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publisher's perspective



The Rumours of Grocery's Death May be Exaggerated

In a recent editorial, "Is This the Death of the Grocery Store?" Sylvain Charlebois, professor of food distribution and policy and associate dean at the College of Management and Economics, University of Guelph, has argued that with the increasing fragmentation of food demand the old supermarket model of the 1960s is under serious threat of survival.

What are the underlying forces at work that have shaped this rather dire outlook for the traditional grocery store? Charlebois points to increased competition from mass discounters, the rise of online shopping and changing demographics. Already, he says, WalMart has close to 10 per cent of the Canadian market and is striving for first position. Loblaws, on the other hand, gains an increasing volume of sales from non-food items. On the demographic front, boomers are retiring with fixed incomes and depressed pensions while millennials link social values to food more than their predecessors did. Customization, he says, will become even more important in the future meaning continued growth for specialty stores. Ethnicity and food trends are game-changers as well with 70 per cent of consumer spending growth coming from visible minorities over the next decade.

As a result of these factors, the number of traditional grocery stores will drop significantly in the future. "Unlike the 1960s, when one model dominated the market, we will soon see many successful strategies emerge to feed Canadians."

Certainly these pressures will limit the long-term outlook. But to say we will one day see the death of the traditional store is going too far. Yes, the traditional store will need to adjust and share the space with other retail formats and online. But it is unlikely they will die.

The supermarket model of the 1960s grew out of the rise of suburbia and the growth of a large middle-class in North America, which, albeit, is now being increasingly squeezed. The rise of WalMart might be seen as the result of this and the increasing difficulty of working class to afford groceries. At the same time, food has become a point of class distinction, hence the Starbucks phenomenon and the rising strength of specialty food stores.

But because the middle-class is an enduring part of North American society and our cities are continuing to undergo suburban sprawl, that old supermarket model will have a lot of staying power yet.

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market update



Dart Cup Ltd./Solo Cup Canada Inc.

Now Marketing Under a New Name: Dart Canada

Canada's leading manufacturer of single-use foodservice packaging has unified its activities and facilities (Dart Cup Ltd. in Campbellford and Solo Cup Canada Inc. in Toronto and Mississauga) under one name: Dart Canada.

The Dart Canada name change is part of integration efforts resulting from Michigan-based Dart Container Corporation's 2012 purchase of Solo Cup Company. Now operating under the Dart Canada name are manufacturing facilities in Toronto and Campbellford, a corporate office in Toronto and a Mississauga warehouse. Dart Canada employs approximately 380 people.



Michael Pilato Appointed to General Manager and President, The Clorox Company of Canada Ltd.

Pilato has been with The Clorox Company of Canada for seven years and has held a number of leadership positions in finance, business management, and his recent assignment as vice-president sales, Canada. Previous to his time at Clorox, he held various cross-functional positions with Kraft Canada and Playtex Canada.



Fresh Direct Appoints Boyle

Fresh Direct Produce Ltd. ("Fresh Direct") has announced that Debra Boyle has joined its management team as director of business development. Boyle is a well-respected pioneer in the organic produce category and she brings a wealth of industry experience to the Fresh Direct Produce team.

"Boyle's extensive passion and experience will help us provide a far wider offering of organic produce to our valued customers," says President and Co-founder Davis Yung. "Our team is excited about learning from Debra's extensive background in organic produce and providing more options to the marketplace."

Boyle is delighted to join Fresh Direct Produce, a company that is constantly "creating fresh solutions". As founder of Pro Organics, Canada's largest organic food company, Debra was honored as Rotman's Canadian Woman Entrepreneur of the Year, Profit Magazine's Entrepreneur of the Month, Nutrition Business Journal's Gold Award Winner for Personal Service, and British Columbia's Ethics in Action Award.

For more information about Fresh Direct Produce Ltd. please visit our web site at www.freshdirectproduce.com.

Country Grocer Celebrates 30 Years on Vancouver Island and Salt Spring Island



You'll feel like family.

Celebrating three decades on Vancouver Island, family-owned and operated Country Grocer has earned a reputation as a truly local company with a deep commitment to our local communities and to the island's farmers, growers and producers. Country Grocer's roots reach back to 1984 when Wally Large and Henry Zwynenburg founded Nanaimo's Food Country. In 1986, Peter Cavin and Mark Wilson, with brother-in-law Brett Large and sister-in-law Jody Large and spouses (and sisters) Kelly Wilson and Laura Cavin, launched Mr. Grocer in the Victoria community of Esquimalt, followed by the Royal Oak store the following year. Bringing the stores together under the Country Grocer banner meant improved continuity and recognition among staff and customers. Today, 30 years after welcoming the first customers, Country Grocer has grown to seven stores serving Greater Victoria, Salt Spring, Cobble Hill, Lake Cowichan and Nanaimo. The company continues to grow and thrive by staying true to these same principles: provide our customers with quality products, competitive pricing, exceptional service and an unwavering commitment to the communities we serve.

market update

Bee Maid Honey Limited Celebrates its 60th Anniversary

Much has changed since 1954 when Bee Maid Honey was first incorporated as the sales and marketing arm for honey cooperatives in the Prairie Provinces. What hasn't changed is Bee Maid Honey's steadfast commitment to supplying the finest 100 per cent pure Canadian honey from the hives of its owners – the beekeepers.

"It's exciting to see Bee Maid Honey reach this milestone," states Guy Chartier, CEO. "The company has continued to grow and is now a leading honey packer in Canada. We are so proud of our products, and consider our honey to be the highest quality, best tasting honey available."

Bee Maid Honey went from marketing honey over one desk to providing honey to homes throughout Canada and the world. "We sell our 100 per cent pure Canadian honey through the BeeMaid



brand, leading Canadian retail brands, foodservice distributors and to major food manufacturers," Chartier continues. "Demand for our high quality white honey is also strong internationally, particularly in China and Japan."

Chartier notes, "The company turning 60 is a time to reflect on our achievements with our cooperative business model. Bee Maid Honey is truly unique in that we source our honey from our members, who own the company. This model has helped us achieve consistent quality, drop after drop, and bottle after bottle. We appreciate our members' support and are proud to have generations of the same family that have been supplying honey to Bee Maid since day one."

2014 Canadian Independent Grocery of the Year Award Winners

The 52nd Annual Canadian Independent Grocer of the Year Awards Ceremony was presented in front of a gala audience of over 500 leading grocers, suppliers, and distributors at Grocery Innovations Canada 2014, Canada's premier grocery conference and trade show.

Each year, the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers (CFIG) Awards Program recognizes the success of outstanding independent retailers and offers insights into innovations that are changing and enhancing the way retailers compete.

This year, Dave Hare, Mieke Hare, Dave Hare Jr., Metieke Hare and family of Tofield IGA, in Tofield, Alta., were awarded The Arnold Rands Heritage Award; awarded to the year's best multi-generational store that is privately owned, and that has been in the same family for at least two generations, in the same community for 35 years.

Oak Ridges Food Market, Richmond Hill, Ont.; Pete's Halifax, Halifax, N.S.; and Qualicum Foods, Qualicum Beach, B.C. were inducted into the CFIG Hall of Fame. To be eligible for Hall of Fame induction, a store must win at least three Gold Awards or receive one Platinum Achievement Award and one Gold Award.

The NATIONAL GOLD AWARD Winners for Top Independent Grocer of the Year for 2014 are:

Freson Bros. Stony Plain, Stony Plain Alta. (large surface)

Longo Bros. York Mills, Toronto, Ont. (medium surface)

Blind Bay Village Grocer, Blind Bay, B.C. (small surface)

Choices Market Kitsilano, Vancouver, B.C. (specialty category, David C. Parson award)

The Canadian Independent Grocer of the Year is the most prestigious award CFIG can bestow. Each year, independent grocery stores from coast to coast in Canada compete for the coveted title in each of the specialty, large, medium and small surface categories. Each of the competing stores is visited personally by a highly respected retail management expert, who evaluates competing stores based on retailing excellence and innovation, store team performance, customer service, space utilization, freshness and cleanliness.

The "Power of You" Campaign

Fairtrade Canada has launched a consumer engagement campaign of unprecedented proportions: The Power of You. In partnership with retailers, brands and community groups across Canada, this campaign places the focus firmly on each consumer and their power to change the world through the purchase of fairtrade products.

The ethical certifier has already begun working closely



with retailers, distributors and manufacturers, providing free resources, guidance and promotional materials for the development of co-branded in-store signage and handouts with the fresh, attention-grabbing Power of You design.

For more information on Fairtrade Canada's Power of You campaign, write to retail@fairtrade.ca or visit www.fairtrade.ca



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market update



Halo Metrics Inc. Appoints New Field Service Manager

Halo Metrics Inc. (www.halometrics.com) has announced that Ron McMurray has joined the company to develop and strengthen their growing service capabilities. McMurray brings to Halo Metrics a



wealth of experience that includes successfully managing a technical field service team as his career developed over his nineteen year employment with Checkpoint Systems, and more recently managed installation with Stanley Black and Decker Inc. In this newly created position located at Halo Metrics Mississauga office, "McMurray will help us strengthen and elevate our field service organization to support all of Halo's product lines, with specific focus on Checkpoint's EAS solution base," comments John Petruskavich, vice-president sales, marketing & operations.

Petruskavich further states, "His mandate is to build an industry-leading field service team of professionals, second to none in our sector, offering an incomparable service to our clients in quality and responsiveness that our customers have come to expect from Halo Metrics."

Freson Bros. Partners with Overwaitea Food Group



Freson Bros., an Alberta-owned and -operated grocery chain and Overwaitea Food Group (OFG), the largest Western-based Canadian Food store chain, jointly announced a new supply partnership bringing together their synergy for a seamless and reliable approach to deliver the best selection of products at very competitive prices to Albertans.

Freson Bros., a family-owned business established in 1955 currently operating 15 stores across Alberta is deeply rooted to its commitment to family, community and heritage. With its strong connection to Alberta's vibrant communities and this strategic partnership, Freson Bros. is poised to enhance its mix of choice fresh and quality products as well as create more excitement to its customers' shopping experience as Alberta's premier fresh market.

Upcoming EVENTS

Jan. 29- Feb.1, 2015

Guelph Organic Conference 2015
Guelph University Centre
Guelph, ON
For more info:
www.guelphorganicconf.ca

February 5-9, 2015

Europain 2015
Paris-Nord Villepinte, France
For more info:
www.europain.com

March 24-27, 2015

Anuga FoodTec
Koelnmesse Fairgrounds
Cologne, Germany
www.anugafoodtec.com

April 13-14, 2015

Grocery Showcase West
Vancouver Convention Centre
Vancouver, BC
For more info: www.cfig.ca

April 28-30, 2015

SIAL Canada
Direct Energy Centre, Toronto
Toronto, ON
For more info:
www.sialcanada.com

POST SHOW REVIEW



World Tour by SIAL, the international winners at SIAL Paris

Having travelled the world in search of tomorrow's trends, World Tour by SIAL, the trade show's new event, has chosen its prize winners.

World Tour Award Gold Medal

Maggi Zart Gebraten/Nestle Osterreich GmbH
Austria — Launch date: October 2013

World Tour Award Silver Medal

Drop of Freshness/Yamasa Corporation
Japan — Launch date: August 2013

World Tour Award Bronze Medal

Gourmet Africa Products/Burchells Foods
South Africa— Launch date: December 2013

SIAL Paris reveals the winners of the SIAL Innovation Grand Prix in celebration of 50 years

Gold

Twists/New Food Packagings/France

Trends: Indispensable and industrial
Category: Fresh products

A ready meal in a box with a separate sauce in the lid. Simply turning the lid opens the tab holding the sauce. The product keeps better and its taste quality is preserved.

Silver

YOOJI /Organic frozen portions for babies/France

Trends: protective food, frugality and control

Category: Frozen foods

Ten gram portions of mincemeat or fish. No additives or preservatives. No added salt. Texture adapted to the baby's age. Twelve individually wrapped portions. Frozen organic vegetable puree in divisible 20g portions in a sachet that stands upright.

Joint Bronze

READY-GROW mushrooms it/France
Eco Gumelo CAP PORTUGAL/Portugal

Trends: gifted consumers, living wild

Category: Fresh products

Growing kit for mushrooms. Enables oyster mushrooms to be grown directly in the cardboard box. Compost of recycled coffee grounds. Vaporizer included.



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From workshops to live cooking demos, there were more ways to network and learn this year.

The grocery industry's only annual trade show and conference provided more opportunities to stay on top of industry trends with insights from experts on changing technologies, customers and new developments.

Retail turnaround titan Bonnie Brooks, vice-chairman of Hudson's Bay kicked off the two-day show at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, by sharing how she revitalized the iconic retailer.

Another key highlight was the all-star grocery panel, moderated by Tom Barlow, CEO of the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers. The panelists included: Darrell Jones, president of Overwait-ea; Jeff York, CEO at Farm Boy; Alexei Tsvetkov, CEO at Yummy Market; Shelley Martin, CEO of Nestlé Canada and Terry Wong, director of marketing, authentic ethnic of Tree of Life. The discussion focused around meeting the demands of today's consumers.

Attendees also had the chance to listen and learn at four concurrent workshops on HMR, regulatory, financial and health.

On the floor, there was plenty of action with leading supermarket chefs from Longo's, Pusateri's, Summerhill Mar-

ket, and Galleria Supermarket competing in a cook-off focusing on HMR trends. Hosted by marketing guru Tony Chapman, it was a lively session that saw Galleria Supermarket's chef Jinah Choi win the first day, while Chef Tony Cammalleri of Pusateri's won the second day battle. Attendees came away with ideas on how to freshen up their meals-to-go offerings.

