

Recipients of the 2022 WIA Demeter Award of Excellence announced

Topsfield, Mass., (August 25, 2022) – Three exceptional women have been named recipients of the 2022 Women in Agribusiness (WIA) Demeter Award of Excellence – Diane Allemang of FMC Corporation, Kendall Jones of ProAg and Karen LeVert of Pappas Capital and Ag TechInventures. The trio will be recognized next month at the 11th annual *Women in Agribusiness Summit*, which will be held in Dallas, September 26-28, at the Hyatt Regency Dallas.



First introduced in 2013, the *Women in Agribusiness Demeter Award of Excellence*, so named for Demeter, the goddess of the harvest from ancient Greek mythology, recognizes those who have achieved excellence in their field and/or who have demonstrated an outstanding contribution to the agribusiness industry. Thus far, more than two dozen exceptional individuals in the ag and food sector have received the award, along with five notable companies.

Diane Allemang of FMC Corporation

Diane Allemang is executive vice president and chief marketing officer for FMC Corporation, which is an agricultural sciences company based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Allemang is recognized for being – throughout her nearly four decades in the industry – a “passionate advocate for safe and effective crop protection technologies and a relentless champion of women at every level in the industry.”

FMC President and CEO Mark Douglas, who nominated Allemang, noted that whether she is advocating for science-based regulatory decision-making, or bringing the latest crop protection innovations to market, “her career has always been rooted in making sure farmers have access to exceptional technology that is more effective and sustainable than previous generation products.”

Allemang was the first female to chair CropLife America’s Board of Directors in the association’s 80-year history, and the first female to chair CropLife International’s Crop Protection Strategy Council. She is involved in FMC’s Women’s Initiative Network and is executive sponsor for SPECTRUM, FMC’s employee resource group focused on increasing visibility of LGBTQ+ issues. She also serves on the executive sponsor team for FMC’s Social Justice and Race Equity Task Force.



Kendall Jones of ProAg

Kendall Jones, who is based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, has served as the president and CEO of ProAg since July 2017 and previously served as EVP and COO for eight years. Jones' leadership has been instrumental in multiple acquisitions and in growing the company's innovative risk management services. She is recognized for her laser focus on customer service, which has made ProAg a strong, prominent player in the crop insurance market, and also helped ProAg grow to three-quarters of a billion-dollar annual premium company.

Her nominator, Richard Stinson – ProAg's national

communications and media manager – said, "Kendall is passionate about growing not only the company she leads but also the crop insurance industry and the people around her. She is a selfless, inspirational leader.... Kendall's drive to challenge the status quo allows ProAg to bring innovation to an industry that is ripe to change."

Thomas P. Zacharias, president of National Crop Insurance Services, where Jones is chair of the board of directors, added, "Kendall is one of the most highly respected individuals in the crop insurance industry. Her professional demeanor and pursuit of inclusivity are unparalleled."

Additionally, Jones serves on the board of directors for the Producers Ag Insurance Company.



Karen LeVert of Pappas Capital and Ag TechInventures

Karen LeVert is a venture partner of Pappas Capital based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, and co-founder of Ag TechInventures, LLC. After a successful IT, financial and executive career in corporate America, LeVert became an entrepreneur and has now come full circle with her mission to advance disruptive technologies in agriculture.

LeVert launched two accelerators to commercialize early-stage technologies from university research labs through the co-founding of Southeast TechInventures (optoelectronics applications) and later Ag

TechInventures. She then joined venture firm Pappas Capital to invest in companies with the potential to transform the agtech industry.



Said her nominator, Michelle VonCannon of North Carolina Biotechnology Center, "Karen has placed key emphasis on supporting women in their entrepreneurial pursuits.... she recognizes the hurdles women can face and has made it a mission to spotlight these amazing women and their technologies to further revolutionize agriculture."

LeVert is a recipient of the Council for Entrepreneurial Development's Outstanding Service. She also has been named to the WRAL TechWire Hall of Fame. Additionally, LeVert is a member of the North Carolina (NC) Ag Tech Council, NC Biotechnology Center Board, Economic Development Partnership Board of NC, and NC State University Agriculture and Life

Sciences Foundation Board.

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ABOUT WOMEN IN AGRIBUSINESS

The Women in Agribusiness Summit in the U.S., introduced by parent company HighQuest Partners in 2012, is renowned for annually convening nearly 1,000 of the country's female agribusiness decision-makers. The year-round WIA community and initiatives have grown to include WIA Membership, WIA Career Connector, WIA Demeter Award of Excellence, Scholarships, and the WIA Today blog. Learn more at womeninag.com.

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