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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Hy-Vee Citrus Display Contest to feature Certified Sustainable Zeal Brand  
Annual display contest to offer sustainably-grown citrus  
from SunWest certified by Protected Harvest**

(Soquel, CA. January 13, 2011) Starting January 19, Hy-Vee shoppers will find certified sustainably-grown Zeal Navel and Cara Cara oranges offered for sale on competitively-designed displays throughout Hy-Vee's 232 Midwestern stores. Demonstrating its commitment to sustainability, Hy-Vee selected Zeal branded Navels, certified by Protected Harvest, for its annual citrus sale contest among store produce managers.

"Our annual citrus competition has always been a creative, post-holiday event for our store managers. For the first time, we are using the contest as an opportunity to showcase our commitment to sustainable agriculture, by offering our customers a quality product grown under strict environmental and social standards," stated Ron Coles, Assistant Vice President of Produce Purchasing for Hy-Vee.

Hy-Vee has relied on SunWest Fruit Company of Parlier, California to supply its citrus needs for the competition for the last five years, but this is the first for the Zeal brand having shipped 45 truckloads of Navel and Cara Cara oranges to their Iowa distribution center. "Hy-Vee is a loyal partner who shares our values. So many customers have asked about sustainability, but Hy-Vee is walking the talk by supplying their customers with high quality fruit grown with care for the environment," said Doug Sankey, Marketing Manager for SunWest. "It is more than a buy-sell relationship."

In 2008, SunWest citrus growers launched the Zeal brand for citrus and stonefruit grown under the strict production standards set and audited by Protected Harvest, a third-party certification agency of sustainably-grown specialty crops. According to farm manager Brian Fien, certification is important because "The Zeal label illustrates to the consumer that not only is SunWest a steward of the environment and its surrounding eco-systems, we are also conscious of the health and socio-economic outcomes that result from agriculture." He added, "Protected Harvest provides a means for measuring our sustainability using a whole systems approach."

“The Hy-Vee and SunWest partnership fulfills a bright opportunity in the marketplace,” explained Dr. Dan Sonke of Protected Harvest. “Today’s consumer is looking for responsibly-grown produce with authenticity verified by certification to high standards. Companies that do this can make a deeper connection to consumers who care about sustainability.”

**About Hy-Vee:** ([www.hy-vee.com](http://www.hy-vee.com)) With sales of more than \$6.9 billion and more than 232 retail stores across eight Midwestern states, Hy-Vee ranks among the top 30 supermarket chains in the nation. Headquartered in West Des Moines, Iowa is an employee-owned store committed to sustainability through product sourcing and packaging, waste reduction and recycling, energy and resource conservation and store construction and design.

**About Zeal:** ([www.zealicious.com](http://www.zealicious.com)) Over 5000 acres of citrus are certified by Protected Harvest for marketing under the Zeal label and grown by SunWest Fruit Company, along with 6200 acres of stonefruit grown by SunWest and Fowler Packing. Launched in 2008, the Zeal program was granted the IPM Innovator Award by the California EPA Department of Pesticide Regulation.

**About Protected Harvest:** ([www.protectedharvest.org](http://www.protectedharvest.org)) Protected Harvest is a nonprofit organization of scientists, environmental NGO’s and agricultural practitioners that is managed by [SureHarvest](#). Protected Harvest performs annual audits of participating growers to verify the production set by its Sustainability Council. Over 40,000 acres of winegrapes, potatoes, citrus, stonefruit and mushrooms are certified by Protected Harvest.

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