There were a host of new exhibitors in key growth categories including global, local and eco-friendly food and products. Korea Food Trading for example, promot-

ed Korean food as executives from both the company, the Korean consulate, and the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers came together over a giant bowl of bibimbap 70 cm in diameter by 75 cm in height. Bibimbap is a delicious tradi-

tional Korean rice dish.

When it came to top trends in food, there was no shortage of innovative products. Among some of the Top 10 most innovative products: kelp caviar and Mad Mexican pico de gallo salsas.

As well, from the Top 10 Most Innova-

Opportunities to grow, innovate and connect were plentiful at annual grocery show in Toronto.

tive Product competition, two of the winners Golijska Aronia Inc. and Beaver Rock Roastery Inc. were chosen to pitch their products live to buyers from Longo's, Federated Cooperatives Limited and Powell's Supermarket on the GIC stage. It was an amazing opportunity to get their product on grocery shelves and gain insights directly from buying decision makers.

There was no shortage of awards handed out over the two days as well. At the annual luncheon of honour, Steve Fox of Nestlé as well as John Briuolo, Ken Schley and Noel Hayward of Quality Foods, Vancouver Island, B.C., were feted as CFG Life Member Recipients.

Capping off the event was the 52nd annual Independent Grocer of the Year

awards on Tuesday night. National Gold winners were: Freson Bros., Stony Plain, Alta. (large surface); Longo Bros. York Mills, Toronto (medium); and Blind Bay Village Grocer, Blind Bay, B.C. (small). The Specialty Category Gold went to Choices Markets, Kitsilano, Vancouver, B.C.

Also, marking a milestone was Dave

Hare, Mieke Hare, Dave Hare Jr., Metieke Hare and family of Tofield IGA, in Tofield, Alta. The Hare family was awarded the Arnold Rands Heritage Award. The award is presented to the year's best multi-generational privately-owned store that has

350 exhibiting companies.

Next year, Grocery Innovations Canada 2015 takes place September 28 and 29 at the Toronto Congress Centre. Go to www.cfg.ca to register for Grocery Showcase West, April 13-14, 2015, Vancouver.

Connecting to Growth & Innovation

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Showing Local Pride

*A bumper crop of innovation
that connects farm-to-fork.*

The “100 Mile Diet” has recently cast the spotlight on the advantages of eating food that is grown, packaged and sold locally. But farm-to-fork has been a way of life in Western Canada for generations, and the historic roots of life from the land are experiencing a renaissance of sorts, fed by growing support for local sustainable food.

Nourished by abundant sunshine, fertile soils, dedicated growers and community-connected local manufacturers, the local food movement has taken root in a big way. It's a bumper crop of quality food, produced and packaged right here. Consumers are increasingly seeking out local products for their quality, ecological footprint on the planet, and desire to support our local economies.

With the increasing demand and awareness to buy local, eat healthy and live well, more of these products than ever before can be found up and down the grocery aisles. The products are diverse and coming from a wide range of community-connected regional producers.

Across the West, government and industry partnerships and programs are helping to promote locally-produced food. The B.C. government is investing \$2 million in its Buy Local Program to support local businesses and organizations with their marketing campaigns. The goal is to lead the agrifoods sector to become a \$14-billion-a-year industry by 2017.

The British Columbia Food Processors Association (BCFPA) has launched its Buy BC Food campaign to increase consumer awareness of products that are grown, harvested and processed in B.C. Canada Safeway is the program's initial retail partner, and the campaign also includes a website — buybcfood.ca — a social media campaign and industry educational activities.

Administered by the Manitoba Food Processors Association (MPPA), Buy Manitoba is a multi-year public awareness campaign valued at \$3 million, funded jointly by the provincial government and industry contributions. The program, developed to encourage consumers to buy more processed and fresh Manitoba foods, focuses on grocery and foodservice channel promotions. There's also a cross-platform media campaign.

The Buy Alberta program is a multi-year public awareness campaign designed to help consumers to readily identify high quality processed and fresh food products produced in the province. To be eligible for the “Buy Alberta” logo, products must be made entirely from ingredients sourced in Alberta or composed of more than 85 per cent of main ingredients from Alberta, and must be processed and packaged in the province. The Alberta Food Processors Association (AFPA) is administering the program and ensuring that products identified with the logo meet the qualifying criteria.

With the increasing demand and awareness to buy local, eat healthy and live well, more of these products than ever before can be found up and down the grocery aisles.

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We've captured the Flavour of the Sea

Foothills Blend

Foothills Creamery is pleased to introduce this new, deliciously creamy, soft and spreadable addition to their line of fine butter products.

Foothills Blend is made from fresh Foothills Creamery butter and premium quality vegetable oil. Perfect for use on toast, waffles, vegetables, and in cooking – your customers will continue to enjoy the great taste of butter, at only a fraction of the cost.

Attractively packaged in a gold foil wrapper, and available in traditional 454 gram blocks, this butter margarine blend will display well on store shelves alongside the other Foothills Creamery family of products.

Give your customers an irresistible reason to come back again and again.
Give them the Canadian freshness and naturalness of Foothills Creamery products.



Calgary's own Foothills Creamery has been putting quality butter on bread for over 45 years and premium ice cream in cones for nearly 30 years.

The company was started in 1969 by Don Bayrack and two other partners, and Bayrack is now sole owner and president. It's a proud Western Canada tradition of local quality and excellence that continues to grow, with locations in Edmonton and Kelowna and products now sold from coast to coast.

The company produces superior dairy products which consumers can consistently trust for premium purity and flavour. "Our dedication to quality and taste is our focus," says Glen Potter, key account manager with Foothills. Today, Foothills Creamery makes many types of butter, ice cream, frozen yogurt, sorbets, sherbets soft serve and Miss Sharon's Yogurt mixes, plus novelties for the retail and foodservice markets.

It all began with butter and all these years later it is still specially churned the old fashioned way in stain-



You Simply Can't Beat the Taste!

BUYING LOCAL

Foothills Creamery offers locally-produced, premium dairy products

less steel barrels using only the freshest local cream to produce smooth texture and exceptional taste. Foothills butter is available in many varieties including our new product — sea salt butter. There's also old fashioned, lightly-salted, unsalted, whipped, garlic butter and blend. Foothills butter products are sold at independent grocers such as YIG, Askews, Island Independent, Western Foods, Bigway, AG stores, and other chain supermarkets such as the Real Canadian Superstore, Federated and Calgary Co-op, Sobeys, IGA, Freson Bros., Save-on-Foods, Buylow, Quality Foods and Canada Safeway.



Deliciously creamy, soft and spreadable, Foothills Blend is made using real Foothills Creamery butter and premium quality vegetable oil. "Blend is perfect for use on toast, waffles, vegetables, and in cooking," Potter says. "It delivers the great taste of butter at only a fraction of the cost."

Using its fresh sweet cream, Foothills Creamery began producing ice cream and frozen yogurt in 1986, using vat processing for better blending of the ingredients. They have over 80 flavours and add a few new popular ones each year.

"We support local suppliers wherever possible for both cream and ingredients. We do our part to keep the local economy thriving and keep the money re-circulating in our communities." With such exceptional quality and local pride it's no wonder Foothills boasts a long list of loyal customers including Saddledome (home of the Calgary Flames), and the world-famous Banff Springs Hotel and Chateau Lake Louise.

They are pleased with the excellent local support from their customers and it continues to grow right across Canada. Foothills quality brings customers back again and again.

"You can taste the Foothills quality difference."

Check out our website – www.foothillsc Creamery.com

The company produces superior dairy products which consumers can consistently trust for premium purity and flavour.



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clean (fair & sustainable)

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- ❁ Made in Calgary, Alberta

fun means a happy and easy
consumer choice for all ages

- ❁ 23 g sized bars are beautifully presented in a custom mold
- ❁ Each bar is *under 130 calories* portioned for everyday consumption & pleasure
- ❁ Big enough to be a real treat, small enough to be guilt-free



Cococo Chocolatiers
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www.CococoChocolatiers.com



At its Calgary factory Cococo Chocolatiers sources local ingredients to create “Good Clean Fun”

When you call something “Good Clean Fun,” it needs to live up to its name. Cococo Chocolatiers took a good look at the confections aisle and saw a lot of large format bars with similar flavour combinations. It was time for something entirely new, they decided, and that’s how Good Clean Fun was born.

And who better to do it than one of Western Canada’s most renowned houses of chocolate?

Cococo Chocolatiers manufactures high quality bon bon chocolates, baking chocolate and other specialty chocolate items, and retails them in their 33 Chocolaterie Bernard Callebaut® specialty chocolate shop locations in North America.

Their factory is based out of Calgary, and they are known for using the best raw chocolate, the finest natural ingredients, and no artificial preservatives — ever. Their artisanal quality chocolates have a loyal following amongst



BUYING LOCAL

Good Clean Fun

Cococo Chocolatiers launches a delicious new brand.

quality-conscious consumers. The factory and head office employs more than 100 workers who have considerable experience in production, retail packaging, brand management and marketing.

They handcraft more than 300 products using 80 different recipes using all-natural, often organic ingredients with no artificial preservatives. More than 50 ingredients are sourced locally, with 11 key organic ingredients coming from elsewhere in Canada.

“We work with local suppliers and services to keep money local wherever possible,” says Kristi Mehr, senior director, sales and retail operations, Cococo Chocolatiers. “Cococo Chocolatiers also works to create unique local partnerships supporting local charities and events in our community.” Since recovering from the June 2013 flood, Cococo Chocolatiers have formed a strong partnership with the Calgary Zoo, also greatly impacted by the rising waters and also strives towards sustainability.



Over the last few months, the Cococo Chocolatiers team has been working hard on the launch of Good Clean Fun brand bars into the grocery channel. “The ‘Good’ part of the brand name comes from extraordinary flavours and quality,” Mehr says. “Eight delicious and interesting flavour combinations made with high quality couverture chocolate.”

“Clean” means simple ingredients, no additives, and fair and sustainable. “Rainforest Alliance certified chocolate is used to make all the bars, flavours are all-natural, each bar has a very short ingredient list,” Mehr says.

The “Fun” comes with happy branding and an easy consumer choice for all ages. The unique, smaller format bar is 23 grams in size; big enough for a satisfying treat, but small enough to be guilt-free. Each bar is under 130 calories, meaning it is portioned for everyday consumption and pleasure. Once the creative wrapper is opened a gorgeous, custom-designed mold shape is revealed.

Cococo Chocolatiers is also looking at multi packing this item so that consumers can keep a supply of their daily fix in their pantry, she says. Cococo has a great YouTube channel where they have posted some of their happy stories (www.youtube.com/user/CococoChocolatiers).

Check out our website – www.cococo-chocolatiers.com

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Proudly Owned by Canadian Beekeepers

Bee Maid Honey has been in the family for some Western Canadian honey producers right since the cooperative was started in 1954.

Bee Maid Honey is truly unique in that we source our honey from our members, who own the company," says Guy Chartier, Bee Maid's CEO. "This model has helped us achieve consistent quality, drop after drop, and bottle after bottle.

Honey produced by the more than 300 member beekeepers in Western Canada is processed and packaged at Bee Maid's Winnipeg, Manitoba and Spruce Grove, Alberta plants. As part of the company's commitment to quality, it was the first honey packer in Canada to be Safe Quality Foods (SQF) Certified and True Source certified. "You don't reach the 60 year mark without also recognizing your employees' commitment to the organization and investing in plant and equipment to facilitate growth," Chartier says.

Recent innovation from Bee Maid Honey includes the launch of its Li'l Honeys, which make honey portable and easy-to-use no matter where you are. More than 39 million Li'l Honeys packets have been distributed throughout Canada.

In 2014, Bee Maid launched its Special Edition Polar Bear celebrating the company's heritage of packing only 100 per cent pure Canadian honey. "This product was met with



BUYING LOCAL

Bee Maid Honey's 100% pure Canadian Honey

Celebrating 60 Sweet Years

great success in the trade and with consumers," reports Shannon Bowden, brand manager, Bee Maid Honey. "Due to the demand and enthusiasm for our Polar Bear, we will have plans for another exciting special edition in 2015 that will be available for a limited time only."

The honey category can be confusing for some customers, Bowden says. "Honey will state Canada No. 1 on the label, but that is simply a grading system and not an indication that the product is 100 per cent Canadian. Customers should look for Product of Canada and check the back of the label for 100 per cent Pure Canadian Honey to ensure they aren't buying a blended product."



Bee Maid participates in the Buy Manitoba, Buy Alberta and localized programs to help consumers understand that BeeMaid Honey is a proudly local product that helps sustain communities and local economies. "In the case of BeeMaid Honey, every bottle helps support agriculture and beekeepers in the Prairie Provinces."

The company also blows all its own bottles, and one truckload of raw material can produce the equivalent of 17 truckloads of empty bottles. "The impact of our in-house blow molding means a reduced carbon footprint and a more efficient manufacturing process," she says.

Consumers can be confident in the quality and safety of Bee Maid products. "We think that Bee Maid Honey produces the highest quality, best tasting honey, and the food safety standards in Canada are among the strictest in the world, she says. "All our honey producers are passionate about their profession. They meet or exceed strict federal standards, making BeeMaid Honey, the safe, natural choice. Our honey is traceable back to the hive."

BeeMaid Honey is available through the iconic BeeMaid brand, leading Canadian retail brands, foodservice distributors and in the products of major food manufacturers. Demand for its high quality white honey is also strong internationally, particularly in China and Japan.

Check out our website – www.beemaid.com

Snacking is on trend and growing.

