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## **MAKERS OF BIGELOW TEA HONORED WITH TRIO OF BUSINESS AWARDS**

### **- Bigelow Family and Company Receive Major Awards including Ernst & Young's Regional "Entrepreneur of the Year" -**

FAIRFIELD, Conn. (September 18, 2002)—At a time when American business is suffering with image problems, one company is a model for growth, longevity, integrity and community service. R. C. Bigelow, Inc., the family-owned tea business, is enjoying a run of recognition for its more than 50 years of professionalism and performance.

Topping its recent honors, four Bigelow family members – David Bigelow (chairman), Eunice Bigelow (co-president), Cindi Bigelow (senior vice president) and Lori Bigelow (senior vice president) – received "Entrepreneur of the Year" awards at a ceremony held June 20, 2002 in Greenwich, Connecticut. Sponsored by Ernst & Young, the "Entrepreneur of the Year" honors outstanding owners of fast-growing companies, whose ingenuity, hard work and perseverance have created and sustained successful, growing business ventures. The four Bigelow family members took home trophies and plaques commemorating their 2002 Southwest Connecticut/New York Hudson Valley award in the Consumer Products and Services category.

In addition, the Bigelows were honored by Ernst & Young with a special award for social responsibility. The Bigelow family was one of only three regional winners to be recognized for contributions to their local communities.

As "Entrepreneur of the Year" award recipients, the Bigelows become life-time members of the "Entrepreneur of the Year Hall of Fame" and are entered into the national competition to be held in November 2002.

Another significant award announced in June named R. C. Bigelow, Inc. First Runner Up of the MassMutual 2001 National Family Business of the Year. The company took second place in the large business category for companies with more than 250 employees. The MassMutual "Family Business of the Year" awards honor family-owned businesses for their success, positive links between family and business, multiple generations of involvement, contribution to communities and innovative business practices.

In reflecting on the recent awards, David Bigelow, chairman of the board and son of founder Ruth C. Bigelow, stated, "Running our family tea business with my wife Eunice, and our daughters Lori and Cindi, is a dream come true. We (the Bigelows) are so proud to continue the tradition started in my mother's kitchen more than 50 years ago. This honor, however, is not just for our family. It is a tribute to all our employees who made this award possible."

**About Bigelow Tea Company**

100 % family owned, Fairfield, Conn.-based Bigelow Tea pioneered the specialty tea category more than 60 years ago. Bigelow takes pride in its heritage and successful growth from a one-product, entrepreneurial venture into America's leading specialty Tea Company. The Bigelow Tea line includes more than 80 varieties of flavored, traditional, green, organic, herbal, decaffeinated teas and iced teas—including America's number one specialty tea flavor, "Constant Comment®".

In 2003, the company purchased and restored the Charleston Tea Plantation. Based on Wadmalaw Island just south of Charleston, South Carolina, the only tea plantation in America cultivates several hundred thousand tea bushes that are descendants of bushes brought from China during the 1800's. The Charleston Tea Plantation has become a "must see" destination for tea lovers and tourists alike who visit the area from around the world and appreciate information and education about tea in addition to enjoying American Classic Tea and products which are produced from the tea grown on the premises

Bigelow Tea products are available nationwide including grocery, super centers, mass merchandisers and health stores. Every variety can be found on the company website, ([www.bigelowtea.com](http://www.bigelowtea.com)), along with an appealing selection of tea chests, tea accessories and other gift items. Tea lovers and enthusiasts will also enjoy interesting and entertaining related stories and facts by visiting the company's blog (<http://www.bigelowteablog.com>).

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