

# Media Release



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## **Country Road takes out retail top gong 2009 ARA Australian Retail Awards - winners announced**

Country Road, ALDI and independent retailer Allspares and Bearings and have been recognised for their outstanding achievements during tough trading conditions as national winners of the 2009 ARA Australian Retail Awards.

After being voted the clothing and footwear category winner by retailers across Australia, Country Road took out the retail industry's top honour as 2009 Australian Retailer of the Year despite stiff competition from ALDI (Food, drink and grocery 2009 Australian Retailer of the Year), L'Occitane (Speciality retailing 2009 Australian Retailer of the Year) and Subway (Restaurants, cafés and takeaway 2009 Australian Retailer of the Year).

ARA Executive Director Russell Zimmerman said over the past five years Country Road has successfully repositioned itself as a fashionable and accessible brand for the younger consumer.

"Despite tough global economic conditions, Country Road has recorded strong sales results for the past two years underpinned by their commitment to rewarding customers and the relaunch of their two-tiered loyalty program," Zimmerman said.

ALDI didn't leave empty handed – taking out the 2009 Australian Retail Innovation of the Year for their leadership and innovation in unit and national pricing, store design, product packaging and maternity leave policy.

"ALDI is consistently the first Australian grocery retailer to adopt unique strategies that benefit the community including consumers and their own staff. We're delighted to recognise their outstanding leadership and innovation," Zimmerman said.

ARA Australian Retail Awards also recognised the outstanding achievements and business nous of 2009 Australian Independent Retailer of the Year Allspares and Bearings.

Since it opened in 2001, Allspares and Bearings (Yarrawonga in country Victoria) has grown from a single person operation to a retailer of over 5000 different product lines for industrial spare parts and accessories. Owner Shane Cummins has recently developed a new product – Aussie Scales - after consultation with local grain growers who were looking for an alternative to inaccurate paddock weighing systems to allow farmers to get as close to the legal limit as possible without overloading trucks.

The ARA Australian Retail Awards program is designed to recognise the outstanding achievements of individuals and organisations in the growth and development of their businesses and their contributions towards retailing in Australia. Award categories in 2009 include Independent Retailer, Retail Innovation, ARA Young Retailer and Retailer of the Year. For further information please visit [www.australianretailawards.com.au](http://www.australianretailawards.com.au) or contact 1300 368 041

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