General Mills leads NPS Category¹



Consumers are in the midst of a new snacking culture. Snacks account for over **50%** of eating occasions.²



1) Nielsen L52W Period Ending Sept. 27, 2014 (National GB+DR+MM)
2) Alone Eating and Continuous Consumption, The Hartman Group, Jan 2014

GLUTEN FREE

By Carly Peters



Gluten free is the fastest growing food intolerance (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2013, 2012), indicating the market for gluten free products has strong potential for the future. According to Packaged Facts (2013), Canada's gluten-free market had a compound annual growth rate of more than 26 per cent over the past five years. The 2012 sales value for gluten free foods in Canada has been estimated by various sources at \$27 million (Euromonitor 2013), \$82 million (Markets&Markets 2013), and \$460 million (Packaged Facts 2013). Increased awareness on celiac disease and intolerance, increase in product quality, and availability of gluten free products at mainstream retailers will continue to keep this category on trend.

"We were carrying gluten free before it was 'cool,'" states Kenny Vannucci of London Drugs. "We had picked up the trend probably seven years ago while at a show in California and while touring retail stores in California at the time. It was very difficult to find items that were

clearly marked or made gluten free."

Now, London Drugs carry hundreds of gluten free skus with the majority of skus being in food/snacks but the chain is also looking to expand into gluten free supplements, OTC, and the HBA/cosmetics areas.

"It continues to grow and offerings are more diverse today than ever before," he states, adding while the number of consumers who truly need gluten free is very small, the market is widely comprised by those who may have a sensitivity to, or a perceived sensitivity to gluten.

And, since the beginning London Drugs had a clear vision for their gluten free merchandising strategy.

"We have always felt that it was best to give the option of gluten free right next to the alternatives that had gluten. For those who are intolerant, we chose not to segregate them into a set just for themselves. As we were one of the first mass retailers to list as much as we

Gluten free continues to see some of the strongest gains in grocery retail.

did, we didn't want any stigmas or attention necessarily attached to their condition and/or purchase. For those who never knew about gluten free as an option, we wanted to keep the gluten free next to their favourite choices to give them the option of purchasing alternate products."

Logos and Labels

"Many foods are labeled gluten-free by manufacturers wanting to jump on this trend. People with celiac disease and those with gluten sensitivity can become

very ill if gluten is present. The best assurance a consumer has that a product is truly gluten-free and safe is to see on the package a seal that the manufacturer has been certified gluten-free," states Saul Katz, president and CEO of SoLo GI® Bars, which are clinically validated low glycemic and the only bars in Canada to be certified gluten-free by The Allergen Control Group, owners of the Gluten-Free Certification Program which is endorsed by the Canadian Celiac Association (CCA) and National Foundation for Celiac Awareness (NFCA).

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The Gluten-Free Certification Program (GFCP) was developed in 2009, to help North Americans looking for a way to identify safe, reliable gluten-free products they can trust. Products displaying a GFCP trademark have been manufactured in a facility which successfully undergoes a robust, non-biased, annual third party audit. This audit verifies the facility's ability to routinely meet the stringent GFCP standard requirements for managing the production of gluten-free products. The endorsements from the NFCA and CCA are communicated to consumers through certification trademarks on product packaging and marketing collaterals.

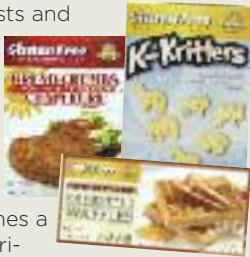
"Gluten free is defined in Canada and most other countries as a claim applied to any food that is considered safe for persons with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity seeking a gluten free diet which is their only option," states Frank Massong, vice-president, Regulatory and Government Affairs with Allergen Control Group Inc.

Product Showcase

No Crossover

Kinnikinnick's preference is gluten free freezer space for breads, buns, bagels, muffins, pie crusts, pizza crusts and waffles with an adjoining bunk or shelving unit for cookies, mixes and specialty grocery offerings. That becomes a destination experience for gluten free shoppers which minimizes the time shoppers must spend on reading labels. Keep in mind that flour contamination from conventional products (e.g. mixes) can directly cause problems. Some consumers refuse to purchase products that are integrated into regular shelves.

- Jerry Bigam, president, Kinnikinnick



Wave the Flag

Some chains have flagged products throughout the store with "gluten free" shelf tags, which is an excellent way to inform their customers of the gluten free products available. "We do encourage manufacturers that we work with



to call out "gluten free" on their label if it is applicable. I think it is important to note that in most cases consumers that are keen on gluten in their diet read labels very thoroughly".

- Dennis Hunt, vice-president, sales & marketing, Star Marketing

Dropping Dough

General Mills has retailers merchandise their new Pillsbury gluten free chocolate chip cookie dough and pie and pastry crust in the refrigerated section alongside their traditional cookie and pastry products. Just like traditional products, General Mills encourages customers to make their products their own by mixing in gluten free options into the cookies, or perfecting a new gluten free pie filling.

- Catherine Jackson, General Mills Canada



Health Canada has provided guidance to manufacturers servicing this special group of consumers in order that they can meet the regulatory requirements.

The main direction can be summarized as follows and failing these can lead to a food recall and other enforcement actions:

- no food shall exceed 20 parts per million (ppm) for gluten
- regardless of the outcome, there shall be no intentional addition of gluten
- there must be a management system in place and effectively delivered

"Companies that meet the GFCP requirements and achieved a Certificate of Recognition have the confidence that they meet regulatory standards. Consumers that buy gluten-free products that carry the GFCP trademark can be assured that they are "gluten-free" and "gluten-safe," he states.



What's in it for you?

The Gluten-Free Certification Program (GFCP) provides brand owners with a comprehensive and cooperative targeted marketing strategy:

- GFCP press release announcing certification
- Ongoing review of brand communication materials
- Newsletters to CCA and NFCA member stakeholder groups
- Website listing on GFCP, CCA, and NFCA websites
- Mention on GFCP, CCA, and NFCA social media sites
- Access to annual gluten-free market research
- Product review and distribution
- Review and consulting on brand strategies
- Monitoring and feedback on marketing activities

In addition to the services included above, ACG can provide a wide range of professionally developed and executed marketing and communication offerings specifically tailored for the gluten-free consumer to increase brand awareness and drive sales.

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Better Buns

Another major debate is underway on the use of freezer offerings for bread and buns, states Jerry Bigam, president of Kinnikinnick, which has one of the largest gluten free dedicated plants in the world.

Freezer sales means a better quality product to consumers, and longer “shelf” life, but that means they are not returning as frequently to the store, he explains, stating, therefore stores prefer not to use freezer space for bread products. “But, as a positive, margins are

strong for gluten products.”

Bigam cautions, if a retailer does not attract consumers with a strong gluten free set they will find another store.

“The loss to the store is not simply the 10 per cent lost on bakery items but that the consumer will purchase the rest of shopping cart where they can find a good gluten free selection. Since the celiac and gluten intolerant population totals around six to eight per cent of the total population this represents a major market share to any store,” he says.

That share is growing bigger thanks to



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new products hitting store shelves that are now comparable to their traditional counter parts. Kinnikinnick offers one of the largest lines of gluten free bakery products in the world with items such as soft breads, bagels, English muffins, breakfast muffins, waffles, cookies, and cake mixes. Bigam states they generally release two or three new products every six months, including a soon-to-be released new cookie, donut and sub bun.

“More and more families with a gluten free member are using gluten free varieties exclusively since they often offer more nutritious, no preservative, and [have] a ‘cleaner label,’” he states, adding unlike older gluten free products new varieties provide the same texture and taste as conventional wheat-based products.

Product Showcase

Great Tasting
Pie Crusts for the
Entire Family!

MI-DEL is a combination of old-fashioned recipes and new bakery methods that let them create better for you treats that meet the latest health standards without giving up a yummy inch of taste. Tree of Life is introducing three new gluten-free pie crusts that are ready to use, made with all natural ingredients, no preservatives and contain no high-fructose corn syrup. Easy as PIE!



Go Nuts for Nuts to
You Nut Better!

Nuts to You Nut Butter Inc. company was established back in 1989. Their original vision 20 plus years ago of a Canadian small-town, fami-



ly-owned, organic/natural nut butter manufacturer remains intact today. Today Tree of Life is introducing two new nut butters from Nuts to You Nut Butter; Rainforest Nut Butter with Coconut Unsweetened and Rainforest Nut Butter with Coconut (Sweetened). From the tallest trees in the Rainforest 100 per cent of Brazil nuts are hand-harvested. Nuts to You Nut Butter blends these nuts with cashew and coconut for a delicious taste.

Free Your Taste Buds

Free for All Kitchen crackers are made with cassava flour and give ancient grains. These smaller cut crackers are great for party appetizers, snacks or part of a full meal, and complement everything from traditional cheeses and soups to the most exotic dips and spreads. These delicious crackers are both gluten and GMO free and come in three yummy flavours: Roasted Garlic Rosemary, Olive Oil and Sea Salt and Olive Oil and Herb.



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Keeping the same great taste as traditional is key to Pillsbury's gluten free chocolate chip cookie dough and pie and pastry crust, which have been available in the U.S. for some time, but have now made their way to Canada.

"Often there's only one family member that is gluten free so with our tub format of cookie dough they can scoop out individual portions, and not have to commit to a whole package," states Catherine Jackson of General Mills Canada, adding the cookie and pastry crusts taste so good everyone would be happy to eat them anyway.

Customer feedback has played a big role in General Mills' gluten free offerings. Shoppers requested the company bring products such as gluten free Betty Crocker cake mix, and Chex up to Canada, and since doing so have expanded lines further (Betty Crocker now boasts a gluten free boxed chocolate chip cookie mix, and brownie batter). Jackson says the biggest request they've had lately is a gluten free Bisquick mix, which is now available across the country.



Over the past five years the gluten free market in Canada has had a compound annual growth rate of more than 26 per cent.

Along with baking, pasta has seen an influx of alternatives to the conventional made from wheat. Star Marketing currently distributes Mrs. Leeper's Corn and Rice Pasta, along with other popular gluten free brands such as Real Foods Corn Thins, Rice Works Rice Chips, and Casa Fiesta.

"Sales of gluten free products are definitely growing as more and more consumers discover that they suffer from a real condition called non-celiac gluten sensitivity which by reducing gluten in their diet has improved how they feel generally," says Dennis Hunt, vice-president, sales & marketing. "It is important to understand gluten free is not a fad or a craze. Celiac disease is not new and non-celiac gluten sensitivity is more common in our society than ever before."

With that in mind, there is certainly potential for growth in gluten free in terms of product innovation and, hopefully, grocery space.

Consumers Will be Spending Less this Christmas

- How Can You take Advantage?

Smart merchandising and solution selling can help you beat a soft holiday sales season. As you are reading this article you are probably in the final days or weeks before December 25th and have noticed that sales are coming in a little lighter than last year.

A survey conducted by Field Agent Canada just before the deadline for this issue showed that planned purchases for Christmas gifts, decorations and holiday food by Canadians are expected to be 7.2 per cent lower than in 2013.

When looking specifically at Western Canada the results are mixed. Residents of British Columbia (-12.1 per cent), Alberta (-6.0 per cent) and Manitoba (-9.8 per cent) are expecting to spend less this holiday season.

The only province in Canada to show an expected increase in holiday spending is Saskatchewan (+11.1 per cent).

In Western Canada, planned holiday spending per capita is lower than the national average (\$885). By province, British Columbia (\$825), Saskatchewan (\$753) and Manitoba (\$803) all have planned spending under the national average. The only province with higher spending versus national is Alberta (\$964).

So what does this mean for the grocery business as we move through one of the most important sales periods in the year?

We think that grocery retailers can lessen the impact of reduced overall spending by helping shoppers save money and also helping them save time.

Saving Money

Let's face it, the holiday period is really expensive for your customers and many are living on a budget or racking up credit card debt through this period. How can you help them save money?

One avenue is the expanded display and promotion of Private Label products in your store. PL products are a great solution for a frugal holiday period as they are less expensive than national brands and usually deliver higher profitability for the retailer.

Simple merchandising ideas like "shielding" national brand promotional displays with similar PL products can help you turn a loss leader into a money maker while helping the customer save money. Think about those key holiday items in each aisle and build end aisle displays highlighting those PL products.

Another great tactic would be comparison shopping baskets or hampers of holiday items showing the savings of a basket of PL products versus national brand products side by side at the store entrance. Create even more excitement by offering your customers the chance to win one of the baskets on Christmas Eve!

Saving Time

Consumers today are increasingly time-strapped and the lead-up to the holidays can be one of the most stressful times of the year.

How can you make your shoppers' lives easier? Here are three ideas:

Gift Giving: Create a quick gifts section in your store which will appeal to shoppers looking for gift ideas for "hard to buy for" gift recipients like letter carriers, daycare workers, bosses, colleagues and employees. Just add a little signage to help people quickly find what they are looking for. Sort gift ideas by price range and be sure to include gift cards displays or clip strips nearby.

Meal Preparation: Making meal prep easy and straightforward can be a big stress relief. Christmas shopping checklists make sure that the cranberry sauce and the turkey pans make it into the cart. Provide options for both "scratch" cooking and "assisted" cooking (think PEI potatoes versus Betty Crocker potatoes).

Inspiration: Check with your staff and get their favourite recipes for all the holiday favourites. Provide simple recipe cards (photocopies of hand-written cards work just fine) on end aisle and bunker displays for that yummy favourite side dish or unique recipe for ham or turkey. What about a recipe for something sweet that customers can take with them when they do their holiday visiting? Hosts always love getting homemade treats from their guests.

Most of the ideas above are easy to implement with products, material and talent that you already have in-store. You can rapidly mobilize these ideas to help your customers have a frugal but happy holiday season.

