



Are You a TOPS Retailer?

The TOPS award is a better-business-practices award created by the SCAA in partnership with Fresh Cup Magazine to recognize specialty coffee retailers that are committed to differentiating themselves through excellence. A TOPS award says that not only is the coffee special, but the people, the place, the service, and the preparation are special, too. TOPS pride is shared only by the best of the best coffee retailers—operators who are devoted to quality and continuous improvement in every aspect of their businesses.

"Competition in a world full of increasingly sophisticated coffee consumers is at the heart of the TOPS award. Differentiation is the secret to success in a maturing market." —Mike Ferguson, SCAA

APPLICATION FORM

Please include the following information on your application.

Date:

Business Name:

Contact:

Address:

City:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Website:

Store I.D.

(If more than one store from your company is applying)

(Note: Companies with more than one retail location must submit an application for each of the stores seeking TOPS recognition.)

Trade Affiliations or Recommended by:

(Note: Applicants must be members of a coffee trade association or must be referred by a member of a coffee trade association.)

TELL US ABOUT YOUR PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

On a separate sheet of paper, please describe your current and/or planned activities in each of the 10 areas of continuous improvement that the SCAA has identified as critical to the pursuit of excellence.

1. Attendance at Coffee-Related Conferences and/or Training Programs (Such as the SCAA's Conference & Exhibition and Regional Training Programs).
2. Providing Educational Resources to Employees (This might include books, videos and posters).
3. Presenting Instruction to Trade or Consumer Groups (Have you led coffee workshops or presentations?)
4. Offering Complete Product Information to Customers (Do your coffee bins or packages provide "born-on dates" and blend information? Do you provide origin information to customers?)
5. Promoting Awareness of Coffee-Growing Issues (This could include promoting environmentally responsible coffee-growing practices and supporting social programs in growing regions. Have you visited a coffee origin?)
6. Hosting Consumer Training Activities or Events (This could include educational workshops for your customers, displaying educational posters or participation in National Specialty Coffee Week.)
7. Roasting or, Sample Roasting Coffee on Premises (This could include sample roasting for cupping evaluations or demonstrating the roasting process with a home roaster for customers.)
8. Employing Certified Baristas and/or Brewing Technicians on Staff (Have any of your staff been certified through the SCAA or other programs?)
9. Earning Golden Cup or Espresso Excellence Awards (Have you earned or are you actively pursuing these awards? - e.g., samples have been submitted)

10. Initiating Marketing Efforts That Emphasize Consumer Education (Such as information on origin countries, correct brewing methods or blending.)

ELIGIBILITY AND GUIDELINES

Preparing a successful entry requires attention and care. Please use the following guidelines to complete your application. Entries not submitted as outlined risk disqualification.

- Applications for TOPS 2002 must have been completed in the year 2002 and submitted between March 1 and August 1. Applications received before March 1 will be disqualified.
- Deadline: Entries must be received (not postmarked) by the SCAA no later than 5 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time), August 1. Applications received after August 1 will be disqualified without exception.
- Applications must be properly addressed to ensure prompt attention.

Mail to: TOPS Promotions Coordinator/SCAA
One World Trade Center, Suite 1200
Long Beach, CA 90831-1200

Or fax to: TOPS Promotions Coordinator/SCAA
562/624-4101

- Applicant must be a member in good standing with a coffee trade association, or must be referred by a member in good standing. Applicant must provide proof of membership with application, such as a membership number or membership documentation (photocopied).
- Applicant must be a coffee retailer selling directly to consumers. Roasters selling strictly wholesale are not eligible.
- Retailers may submit applications for multiple stores, but a separate application with specific location information and distinct initiatives must be submitted for each store.
- Each application must be complete with definitive answers to every question on the TOPS brochure. Entries will be disqualified if any question is unanswered or the reason for omission is not explained.

- Each application must be typed on white 8.5 x 11 standard-sized paper (company letterhead is acceptable). Hand-written applications will be disqualified. Applications should not be bound or mounted.
- Applicants are encouraged to send photographs (or clear copies of photographs), sample menus, event calendars, or feature articles. It is necessary, however, to send five copies of each of these items for judging purposes. These items will not be returned to applicants.
- Any entry that does not adhere to the requirements in this brochure may be disqualified.
- Applicants will not be notified if disqualified.

**IMPORTANT DEADLINE INFORMATION:
TOPS applications are accepted from March 1–August 1**

Presented by Specialty Coffee Association of America & Fresh Cup Magazine

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NOTICES AND DISCLAIMERS

- TOPS awards feature a coffee retailer business name and are presented to that company, not to an individual.
- The exact spelling of the company name appearing on the application will be the name that appears on the award certificate.

- All entries become the property of the SCAA and will not be returned to applicants. Please do not send irreplaceable items or materials.
- The SCAA will acknowledge receipt by fax (unless otherwise specified by applicant) after an entry is screened and processed. Please allow three business days for confirmation.
- Volunteer judges are recruited at the discretion of the SCAA and Fresh Cup Magazine. Identities of judges are confidential and undisclosed.
- Decisions of the judges are final. All scores are confidential and undisclosed.
- Winners of the TOPS award will be announced via the SCAA Website on September 1. Certificates will be mailed to winners shortly thereafter. Winners will receive formal recognition by announcement at the NASCORE coffee and tea trade show, and they will be mentioned in Fresh Cup Magazine and the SCAA Chronicle newsletter.
- The SCAA provides one award certificate at no cost to each award winner.
- Winners are responsible for recognizing any individual, contractor or consultant who helped to develop an award-winning initiative.

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