

# Winners unveiled at first Wales Food and Drink Awards

The winners of the first Wales Food and Drink Awards have been announced.

Welsh food and drink producers of all sizes were celebrated for their innovation and creativity at the inaugural business awards held at the Mercure Hotel in Cardiff.

Businesses were shortlisted in a range of categories reflecting the diversity of the key sector in the Welsh economy.

The award winners were:

- **Start-Up Business of the Year** – Do Goodly Foods
- **Local Community Award** – Tiny Rebel
- **Covid-19 Resilience Award** – In the Welsh Wind Distillery
- **Entrepreneur of the Year** – Danny Curtis, Lobster & Môr
- **Rising Star Award** – Charlotte Clark, Pembrokeshire Gin Company
- **Drinks Producer of the Year** – Coaltown
- **Exporter of the Year** – The Lobster Pot
- **Food Producer of the Year** – Llaeth y Llan – Village Dairy
- **Innovation Award** – Vala Energy
- **Apprentice of the Year** – Ben Roberts -M. E. Evans Ltd
- **Artisan Business of the Year** – Caws Tefi
- **Scale-Up Business of the Year** – Hilltop Honey
- **Sustainable Business of the Year** – The Gower Gin Company

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Business which were highly commended included:

- **Start Up Business of the Year** – Old Farmhouse Brewery Ltd.
- **Local Community Award** – MamGu Welshcakes
- **Covid-19 Resilience Award** – Bang on Brewery
- **Entrepreneur of the Year** – Michael Beynon, Coalpit Welsh Cakes
- **Rising Star Award** – Lauren Price, Kepak
- **Exporter of the Year** – AU Vodka
- **Food Producer of the Year** – The Authentic Curry Company
- **Apprentice of the Year** – Joseph Hembrough, The Menai Seafood Company
- **Artisan Business of the Year** – Pembrokeshire Chilli Farm
- **Scale-Up Business of the Year** – Lilo's Pasta
- **Sustainable Values Award** – Pembrokeshire Lamb
- **Drinks Producer of the Year** – Cotteswold Dairy
- **Innovation of the Year** – Daffodil Foods

Colin Gray, chef and managing director of independent food business [Capital Cuisine](#), was named Wales Food and Drink Champion of the Year.

Founder of independent food wholesaler Castell Howell, Brian Jones MBE, received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Robin Jones, managing director of Wrexham-based Village Bakery, chaired the judging panel.

He said: "The judging was incredibly tough because the

standard in every single category was absolutely exceptional – and with so many entries it was very difficult to shortlist. I was blown away by the passion of the producers and their innovation as well as their resilience and ingenuity over the past couple of years. I would like to congratulate all of them because they are a credit to themselves and a credit to Wales.”

Kathryn Jones of headline sponsor Castell Howell said: “Our Welsh food sector is an important contributor to our economy and social fabric. Therefore, it was natural that we supported an event that recognises businesses who have excelled in recent years, especially during and post the Covid pandemic.”

The inaugural Wales Food and Drink Awards launched earlier this year by founders Liz Brookes, director of Grapevine Event Management and broadcaster, Sian Lloyd.

Ms Brookes said: “To see everyone come together for a night of celebration after what has been the most challenging couple of years, was amazing. Wales has such an array of passionate food and drink producers and I congratulate all of them on their achievements.”

Ms Lloyd said: “As a life-long fan of Welsh food and drink it has been fascinating to gain a better understanding of this hugely creative and essential sector. Businesses entered from every corner of Wales and the passion for their products shone through. Many of the stories behind these businesses are inspirational and with such a high standard of entries I’m very relieved that my role was to host the ceremony rather than judge the awards.”

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