From all of us here at Field Agent we wish you a happy holiday and lots of success in 2015!



Jeff Doucette is the founder of "Field Agent Canada" an iPhone-driven audit service that is revolutionizing how retail audits and mystery shops are completed in Canada. He can be reached at jeff.doucette@fieldagentcanada.com

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SPECIALTY BRANDS

By Robin Brunet

According to The State of the Specialty Food Industry 2014, compiled by Mintel International for the Specialty Food Association (SFA), sales of specialty brands in North America increased by 18.4 per cent between 2011 and 2013, with total sales topping \$88.3-billion in 2013. Dollar sales grew in nearly every segment during 2011-2013, the majority by double-digit percentages.

Cheese and cheese alternatives is the largest category with \$3.99-billion in sales in 2013; the fastest-growing categories include nut and seed butters (51.6 per cent) and frozen desserts (28.2 per cent). As for products with the strongest potential for growth in the next three years, distributors cite non-GMO as topping the list.

But not all is harmonious in the ever-changing specialty category. The SFA report points out that while mainstream supermarkets still account for more than two-thirds of specialty food sales, their share has been steadily slipping over the past three years. By contrast, specialty food stores leaped 42.4 per cent to \$9.6 billion and now account for 23.6 per cent of sales.

Michael Meinhardt, store manager of Vancouver's iconic specialty food retailer Meinhardt Fine Foods, isn't surprised. "More and more, consumers seek specialists in specific categories. If they want cheese for example, it's no longer enough to access a good selection at a big box retailer.

Instead, cheese mongers are sought due to their intimate knowledge and the greater variety of product."

Still, mainstream stores are perfect venues for specialty foods to evolve into powerhouse sellers.

A good case in point is Maille mustard, an I-D Foods Corporation brand that was introduced in Canada in 1960. "Back then, Nielsen wouldn't have known how to spell Maille or Dijon, but today Nielsen reports that Dijon now makes up 36 per cent of all mustard sales, and of that Maille has 50 per cent of the category," says I-D Foods Owner Philip Issenman.

So, what should retailers do with new specialty items as they become available, and how can they make them grow to become mainstream?

Chantal Seguin, associate media manager for Tree of Life Canada, notes, "The merchandising of specialty items tends to be cyclical and is somewhat related to Canadian immigration trends. We used to see many displays built

Exclusivity Rules

Consumer thirst for specialty brands reaches new heights.



Product Showcase



Give Them Choice

Rao's Homemade sauces from Terra International Foods are based on the simplicity of traditional Italian cooking and made of all-natural ingredients.

"By integrating this brand in the sauce aisle, you still give shoppers variety but also the option of a higher-end purchase," says Gary Hoskins.



Tipsy in the Aisles

Available from Terra International Foods, Sable & Rosenfeld Topsy Tapas are a gourmet line of vegetable condiments hand stuffed with imported Austrian cream cheese and hand-packed in premium herb-splashed vegetable oil.

"Display Topsy Tapas in the condiment section to add value to the overall category," says Gary Hoskins.



Chasing the Dragon

The Blue Dragon line of condiments, pastes and sauces, available from I-D Foods Corporation, enable shoppers to create authentic Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, and Japanese dishes at home. Philip Issenman urges grocers to locate Blue Dragon in the meat section.

"Also, marketing the brand in conjunction with Chinese New Year is a must," he adds.



Ex-pat Lure

Mrs. H.S. Balls Chutney, available from I-D Foods, has been called the best chutney in the world and is a South African tradition.

"Display this product prominently in the relish section and draw attention to the fact it's South African in order to lure the ex-pats," says Philip Issenman.



Sensational Soy

Ohsawa Organic Nama Shoyu soy sauce, available in 2015 from New Age Marketing & Brand Management Inc., is the only soy sauce that's unpasteurized, enzyme- and lactobacillus-rich, and aged two years in cedar kegs.

"Ohsawa is best displayed in the fresh seafood or the Asian food sections of the grocery store," says Ken Kwong.

around foods from Britain 20 years ago, and that type of program seems to be coming back around again."

Issenman suggests a simple strategy. "Initially you market to people from the home country the brand is from," he says. "Then you introduce Canadians to the product. That's what we're doing with our Blue Dragon and Haiku brands from Asia: one way we promote these items is via Chinese New Year."

Gary Hoskins, vice-president of sales & marketing for Terra International Foods Inc., addresses another concern cited in the SFA report: how to determine what shoppers want. In addition to consulting with importers, he says, "Don't be afraid to experiment. And, most importantly, once you decide to carry a new brand, then conduct as many demos as possible — don't just put it on a shelf."

Sequin says retailers should "pay attention to special requests from customers and dedicate some space to rotate in and out some of these weird and wonderful items."

Ken Kwong, vice-president sales & marketing at New Age Marketing & Brand Management Inc., cites the Safeway chain as doing an exemplary job of integrating specialty items throughout the aisles of its stores. "This ultimately gives brands more exposure," he says. "However, the risk is that these higher-priced products sit alongside more affordable alternatives. If I were a retailer, I would have a specialty food area situated next to the deli, which is where higher-end products tend to be located."

Meinhardt points out that to some extent, the changing face of grocery retailing will benefit mainstream venues in the long run. "As specialty retailers introduce, develop and create demand — you will see mainstream grocers implementing specialty products we develop into their mainstream venues," he says. Indeed, Meinhardt's private label offerings will soon be available in Nesters Markets in British Columbia.

One thing is certain: the public's enthusiasm for specialty will continue to grow for the foreseeable future. Over half the brokers surveyed in the SFA report believe that in addition to non-GMO growing in the next three years, all-natural and local will continue to attract consumers.

The message is clear: any food that can be marketed as specialty stands a good chance of flying off the shelves. That is, if retailers are willing to experiment with procurement and promote brands via sampling, cross-merchandising and other strategies. ●

The words
fair trade
have perforated
shoppers' lexicons,
but do they really
know what it
means, and are
they buying
into it?

World-Wide Shopping

By Carly Peters

FAIR TRADE

The local food movement is certainly in the forefront of grocery consumers' minds as of late, but there's been a much broader campaign for some time. Fair trade ensures farmers and producers across the globe get a "better deal" — not just better prices for producers, but better working and living conditions. More products produced and brokered in this manner are making their way into Western Canada, and with additional education consumers are coming to understand how their purchases can make a difference.

There seems to be a desire amongst shoppers to do, or buy rather, the right things. According to Carman Allison from Nielsen, 40 per cent of Canadian consumers say they're willing to pay extra for products and services from companies that are committed to making a positive social and environmental impact. That's up from 33 per cent in 2011. In fact, of the top five causes of extreme concern for Canadians, 50 per cent are concerned about eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, and 43 per cent are concerned about ensuring environmental sustainability — two main focus areas within the Fairtrade certification system, states Lisa Zentner, director of marketing and communications for Fairtrade Canada.

"[Yet] there is more education needed at the retail level to communicate to consumers about the purpose of Fairtrade and its positive impact on producer communities," explains Zentner. "It is for this reason that Fairtrade Canada has created a new marketing and retail strategy to raise the profile of the mark at store-level

and help educate consumers about the benefits to farmers that our Fairtrade certification system stands for. Our FAIR-TRADE Mark remains unchanged and continues to represent that we are a part of Fairtrade International, the world's largest and most recognized fair trade system."

As customers become more educated about fair trade they are also being exposed to mixed messages. The U.S.'s recent breakaway from the globally recognized fair trade certification group, introducing their own logo and definition of fair trade, has cast widespread

dissension and confusion in North America about what fair trade really is.

Couple that with news stories that imply the premium prices consumers pay over non-Fairtrade products does not reach the producers and is instead collected by businesses, employees of co-operatives, or used for unnecessary expenses, has also added to the uncertainty.

"Because there have been so many changes within the fair trade movement, many consumers have become uncertain about what it really means. This has resulted in the loss of consumer confi-

dence in fair trade and left many questioning 'how much of' and 'where' do the fair trade premiums really go," explains Stacey Toews, co-founder and communications catalyst, Level Ground Trading Ltd., which specializes in fresh roasted specialty coffees, a line of organic dried fruits and organic cane sugar, adding customers are regularly surprised with the company's Direct Fair Trade model. "Our website posts the price we pay for all coffee we've ever purchased and how much of our purchase price went into farmers' pockets. This is our most transparent way to com-

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municate how 'pro farmer' we are."

Or, people's reasons for not purchasing fair trade may be as simple as brand devotion.

"People may be holding back on purchasing fair trade simply because they are loyal to their brand. The brand they have bought for the past five, 10, 15 years. Why change?" asks Flavia Kilger, Fair Trade Brokers Ltd., an import company that imports two fair trade food brands into Canada — Oxfam Fairtrade and Belvas. "Unless they are told that the cocoa in many chocolate brands are from plantations that do not pay their workers well or even keep them as slaves (yes, I am speaking in the present). Or that the fruit pickers for juice or as a ready to eat product are being paid less than \$1 a day. Once consumers know, I believe change is imminent."

Products They're Picking

Juice and chocolate aren't the only fair trade products that have the potential to hit grocers' shelves.

"We have seen a huge increase in the number of products offered, including some new types of products like Fairtrade fresh vegetables and Fairtrade soya

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sauce,” states Zentner. “The categories that have been growing the most have been chocolate, fruit, and flowers. Coffee continues to be our number one product, but it is exciting to see the growing diversity.”

“As pioneers of fair trade cocoa and sugar in Canada, we’re encouraged to see that the very first product we brought to market 15 years ago — Camino hot chocolate — has expanded and found its way into so many family’s pantry,” states Jennifer Alldred of Camino, a Canadian brand of fair trade and organic food products, which include chocolate bars, hot chocolate, coffee, and a full-line of baking products, such as sugar, chocolate chips, shredded coconut, and cocoa powders. “What’s special about our hot chocolate line, versus others, is that every ingredient that can be fair-trade certified is, which is a testament to our commitment to our producer partners and our consumers.

She adds, the more awareness retailer and suppliers can create about the positive socio-economic benefits of fair trade, and by creating dedicated space or specific point of sale materials to communicate such, the more informed the consumer will be at the point of making a purchase decision. It’s about converting information into positive action.

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Finding the Fair Way

Apples to Apples

Grocers currently tag gluten free and organic consistently throughout their stores. We recommend having shelf labels to bring attention to fair trade. Also, dedicated sections are typically slow moving unless they are in a high-traffic location along with effective signage. We recommend integration of our products with traditional ones — it allows ‘apples to apples’ price comparisons and gives the chance that a fair trade product on ‘deal’ can be easily reached by a new customer. - Stacey Toews, co-founder and communications catalyst, Level Ground Trading Ltd.



Promotional Level

One of the best opportunities for retailers to see consumer reaction to fair trade is by participating in May Fairtrade month. Camino typically runs a promotion to distributors and retailers for May, which provides incentive to carry a wide assortment of Camino fair trade certified products. Retailers can pull all fair trade



brands together and develop special promotions, signage, in-store demos and contests during that time. This would help tell the fair trade story in a big way, help consumers easily identify fair trade products and bring attention to the positive impacts on producer communities. - Jennifer Alldred, Camino

Just a Few Steps

The perfect solution would be to have fair trade products in both spaces — in their respective category and in their own area. Grocers can help by putting fair trade products at high traffic locations, and using things like end caps. Fair-trade Canada provides marketing materials to help promote fair trade like shelf talkers, aisle invaders, and signage. They have booklets to tell consumers about fair trade as well. Our world needs to be a better place. And if each of us do just a few steps, we can help such a large mass of people. - Flavia Kilger, Fair Trade Brokers Ltd.



SOCIAL MEDIA

By Ken Kwong



Every year, around this time, I get asked what my thoughts are on the ‘next big thing’ in social media and digital marketing. What makes it difficult to answer such a question is due to the fact that this particular marketing arena is in a continuous state of flux and evolution. Instead of focusing on what the ‘next big thing’ will be, I would say that we should zoom out and try to adopt a macro perspective on digital marketing. As it evolves, so will the trends that support its growth be mostly driven by demands from the user, innovations and advancements in technology.

Below, I’ve gathered some of the predicted social media and digital marketing trends to watch out for in 2015:

Content Marketing

Everywhere I turn, content marketing seems to be the buzzword of 2014. I believe that in 2015, there will be a more disciplined, developed and focused approach towards building on marketing that is more uniquely personalized for the customer. What is content marketing? In layman’s terms, it is the art of communication with your customers and prospects,

without selling. This is done by creating and curating relevant and valuable content with the intention of changing or enhancing consumer behaviour through stories that are relevant to their own experience.

Audio-Video Content

Social media platforms, such as Instagram, Vine, and Snapchat have all helped feed the growing hunger for audio-video content. In 2015, we will see savvy digital marketers tapping into consumer’s emotions through relevant targeting via sophisticated visuals and elaborate audio clips. Queue 3D, VR and Stereophonic Spatialization.

Top 15 Most Popular Social Networking Sites

According to <http://www.ebizm-ba.com>, as of Oct 2014 the following are the top 15 most popular social networking sites ranked by estimated number of active monthly users (as derived from eBizMBA Rank which is a continually updated average of each website's Alexa Global Traffic Rank, and U.S. Traffic Rank from both Compete and Quantcast sites).

