy easier,” said Lempert.

Phil’s industry knowledge and expertise provides added value to Product of the Year winners, as he promotes the winning products and the award program in trade and consumer media. The 2009 winners received over \$1Million in free media exposure, with the 2010 program to guarantee at least the same level of coverage. Lempert exclusively announced the 2009 winners on a special episode of *The View*, where the audience received a Product of the Year giveaway bag containing all winning products. Additionally, Phil appeared on 40 plus broadcast stations nationwide including, *Good Day Colorado*, *Good Morning San Diego*, *Good Day Sacramento*, Atlanta’s *Morning Drive*, and Las Vegas’ *Wake Up with the Wagners*, to promote the Product of the Year seal and winners. Currently, winners from top manufacturers and brands, including, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, Dr Pepper Snapple Group, Duracell, Oust, O Organics, Pantene, Olay and others are featuring the Product of the Year seal on packaging and in their marketing initiatives

“We are thrilled to have Phil Lempert’s continuous commitment to Product of the Year and support for the soon-to-be-determined 2010 winners” said Colleen Kelly, Managing Director, Product of the Year USA. “Although this tough economy causes consumers to be frugal with their spending, the demand and quality of innovation has increased. Product of the Year is a powerful ROI tool, proven to drive sales, distribution and foot traffic, helping not only consumers but manufacturers and retailers. With severe budget cuts and scaled back product launches currently going on in the industry, this is a sure way for companies to help their innovations stand out.”

Product of the Year is now accepting product submissions until the end of September. All finalists will have the opportunity to attend the Product of the Year USA Jury Day on October 28 at the Gansevoort Hotel in New York City. Colin Watts and the jury panel will preview the latest generation of innovative consumer packaged goods, before they go on to compete for the 2010 Product of the Year stamp of

approval from 100,000 American shoppers. Winners will be revealed at the Product of the Year awards ceremony in February, 2010, and will be able to utilize the Product of the Year seal for marketing initiatives. For more information visit <http://www.productoftheyearusa.com/>.

**About Product of the Year:**

Product of the Year is the only consumer product award that rewards innovation and is voted on by consumers. Established 23 years ago in France, POY currently operates in 28 countries with the same purpose: Guide consumers to the best products in their market and reward manufacturers for quality and innovation. Backed by the votes of 100,000 consumers, the distinct red POY seal serves as a shortcut for shoppers in the supermarket, saving them time and money. For manufacturers, the award is a powerful marketing message proven to increase retail distribution and sales by an average of 10-15%. Product of the Year accepts entries every year from consumer packaged goods that demonstrate innovation and were launched within the previous year. Entered products are then placed into specific categories such as food, beverages, personal care, household care, etc. with a product then being chosen as a winner in its category through a nationally representative research study administered by TNS. For more information visit [www.productoftheyearusa.com](http://www.productoftheyearusa.com).

**About Phil Lempert:**

Phil Lempert, The Supermarket Guru, ® has been accredited with predicting the future -and helping businesses and consumers understand it. For more than 25 years, Lempert, an expert analyst on consumer behavior, marketing trends, new products and the changing retail landscape, has identified and explained impending trends to consumers and some of the most prestigious companies worldwide. Lempert is a distinguished author and speaker who alerts consumers and business leaders to impending trends, and empowers them to make educated purchasing and marketing decisions. As one of America's leading consumer trend-watchers and analysts, Phil Lempert is recognized on television, radio and in print. He has appeared as the food trends editor and correspondent for NBC News' *Today* show for over 20 years, where he reports on consumer trends, food safety and money-saving tips, as well as showcases new products. He makes monthly appearances on ABC's *The View*, and has appeared numerous times on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *20/20*, CNN, CNBC, Discovery Health and MSNBC, as well as on local television morning and news programs throughout the country.

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