

# The Eastwood Hall of Fame 2023

## JOSEPH R. HIRZEL

Joseph R. Hirzel was born in 1937 and has lived here in Ohio his entire life. He is the son of Karl and Rosalie (Elspermann) Hirzel. He graduated in 1955 from Olney School (now Northwood) and attended the University of Toledo and Ohio State University. He served six years in the Army Reserve. He spent his free time with his father at the Hirzel Canning factory learning how to build the machines needed to improve the canning processes. Joe has been dedicated to canning, agriculture, and community which shows in his roles of leadership. Joe and his wife, Julia (Williams) in their 52 years of marriage, raised 5 children and are proud of their nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. The Dei Fratelli brand of tomato varieties is now among their best-selling products. However, the business was originally founded on sauerkraut. Tomatoes didn't factor into the business until the third year. The Hirzel business is now being run by the 4th and 5th generations of the Hirzel family. Joe was also instrumental in the formation of the Agricultural Incubator Foundation (AIF) on Ohio 582 near Haskins which has worked with Eastwood, Otsego, and Penta County schools.



- 1994 Pemberville Lions Club Citizen of the Year
- 1998 Pemberville's Outstanding Citizen
- 1998 Ohio FFA Honorary State Degree Recipient, presented to 70th Annual State FFA Convention
- 2001 H.D. Brown Food Processing Person of the Year Award by the Mid-America Food Processors Association. The MAFPA raises awareness of food technology and assures high-quality products to consumers with programs like Tomato Research and Save Our Crops Coalition.
- 2019 inducted to the Wood County Agricultural Hall of Fame
- Nominated Citizens of the Year and Senior King and Queen by the Pemberville Free Fair. Joe supports the cattle sale during the fair.