#1 - Facebook	900,000,000
#2 - Twitter	310,000,000
#3 - LinkedIn	255,000,000
#4 - Pinterest	250,000,000
#5 - Google Plus+	120,000,000
#6 - Tumblr	110,000,000
#7 - Instagram	100,000,000
#8 - VK	80,000,000
#9 - Flickr	65,000,000
#10 - Vine	42,000,000
#11 - Meetup	40,000,000
#12 - Tagged	38,000,000
#13 - Ask.fm	37,000,000
#14 - MeetMe	15,500,000
#15 - ClassMates	15,000,000

Mobile Marketing

The growth of mobile smart devices has reached a worldwide penetration of 93 per cent. This means that mobile optimized web, social and media sites will become the norm. Geo-targeting and location-based marketing will become an integral part of personalized digital marketing.

Blogging Grows

In 2015, we will see increased marketing activity from digital marketers over YouTube, twitter, and facebook. As the demand for content grows, so will the creation and distribution of content through social networks. Marketers will be looking for ways to differentiate themselves from other blogs. Marketers will become more creative in cross-platform blogging.

Increased Visual Asset Use

In 2015, we will see the increased use of infographics and memes by marketers. In a visual-centric world, these nifty visual properties allow a marketer to communicate a set of complex facts or details through graphical representations. I liken this to how during PowerPoint presentations, we prefer colourful charts and graphs over dry bullet points and Excel spreadsheets.

Google Plus

Although Google Plus has mostly been a social network hub for tech-minded people, it has been identified by digital

marketers as one of the top social platforms that marketers would like to figure out in 2015. Reason being that, according to the Forrester Report (the Case for Google Plus), Google+ has a significant number of active monthly users from which to build a solid base of followers. Also that some top brands have 90 per cent as many fans on Google+ as they do on twitter. But, not to be overlooked, that it is, after all, Google and if you want to improve your SEO and remain relevant in Search companies need to join.

Micro Targeting and Hyper Segmentation

Each year, people visit more websites and give up more and more data. As a result, sites like twitter and facebook have a wealth of information about their audience. With all of this data gathered — marketers can now target a very niche audience size based on people's preferences and targeted locations.

As 2015 approaches, we should all take note of how far social media and digital marketing has come in the last 10 years. In as recent as the last seven years, LinkedIn, facebook and twitter have all become an integral part of, not only our daily lives, but also part of our brand marketing and online identity. However, in the end, we must remember that it is all for nothing without the user. After all, we are the ones who fuel this growth and evolution. ●

If you are interested in being featured in the social media segment of Western Grocer, please have your social media-marketing department contact Ken for an interview.

Ken is the vice-president of sales and marketing for New Age Marketing & Brand Management Inc., (NAM&BMI) a national brokerage company specializing in brand management of natural and organic CPG brands and products in all channels and markets in Canada. His opinions expressed in this column are solely his own and do not necessarily represent those of this publication.



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BAGS

By Lawrence Herzog



It's in the Bag

Victoria's Market on Yates is located in the heart of the city, and it's the sort of store where customers often shop with their knapsacks or panniers. Many others bring reusable bags, while some prefer the old standbys — paper and plastic. "We want to offer our customers as much choice as possible," says Marlene Faulkner, the store's front-end manager. "Some take plastic bags and say they reuse them, some take paper and recycle them, and some buy our reusable bags or bring their own."

Market on Yates offers a mini-reflection of the market trends across the country, where reusable bags have made considerable inroads over the last five years but paper and plastic retain considerable market share. Beyond convenience and personal preference, many consumers are swayed by the environmental footprint of the various bag choices, but quantifying that impact makes for rigorous debate.

All bags have an environmental cost. Studies, like a life cycle assessment released in 2011 by the U.K. Environment Agency, say reusable bags need to be used between four and 131 times (depending on what material they're made from)

before they're better for the environment. Other research, including a 2012 study from the University of Berkeley, reveals that reusable bags are a breeding ground for potentially harmful bacteria and foodborne illness if customers don't wash them.

Reusable, plastic and paper are carrying their share.

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Decima Research statistics indicates that 93 per cent of Canadians reuse their plastic bags two or more times, and Stewardship Ontario reports that 50 to 60 per cent of the plastic bags are used two or more times, and often for household garbage. In the United States, more than 160 municipalities have banned the use of single-use plastic grocery bags, and in many places, consumers are being charged for a paper bag (10 cents in Los Angeles, for instance).

When measuring impact, life cycle analyses (LCAs) of paper versus plastic bags show that each has its own advantages and disadvantages. The paper industry notes that no current LCAs recognize the Canadian industry's high use of wood chips and sawmill residues to make bags, or its use of renewable energy (biomass). Nor says PPEC, the industry's environmental council, do any current comparative LCAs take into account the effect of plastic litter on aquatic and marine ecosystems.

In the reusable segment, the most common material remains non-woven polypropylene, as it has been for years. They're strong, durable, easy to wash, resistant to odours, mildew, water and wrinkles. Bags made from recycled plastic bottles material called polyethylene terephthalate (PET) are making gains in the market. Now customers can also choose bags made from cotton,

Ninety-three per cent of Canadians reuse their bags two or more times.



hemp and bamboo. Insulated designs that keep food items at temperature for longer are also becoming more popular.

"If customers like your bag, they are more likely to reuse it for their everyday needs, says Tony Towers, sales and marketing, Eco-Durable Products by Colnuck. "Bags that look good, have a unique design and are made of a material that is different from common ones have the best chance of being reused."

As with everything else in the grocery channel, price points are crucial, and 99 cent bags might move well while those priced

at \$1.99 will simply sit. "You don't need to make 50 points on reusable bags because they are a promotional item, and it's important to approach it that way," Tower says. "They are a fantastic way for smaller retailers to get their name out into the marketplace and compete with the bigger guys."

Bags are an impulse buy for most people, and Market on Yates always merchandises its bags right at the tills. "We're tight for room at the front end, but we do have one standalone rack for the cooler bags which are larger," Faulkner says. "Customers like our bags; they are good looking with nice, bright colours, and that's really important. It helps to drive the impulse purchases right at the till."

Tips

- *Reusable bags are typically an impulse buy, so always display some right at the tills.*
- *Display your reusable bags with items in them in multiple locations around the store to get customers thinking about buying them as they shop.*
- *Standalone racks are a great way to drive purchases of deluxe bags, like cooler style ones.*
- *Give partial proceeds of bags you sell to charity or community event.*
- *Partner with a supplier to feature their product on your bags in return for a contribution to your bag cost.*



Colnuck knows that price points are crucial when it comes to bags.

The store is always looking for new bags, and has just added one that is made from jute, so it's like burlap. "They are priced at \$3.49, which is a little bit more than our other bags, but they are sturdier and a little bigger," Faulkner says. "We've also got a cooler bag now with a zippered top."

There is no 'standard' size for reusable bags, Tower notes, but there are common sizes that have become industry and consumer accepted. Bags with a wider than higher profile have made inroads in some markets, and they are distinctive and finding popularity among urban commuters like on Vancouver's SkyTrain.



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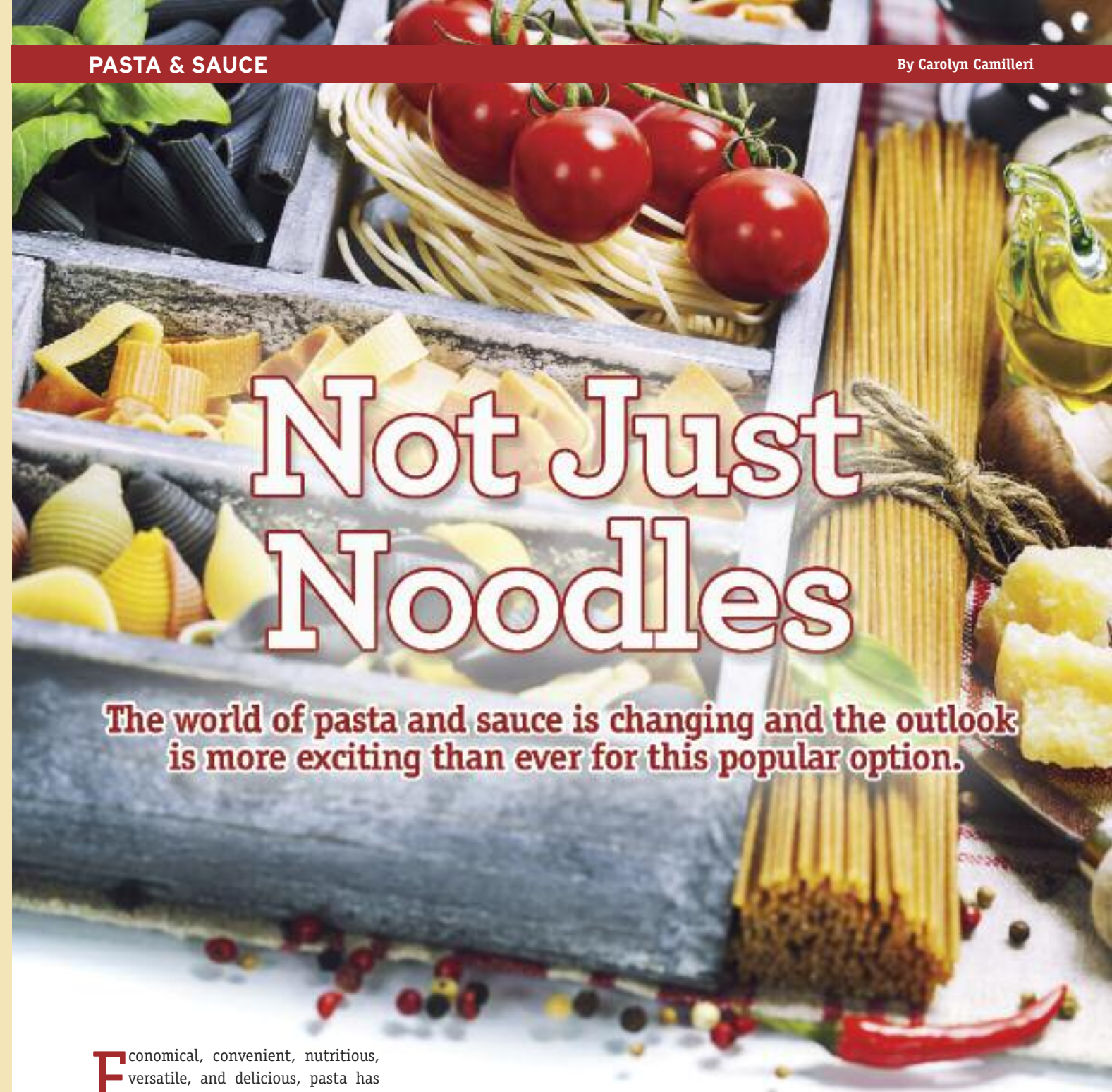
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Not Just Noodles

The world of pasta and sauce is changing and the outlook is more exciting than ever for this popular option.

Economical, convenient, nutritious, versatile, and delicious, pasta has one of the highest household penetrations of any category. Pasta is forecast to increase by a two per cent CAGR in constant value terms from 2013-2018, reaching C\$1 billion in 2018. The principal determinants of this growth will continue to be chilled/fresh pasta and dried pasta, particularly products like high fibre pasta within health and wellness.

"Pasta is being fuelled by the enhanced segment," says Martin Kuev, director of marketing at Barilla Canada "with new offerings by most major com-

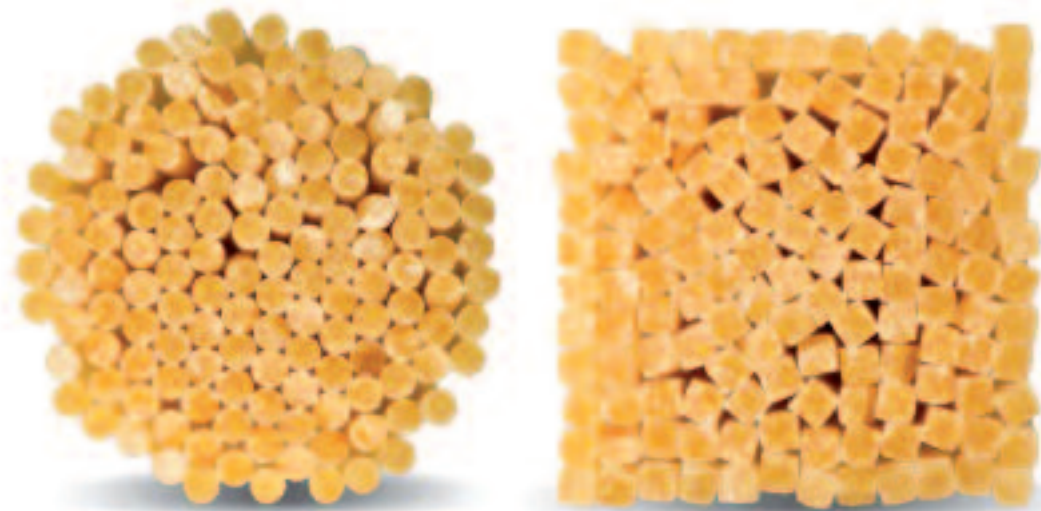
petitors in gluten-free, as well as the balanced nutrition offering with the benefits of protein, fibre, and omega three".

"We have certainly seen a shift among consumers toward more health and diet-friendly options among both pasta and sauces," says Chris MacDonald of Bosa Foods. "The feedback we have received from consumers is consistent with the current trends in diet and health we are seeing in the marketplace. As a result of consumer demand, we have added a number of new pasta and sauce options

to suit a wide range of individual tastes and preferences."

John Porco, COO at Unico and Primo Foods, says "There's a lot of things driving the pasta category," listing variety, new pasta cuts, as well as nutrition, health, and wellness. "Bowties are an old, standard cut, but the way you can prepare it with fresh vegetables or other things makes it new again. It's no longer the same old spaghetti and meatballs. It's variety. You can continue to introduce variety and

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it gets exciting. Different recipes, new cuts, that's what it's all about."

Frank DeMichino, COO at Italpasta, the first North American company to develop thick-walled pasta, says for manufacturers the key is to be innovative. "Pasta's always been focused on giving the consumer what they're looking for. Fibre's still very popular so we continue to focus on delivering that same type of thick-wall, al-dente taste, and increasing the fibre content. It is meeting people's daily fibre needs."

While manufacturers have innovated by focusing on enhanced products, there can be little argument that many current

DeMichino believes this may be more short term as consumers, whose overarching concern is health and wellness, begin to sort out what actually contributes to this outcome.

"We know that celiacs definitely have to deal with gluten, and gluten-free is not going to go away," says DeMichino. "I think gluten-free, as it gets more and more exposed — my opinion — is that people will find out that gluten-free does come with other things that may not be exactly great for you, for example, high sugar, high sodium, trans fat, so on. We're seeing a lot of sauces making the gluten-free claim too. Just because you



dietary trends-especially gluten free-have impacted the category negatively.

Porco says the pasta industry has been quite flat, sometimes plus one, sometimes minus one. "The reason for that is, unfortunately, a lot of diets will have you stop eating carbs," he says. "That's where it has a bit of a negative impact with respect to pasta."

Retailers can benefit by highlighting the many benefits of pasta and sauce.

have a gluten-free product, doesn't mean the product itself is healthy. I think that's one thing that consumers are starting to get nowadays."

Pasta sauces have also responded to changing consumer tastes with category growth driven by new entrants to the market and product extensions.

continued on page 46



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Product Showcase



Totally Beneficial

Italpasta recognizes the importance of health and wellness to the consumer and has responded by creating a new 'better for you' pasta – Total pasta. The same great tasting white pasta you expect from Italpasta but with the high fibre benefit of whole grain, whole wheat pasta at a value price. Made with 100 per cent Canadian durum wheat, oat fibre and chicory root inulin, Total pasta is a very high source of dietary fibre providing 10g per serving – that's 2g more than the leading name brand. Available in box and cello formats.

Ancient-Origin Sauce

"Ocean Brands has launched Ocean's World Cuisine Pomodoro Ricotta sauce, made with chopped tomatoes, ricotta cheese, and Grana Padano cheese. The origins of this authentic Italian sauce date back to ancient Rome but became a Sicilian specialty in the early 13th century," says Hannes Koller, vice-president of Ocean Brands, who says this new sauce is more intense in flavour and texture than other similar pasta sauces, so consumers need less to cook with, offering much greater value for money. All Ocean's World Cuisine Pasta Sauces are gluten-free.



Top Quality Canned

"Our canned [sauce] is what we call a single-serve, where you serve it for one night's meal. It's very cost-effective," says John Porco, COO for Unico and Primo Foods. "The ingredients are sealed quickly after production, so it's very, very good quality, and it's a fantastic value. We think people should really look at the canned product as a great, nutritious, and great value sauce."

Gluten-free & Delicious

Anna's Country Kitchen Gluten-Free Gnocchi from Bosa Foods appeals to those with specific dietary restrictions and entertains individuals who prefer gluten-free products. It's a great match for Anna's Country Kitchen Marinara sauce or Anna's Country Kitchen Pesto for an authentic Italian dish.



Buon Appetito!

Preferisco Pasta Sauces from Bosa Foods carry the authentic flavour of Italy. "In addition to the attractive labelling, this is a line which is gluten-free and showcases five unique pasta sauce varieties, including organic pasta sauce, vodka, tomato and basil, marinara, and spicy arrabiata options," says Chris MacDonald of Bosa Foods. "All the pasta sauces we distribute under the Italissima and Preferisco brands are also gluten-free and offer a fantastic selection of traditional and unique sauce options."

For the Whole Family

Barilla has launched a line called Barilla PLUS – the same pasta quality consumers expect from Barilla, with the added benefit of protein, fibre, and Omega 3, ensuring the entire family gets the nutrients they need, says Martin Kuev, director of marketing for Barilla Canada Inc.



Basic and Versatile

tat diced tomatoes are not a typical pasta sauce but they do come in three varieties—plain, with onions, and with onions and green pepper – but can be used as the beginning of a sauce or in other dishes, says Baris Korucu, director of sales at CCD Trading.



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"With traditional red sauces being the staple in this category, the emergence of light and white sauce, as well as pesto, has expanded the offering in this category," says Kuev. While canned sauces won't disappear, jar or premium sauces are getting very sophisticated now, says DeMichino, specifically naming sauces launched by restaurants and celebrity chefs. "They're celebrities so people are buying that, and that's pretty expensive," says DeMinchino. "You can buy that and feel like you made your own sauce."

The idea that consumers want to feel like they made the sauce themselves is something Kuev points out as well.

"Consumers are time starved when it comes to meal preparation," says Kuev. "They are looking for a way to have store-bought sauce that tastes great, but also having the flexibility to feel like a chef themselves and add their own ingredients to make it their own."

Hannes Koller, vice-president of Ocean Brands, also lists taste as a top factor in consumer buying decisions.

"Taste, ingredients, and price are overwhelmingly the key factors when deciding on what brand of sauce to purchase," says Koller. "Nutritional



Highlighting the many benefits of pasta and sauce means retailers benefit, too.

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information also ranked very high. Gluten-free becomes more and more important."

While trends may change, the end result is that consumers love their pasta and sauce and are looking for ways to feel good about continuing to put it in their shopping carts. Highlighting the many benefits of pasta and sauce means retailers benefit, too. ●

Merchandiser's Tips ◀.....

The advice below can be helpful to retailers looking for the best way to merchandise this category to its full potential.

Full-Meal Solutions

"Pasta is constantly on the grocery list and is among the top grocery items that are ingredient based," says Martin Kuev, director of marketing for Barilla Canada Inc. "Retailers should look to their overall basket of goods trying to utilize full-meal solutions and merchandising pasta along with complementary items such as fresh vegetables, spices, or meats."

What a deal!

Baris Korucu, director of sales at CCD Trading suggests cross-merchandising PastaVilla pasta and diced tomatoes. "When we do large volume sales, we offer to combine [pasta] with the diced tomatoes so when people want to buy the pasta and they see something they can use together, that attracts more attention. Sometimes what we do, if you buy two pasta, you get one diced tomatoes at half price."

Spreading the Word

In addition to better labelling and descriptions on packages, Frank DeMichino, COO of Italpasta, recommends letting consumers know about the benefits of pasta in flyers and other means communicating with customers. "A lot of [retailers] have their own methods of reaching their consumers. We need to try to help [consumers] make that decision before they actually go to the store."

Expanded Cross-Merchandising

Pasta is a product that can be combined with many different areas in the store and cross-merchandising opportunities are immense. Whether it is with produce, whether it is with the proteins, whether chicken or meat or beef, whatever, or whether it would be in the health and wellness section, they've got so many different ways of merchandising pasta to get those incremental sales," says Frank DeMichino, COO of Italpasta. He gives an example of pasta vegetable salad in the produce section. "Pasta moves in so many different segments."

Made in Canada

"If you put out an ad that says 'Canadian-made pasta,' 'Canadian-made sauce,' 'Canadian-grown tomatoes' I believe that consumers would appreciate that and understand that," says John Porco COO at Unico and Primo Foods. "Make a statement by supporting Canadian manufacturers."

Quality Counts

"[Retailers] have to ensure that they have the best quality, especially on those types of wellness items that people actually really like, because they're dependent on them," says John Porco COO at Unico and Primo Foods, recommending that retailers do some testing and ask customers what they like. "Whatever they put on their shelf has to deliver from a texture, taste, quality standpoint. If it doesn't, they're going to lose that customer."

Gluten-free Groupings

Chris MacDonald of Bosa Foods suggests highlighting gluten-free sauces, and cross-merchandising gluten-free sauces with gluten-free pasta options.

Keeping Up with Trends

"Staying current with consumer trends is definitely an important aspect of retailing, and as distributors, we make sure to analyze our year-over-year data to provide additional options for retailers in the categories that are growing," says Chris MacDonald of Bosa Foods.



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The dips category is performing well thanks to healthy offerings and product innovation.

With market growth of over four per cent last year, dips are proving their worth to retailers looking to capture consumers' interest in healthy and convenient snacking solutions. In past years, salsa had been responsible for generating much of the category growth (and still is with growth last year of two per cent); today it is guacamole (up seven per cent), hummus (up 12 per cent) and other more exotic varieties of dips that are pushing numbers up.

Hummus, in particular, is on a path to gaining the number one spot among dips. The chickpea dip is low in fat and high in protein and is a great portable solution for lunch boxes. In the U.S., sales of "refrigerated flavoured spreads" — a segment dominated by hummus — totalled \$530 million. The growth has caught the attention of big food companies like PepsiCo, which bought a 50 per cent stake in Sabra in 2008, and Kraft Foods Group Inc., which owns Athenos, another big hummus brand.

Aside from its health profile, the growth in hummus sales can be partially attributed to manufacturers who have found innovative new product offerings. For example, the Wild Garden brand has introduced a gluten free "Snack Pack to Go!" The product ties into consumers' desire for healthy yet convenient meal or snacking options. In time for the holiday season, the company will be extending the line with two new offerings — Traditional or Roasted Garlic Hummus flavours and Quinoa Chips. According to Jim Kavanagh, president of BrandSeed Marketing, a Brampton-based Brand Development Company that works with Tree of Life to distribute the product, Wild Garden eliminates preservatives and unnecessary additives creating a shelf-stable product that does not need refrigeration until it is open, meaning greater merchandising opportunities. The hummus comes in both a 13.4 ounce jar in six flavours and a 1.76 ounce single-serve tetra-pack in two flavours.

With the unique distinction of being the only shelf-stable hummus on the market, The Wild Garden brand can be merchandised in the snack section along with salsas and other shelf-stable dips or alternatively in the bakery department cross-merchandised with pita.

Within the dips category, fresh, refrigerated sales have

outpaced other segments. According to Jake Oliver of Litehouse Foods "The refrigerated section of grocery has shown the largest gain in household penetration, up 3.8 per cent". Litehouse is just introducing a new line of Greek Yogurt Veggie Dips called "Opadipity", in four different flavours. "These dips launched in June of this year and have had great success across the U.S. and Canada," says Oliver. The new Litehouse dips are low calorie, free of gluten, preservatives and MSG and are in line with the surge of interest in Greek style yogurt.

The demand for fresh, refrigerated dips has also helped to rejuvenate the salsa segment. Toronto-based Mad Mexican Food Products have seen sales of their fresh artisan salsa and guacamole take off, based on authentic flavours and ingredients. The company's top seller is Chunky Guacamole in a lineup that includes Salsa Verde, Salsa Morita, Two-Way Jalapeno Bean Dip, Roasted Tomatillo and Avocado Salsa and Pico De Gallo.

Dips are headed for continued growth into the foreseeable future and will help contribute to a healthy bottom line for grocers. This will be aided by a consumer that is now snacking more than ever but wants to indulge in better-for-you options. Focusing on healthy and carrying a wide assortment of refrigerated and shelf-stable products will be the path to profit. ●



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HUMMUS TO GO

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Dipping Into Profits



Driving Dairy

Capitalizing on new opportunities.

Composed of many significant segments, the dairy category has proven to be a long-standing staple of the grocer's general product offering. But the dynamics of the category continue to evolve and bring new product to the shelves. This means new sales strategies are needed to win over traditional consumers and get the most bang for your buck.

Market Report

Statistics from the 2013 Dairy in Canada report from Euromonitor International suggest that the cheese segment will increase by a conservative CAGR of one per cent between 2013 and 2018 — to reach \$4 billion. Growth drivers are anticipated to include a higher demand for unprocessed, higher-quality cheese and continued high demand for soft cheese.

Major players in this market include Saputo Dairy Products Canada, Agropur Cooperative, Parmalat Canada and Kraft Canada — collectively accounting for an 83 per cent

share of value sales in cheese in 2013.

Falling per capita consumption of milk in Canada is expected to dampen the category somewhat in the years ahead, with Euromonitor International forecasting a negligible negative constant value CAGR between 2013 to 2018 to reach \$3.9 billion. But the good news is an anticipated consumer shift towards healthier milk products, with both organic milk and non-dairy milk alternatives anticipated to grow.

Dairy Farmers of Canada confirms this trend. "Health and taste are still the key drivers of milk and cheese consumption, and they're also drivers for alternative options such as almond, rice and soy beverage," states Caroline Khoury, director of marketing. "Consumers' perceptions are changing the dynamics of milk. Food intolerances, as well as new diet/lifestyles, are shifting consumers towards alternatives to traditional cow's milk."

Ted Lawson, vice-president, marketing, Saputo Dairy Products Canada, also



speaks of balancing declining milk sales with the introduction of new products.

"Overall milk sales are declining in the West," he says. "Growth is only coming from the organic and lactose-free segments but these segments are not large enough to keep the entire category from shrinking. Organic milk is increasing in appeal to consumers that have adopted an organic lifestyle or to those consumers that are supportive of organic farming practices."

Yes to Yogurt

Yogurt and sour milk products are anticipated to maintain their market share — increasing by a constant value CAGR of one per cent during the forecast period. Euromonitor International reports that Canada remains a mature market in this category, with per capita consumption of yogurt and sour milk products among the highest in the world.

Greek yogurt has been the rising star

of this category for the past couple of years, with the result being an influx of new brands and products.

"The yogurt segment has slowed right down," says Ben Pearman, vice-president, managing director, yogurt, General Mills. "This is post the big boom in sales that was driven by Greek yogurt. Retailers were on the lookout for the next new Greek yogurt product and as a result, started to list all sorts of products from different manufacturers, despite significant duplication and limited space. Essentially, the shelf efficiency of the category dropped."

Whilst Greek yogurt continues to grow, albeit at a slower rate, Pearman suggests that retailers focus on finding the right range and try to consolidate the number of skus and make space for genuinely different innovation.

"Retailers should focus on carrying the No.1 and No.2 best-sellers in each segment and create space for innovation that drives incremental value into the category," he says.

A new and exciting dairy product that is gaining interest is kefir. "For some, kefir is an ethnic food, for others a natural food, but for most it is like a drinkable probiotic yogurt," says Lawson. "Lifeway Kefir has been a huge success in the U.S. and now Saputo has brought it to Canada."

Kelsie Black, sales and marketing director of Happy Day Dairies, also sees the interest in kefir.

"Sales of fermented foods are increasing and are attributed to consumers' growing knowledge of the health benefits of fermented foods," she says. "We now see whole sections in stores dedicated to fermented foods."

New Products on the Rise

New dairy products are constantly being introduced, such as Saputo's Milk2Go Sport recovery beverage or the company's Bailey's flavoured coffee creamers. Both Yoplait and Liberte have recently introduced a slew of new products, both within the Greek segment such as its Extra Creamy Liberte Greek Yogurt along with brand new products like Liberte Kefir, an on-trend pro-biotic drink great for pouring on cereals or making smoothies.

Merchandising Opportunities

Dairy companies continue to work with retailers to find innovative approaches to promote new products. These can include everything from stick-on coupons, in-store specials, secondary displays with a call to action or contest element, cross-promotion, digital and social media, in-store consultants or even events and seminars.

"The competition is very strong and increasing but the health trend is favourable for milk products, as they are naturally nutrient rich, are a source of protein, and are key foods to provide lasting energy, especially at breakfast," says Khoury.

Dairy products may be a mainstay category but retailers need to find the right product mix for their shelves and then back up that selection with innovative merchandising designed to generate new sales.





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MEAT DEPARTMENT

By Carolyn Camilleri

*Retaining
and increasing
profit means
staying up
to date on
trends.*

“Meating” Consumer Demands

Grass-fed, hormone-free, antibiotic-free, all natural, organic, ethically raised — today's customers are looking for healthier and more conscientious options in the meat department. Here is the news from the organizations behind the products in the meat case.

Chicken

Recently, the Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) commissioned Leger Marketing to conduct quantitative research among Canadian consumers to determine the most compelling label communication. This research found that the vast majority (88 per cent) of Canadians would be likely to buy chicken if it had a label showing whether it is from Canada or imported from elsewhere. Also, the majority of Canadians (77 per cent) would trust the chicken label they selected as “best” if it came directly from the farmers

or a farmers' group or association, rather than a retailer or manufacturer.

In other words, for consumers, branding is important—and the message should be coming from the farmers.

Lisa Bishop-Spencer, manager of communications at CFC, says consumers also want to know that chicken was raised according to a set of strong criteria.

“[The Raised by a Canadian Farmer brand] ensures that chicken is raised according to nationally set, high food-safety and animal-care standards — and complements all existing chicken brands, even provincial, local claims,” says Bishop-Spencer.

One important standard is the mandatory “On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program” (OFFSAP), which emphasizes animal health, cleanliness, and safety throughout each step of the production cycle and follows strict biosecurity measures to protect animal health and pre-

vent flock infections from outside sources. “These mandatory rules govern chicken farms from coast to coast and include all the record keeping necessary to prove that farmers are adhering to the process,” says Bishop-Spencer.

CFC's on-farm food-safety program received full recognition by the federal government — the first commodity to do so. Over 98 per cent of farmers are certified on this annually audited program.

Another important standard is CFC's Animal Care Program, which sets out the regulations and guidelines for the care and handling of the birds raised on Canadian farms. It is an annually audited program designed to demonstrate and maintain high animal-care standards. Over 95 per cent of farmers are certified on the program.

“That is really what the Raised by a Canadian Farmer brand stands for — it stands for the mandatory farm food-safe-



For consumers branding is important when it comes to buying chicken.

ty program. It stands for our audited animal-care program. It stands for not just country of origin but a whole bunch of important standards that the consumers want to know are in their food," says Bishop-Spencer.

Bishop-Spencer says the program works very well with local labelling as well. "It is very important for consumers to know this product was raised in British Colum-

bia, but also, that it was raised according to a set of national criteria."

The program is available for use at retail now, free of charge, with the signing of a licensing agreement, and participants can leverage CFC's strong traditional marketing program, mobile grocery store app, digital marketing programs, and its reputable social media presence (the last twitter party garnered over 30 million impressions).

"This logo will go a long way towards demonstrating to consumers that their chicken is raised right here by our farmers, in accordance with a mandatory on-farm food-safety program, a robust animal-care program, and an unyielding commitment to raising the chicken Canadians can trust."

Pork

Four decades of export success has taught the Canadian pork industry that quality often means different things to different customers. This knowledge has empowered the value chain members to create a responsive production, processing, and delivery system built on a philosophy of continuous change, flexibility, and improvement to meet the changing

requirements of customers.

Derrick Ash, Canada Pork's director of national marketing, says the Canadian pork industry is committed to the highest standards of quality, food safety, and environmental sustainability. State-of-the-art animal care, feeding, and processing facilities ensure a consistent product of unsurpassed quality.



IDEAL PORK MARBLING SCORE RANGES BY MARKET AND CHANNEL: 1. Further Processing (ham, sausage production): CPQS <2.0? 2. Retail and Foodservice Operations (table meat): CPQS 2.0>? 3. Premium Retail and Foodservice Operations: CPQS 3.

Ash says retailers look for premium-quality pork products selected for optimum marbling, meat colour, and firmness to deliver an exceptional eating experience. Canadian Pork Quality Standards (CPQS) measure pork quality beyond traditional carcass yield and fat cover and provide a unique mechanism to establish quantifiable points of differentiation.

"Enhanced pork quality standards can improve the competitive advantage for innovative producers, processors, and retailers wishing to differentiate their products based on specific meat quality attributes," says Ash.

CPQS include six meat-colour levels, four fat-colour levels, and six marbling-score categories, representing a wide spectrum of pork meat quality attributes perfect for every application.

"Meat colour continues to be the No.1 attribute consumers look for when selecting fresh meat in the retail case in all markets around the world," says Ash, adding that colour is a visual indicator in terms of water-holding capacity to maintain natural juices and flavours throughout distribution, preparation, and cooking.

Meat colour is also closely associated



Consumers want to know where their meat comes from and what they are paying for.

with animal care, age of the livestock, genetics, feed, processing, and, ultimately, the hygiene and shelf life of the finished product.

Another indicator: Intramuscular Fat (IMF) or marbling — the small flecks of internal fat found inside the muscle. Marbling is a major contributor to the natural flavours and juiciness of the cooked product and, to lesser extent, tenderness, says Ash.

"As meat cooks, the fat melts," says Ash. "The melted fat does two things: it keeps the meat tender and moist, and it

infuses the meat with flavour. In fact, most of the silky texture and great flavour that we love in a good steak comes from the fat, not the meat itself."

Canada Pork's National Market Development Program, launched last fall, fulfils a number of functions within the industry, including providing technical services and supporting regional consumer marketing activities as required.

"Canada Pork programs bring a consistent and credible value proposition to the table that regional activities can be

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- Parsley

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Cut pockets into boneless pork loins. Stuff with Malabar's Wild Rice & Mushroom stuffing, mixed with Herby Willy marinade. Brush with either Herby Willy or Chilli Willy marinade. Edge with Varianta Decor Seasoning.

Spiced Oil Magic

Chilli Willy

Spiced Oil Pepper

Flavoured Rice

You'll Need:

- 4 cups long grain white rice, cooked
- 2 tbsp Gourmet Liquid Marinade

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built on,” says Ash. “Close working relationships combined with a collaborative approach will ensure no duplication while maximizing ROI/ROE for stakeholders.”

Ash adds that the Canada Pork team works with participating processors, retailers, and foodservice through various programs, such as distributor education; branding and co-branding opportunities; marketing materials and support collateral; benchmarking services; value optimization; and merchandising ideas.

“The Canada Pork team works closely with participating provincial organizations,” says Ash. “Canadian pork producers and processors produce exceptional quality products, offered to the world’s table at the best possible value.”

Beef

“With the increase in prices around food in general, especially beef, consumers want to know more about where their food comes from and what they are paying for,” says James Bradbury, director of market development at Canada Beef Inc.

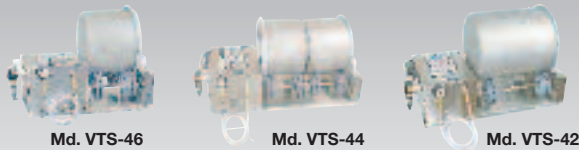
Beef in particular has a strong story around sustainability, the care and attention of the ranching and farming families in raising their herd and getting the best product to market.

“In the cattle business, this process of raising animals for beef all the way to the retail shelf can take up to three years,” says Bradbury. “Like the wine industry, this level of commitment is what makes our products artisanal and worthy of that story being told.”

Beef can no longer be sold on price - it needs to be sold on value, says Bradbury. Retailers are realizing that beef takes the lion’s share of the basket and can no longer be sold as a commodity, he says. “Marketing to consumers is more important every day.”



Vacuum Marinating Enhances Taste and Adds Value



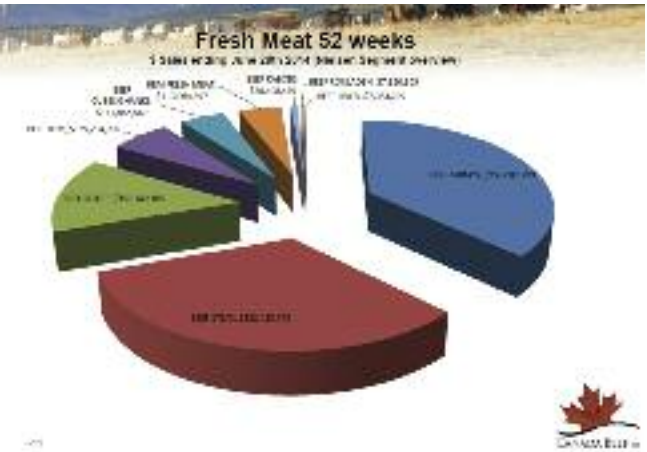
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Bradbury points to Federated Co-Ops (FCL) marketing efforts this year as a fine example of telling the story. By hand-picking three farming families across the country — one in each province they retail in — FCL was able to embrace the agricultural roots within their business and reach out to members using other members involved in agriculture, while telling the story of why they choose local Canadian beef to sell to their members. With a fresh angle on traditional in-store point of sale items, as well as creating three online videos, FCL created a unique marketing approach that can be used for years to come.

In terms of consumer demand, indications are that people are willing to pay more for beef.

“The international market demand index has increased every year for the last four years and quality beef seems to be the key driver,” says Bradbury. “Canada is well positioned to answer this call and Canada’s reputation for having a great environment for growing the best, most sustainable beef by producers that care, leads the way to increased value of Canadian beef.”

Canada is building towards growing the herd, but supply is still a challenge, says Bradbury. And price increases mean consumers require greater value for their money. To meet this



demand, Canada Beef works with retail and foodservice partners to answer consumer needs, such as smaller portions, greater convenience, lack of cooking knowledge, time constraints, and multicultural demographics. He adds that Canada Beef continues the communication cycle by working with the packing community to align all aspects of the industry toward common goals.

Bradbury says the gourmet burger category in retail and foodservice is a “shining example” of how industry is meeting trends.

“The industry is answering with premium programs at retail and foodservice and helping to build premium grind categories such as ground sirloin, chuck, and prime rib,” says Bradbury.

“By helping our partners tell their story of commitment to local Canadian Beef, assisting them in purchasing and merchandising opportunities, and keeping them well informed of the industry directions as a whole, Canada Beef assists the industry in meeting consumer demand with increased value for the beef they purchase,” says Bradbury.

No matter what the specific demands, indications are that customers are paying attention to where their food is coming from and how it is produced. An overwhelming theme among all three meats is that more consumers want Canadian products because of high national standards and quality. For retailers, Canadian branding may be the way to increased profits. ●

PACKAGING



It could be argued that environmental activists have influenced public opinion to the point where any form of packaging is a potential target for media criticism and boycott.

Still, there’s no denying that ongoing concerns over the way food is packed and shipped is causing packaging manufacturers to constantly improve operations — collectively to the tune of billions of dollars. “Our member companies are extremely committed to environmental stewardship,” says John Mullinder, executive director of the Paper & Paperboard Packaging Environmental Council (PPEC).

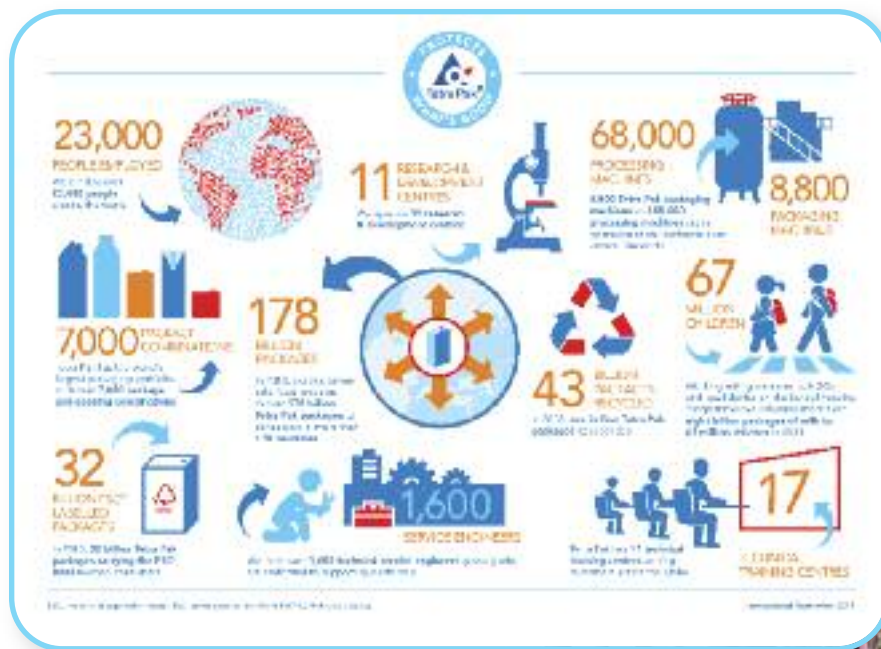
Larine Urbina, communications manager, Canada and the US for Tetra Pak (the world leader in the manufacture of packages for liquid foods and beverages), says her company is going full-tilt in fulfilling a sustainability mandate of which recycling is only one facet. “The public now expects the entire cycle of packaging to be considered, from how trees are grown and harvested to how finished products are transported,” she explains.

Packagers are also responding quickly to the ever-changing demands of the marketplace. One case in point is The Ellis Group, which through a series of acquisitions and technological investments, has expanded its production and service capabilities on behalf of clients such as Mars, Hershey and Procter & Gamble.

Ellis constantly seeks to add value for clients: hence, equipment such as a Carton Master primographic printing press that, amongst other functions, gives a holographic appearance to selected areas of an image by applying a special micro-embossed UV coating (an anti-counterfeiting property). Advanced gluers and

Lean, Mean & Green

By Robin Brunet



Tetra Pak has made substantial improvements in its manufacturing process, and has a keen appreciation for the changing face of retail grocery.

other equipment improve the company's delivery timelines.

Brad Weale, vice-president, sales at Ellis Packaging Ltd., says the current marketplace is putting more emphasis on quicker lead times: "Our clients are under the gun for quick turnarounds from their big box customers, and we must be ready to support and supply these needs. Much of our packaging runs on high speed filling lines, so quality of throughput must always be at the top of our list."

Moreover, many of Ellis's customers expect a "one stop shopping experience," according to Weale. "So from the beginning of the process with structural design, we work with them to create a package that will not only look great but also perform

well on their filling lines.

Mock-ups have also become common, as customers need a solution for making sales pitches as well as doing market studies."

Ellis is investing in a new eight-colour press that should quicken make-readies and lessen waste. "This in turn will make us more efficient for quicker lead times," says Weale. "Inspection is becoming a key role in our world, and this is why the press will be outfitted with the latest in inspection and quality systems.

"We're also adding a new high speed die cutter to our lineup. All of these purchases should enable us to keep up with our customer demands and help us with our speed-to-market philosophy."

Meanwhile at Tetra Pak, there is a keen appreciation for the changing face of retail grocery. "With more specialty stores opening and new venues getting smaller, maximizing shelf space is a huge consideration, as is making products stand out on the shelves — and our type of packaging goes a long way in fulfilling both goals," says Urbina.

Urbina is referring partly to Tetra Recart packages, the first retortable carton designed for shelf-sta-

ble products traditionally filled in cans, glass jars or pouches (foods like vegetables, beans, tomatoes, pet food, soups and sauces). Food is sterilized inside the Tetra Recart and stays fresh for up to 24 months. "Tetra Recarts free up to 40 per cent shelf space and provide an excellent shelf impact and billboard effect," she says. Thanks to their square shape and light weight, they're also easy to handle and transport.

As for sustainability, Elisabeth Comere, Tetra Pak's director of environment and government affairs, says her company has made substantial improvements in its manufacturing process. "At plant level we've improved energy efficiency through better heating and

ventilation and equipment utilization, and through the elimination of production waste and waste water." Aside from fulfilling green objectives, these undertakings also resulted in a 2.6 per cent growth

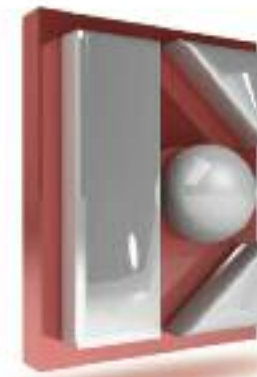
in packing material production in 2013.

Norampac, a division of Cascades Canada, is another example of a PPEC member that is a sustainable supplier, with the company's new Greenpac containerboard mill near Niagara Falls being a prime case in point. This \$430-million facility manufactures a lightweight linerboard on a single machine with an annual production capacity of 540,000 short tons. Water is treated and reused to reduce consumption, and the biogas generated by the anaerobic water treatment system is reused in a boiler to produce steam.

It's unclear whether costly improvements undertaken by manufacturers influence consumer buying patterns to any substantial degree, but Mullinder believes that as long as they're economical viable, "improvements that reduce waste is the clearly right thing to do."

That said, much of the PPEC executive director's efforts are still spent trying to dispel outdated misconceptions about paper packaging — one being that trees are continually cut down to make it. In fact most boxes and cartons made in Canada are already 100 per cent recycled content, made from the old boxes collected from the back of factories and supermarkets and from various leftover paper materials collected from curbside depots.

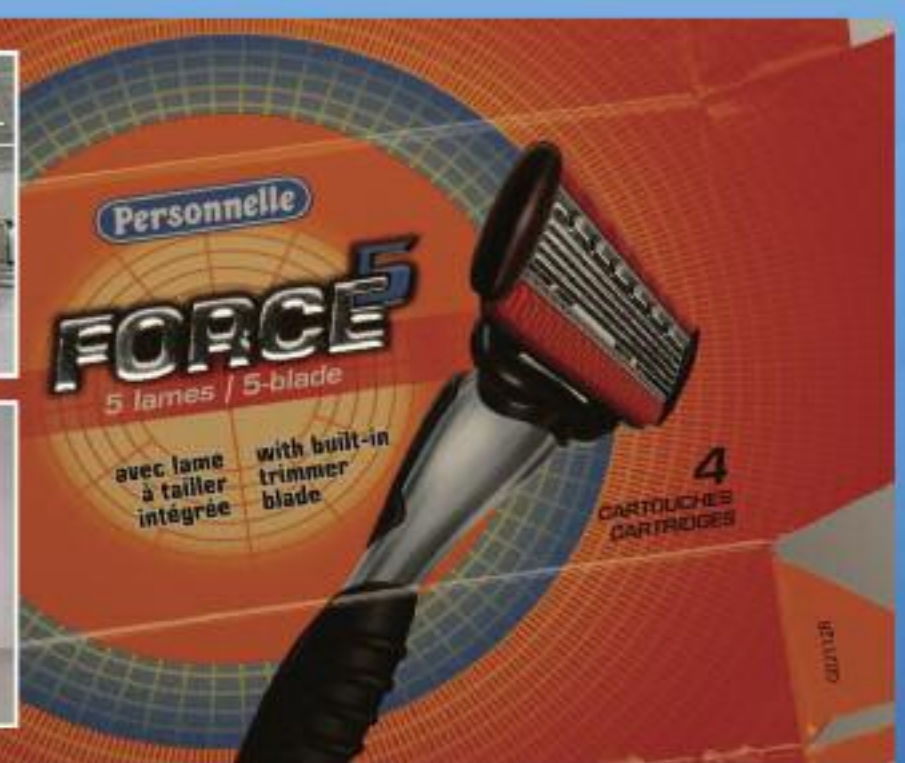
Another popular misconception is that



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PPEC is trying to dispel the misconception about paper packaging, and notes that most boxes and cartons made in Canada are 100 per cent recycled content.





The Ellis Group is constantly seeking to add value for their clients, and improving the company's delivery timelines.



because Canada is running out of trees. "In fact, the entire Canadian forest industry harvested less than 0.2 per cent of the commercial forest in 2011, and by law these forests must be regenerated — which they are," says Mullinder. "Over 1,000 new tree seedlings are planted every minute in Canada. We also lead the world in the amount of commercial forest that's independently certified as being sustainable."

Overall, Mullinder regards the media-fuelled controversy over packaging as somewhat ironic. "It's a soft political target, and in a way it's a fake argument because the real issue is our choice of lifestyle target and consumption, not packaging per se," he says.

As frustrating as going over old ground may be, Mullinder knows that the on-going

efforts of his organization are paying off: "I think there's a growing awareness on the part of consumers about paper and paper products. They may not know all the details, but paper overall has a very positive image."

For the record, the plastics industry is equally busy trying to combat myth with fact. In 'A Fresh Look at the Options for Managing Plastic Packaging', The Environment and Plastics Industry Council (EPIC) stresses that although plastic poses greater recycling challenges, plastic packaging is lighter and more compact than other product delivery systems, meaning more widgets can be fitted in a truckload of goods, which in turn means fewer trucks on highways.

As for the future potential of plastic

recycling, although the motivation to recycle on a large scale is stymied because prices for recycled resin are lower than those for virgin resin, the EPIC report predicts that rapidly escalating energy costs will increase demand for plastic waste as a substitute for natural gas or coal — and recycled resin prices may skyrocket.

It's doubtful that packaging will ever escape the attention of activists, or that manufacturers will ever get full credit for their equipment upgrades and product innovations. However, their on-going initiatives are benefiting grocers and consumers in providing less damage, less spoilage, and improved transport efficiencies. ●

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What's new & improved in the grocery aisle

Dare Puts the Wow! into School Lunches

Dare Foods Limited has introduced new peanut-free snacks to make lunch tastier for kids and easier for parents. Dare Bear Paws Morning Snack Wowbutter and Strawberries, Bear Paws Minis Chocolate Chip & Wowbutter, and Wagon Wheels Wowbutter deliver the great taste of peanut butter kids love, using a toasted soy spread called Wowbutter. Like all Bear Paws and Wagon Wheels snacks, the new Bear Paws and Wagon Wheels with Wowbutter are made in Dare's nut-free and peanut-free Canadian facility. The cookies contain protein and support Dare Foods' Made Better promise – a family commitment to providing delicious, better-for-you snacks.



Piller's Launches Two New Simply Free Kolbassa Products

Combining its traditional European sausage-making practices with modern innovation, Piller's Fine Foods has added two new Kolbassa products to its gluten and allergen free Simply Free line. Both the Piller's Simply Free Kolbassa meat sticks and sausage pieces are made from pork and natural ingredients for that old-fashioned wholesome taste, and, as with all products under the Simply Free banner, are also free of all major food allergens including gluten, milk, peanuts, tree nuts, mustard, sesame, egg, fish, soy and sulphites. "Our latest Kolbassa products cater to the 2.5 million Canadians that are afflicted with food allergies," says Rita Weigel, the company's director of marketing. "As well, each Kolbassa stick is only 50 calories, and provides about seven grams of protein."

Jarritos: We're Not From Here!

Jarritos is a premium soft drink with eight mouth-watering and refreshing flavours now available in Canada. Jarritos are made with 100 per cent natural fruit flavours, using only the most authentic and natural fruits from Mexico. Jarritos soft drinks are made with natural cane sugar, never high-fructose corn syrup and come in 370ml premium glass bottles. Explore the Mandarin, Guava, Lime, Pineapple, Fruit Punch, Grapefruit and Tamarind flavours right here in Canada; they are not only for people on tropical vacations! Jarritos, keeping bottle openers busy since 1950.



Say Cheese!

Three of Coombe Castle's delicious cheese skus are now available in a convenient snack pack; Double Gloucester, famous for its mellow, accessible flavour; Mature Cheddar - smoothly textured with a rich, nutty and sharp tang; and Red Leicester - well known for its deep red colour and its nutty, slightly sweet flavour. These three cheeses are gluten-free, trans fat free, vegetarian and make a healthy and convenient grab-and-go snack!

Contact your local Tree of Life Canada representative for more information.

Nutritious Energy Bars Never Tasted This Good

New Era Nutrition Inc., Canadian developers of SoLo Gi® Energy and Nutrition Bars has announced the expansion of their line of low glycemic and gluten-free bars to include three new delicious flavours – Apple Cinnamon with Quinoa, Mocha Fudge and Dark Chocolate Almond. Expanding their line of delicious bars that includes favourites like Peanut Power and Lemon Lift, SoLo Gi® introduces snack lovers to their new flavours made with the same unique blend of slow-release carbohydrates, premium proteins, healthy fats and dietary fibres. These indulgent new flavours are sure to spike everyone's taste buds, but not their blood sugar! "SoLo Gi® is passionately committed to the continued innovation of our bars by not only providing the unique nutritional blend but also flavours consumers crave, in a bar they trust to sustain their energy throughout the day," says Saul Katz, CEO of SoLo Gi® Nutrition. "It's incredible that something that tastes so good, can be so good for you too."



Nak'd Protein Crunch Bars

Nak'd Protein Crunch Bars are fruity, tasty, nutritious and irresistible crunchy, packed with real ingredients for long-lasting satisfaction. These two crunch bars are dairy, wheat and gluten free, loaded with soy crunchies for extra protein to keep you feeling fuller, longer.

Contact your local Tree of Life Canada representative for more information.



Two New Way Better Snack! (Gluten-Free) Flavours

Tree of Life introduces two new delicious flavours in the Way Better Snack line; Spicy Sriracha and Mustard and Onion. These two new Way Better Snack flavours are bursting with goodness, because they've unlocked the powerful nutrients found in perfect, unprocessed ingredients. So when you share these deliciously sprouted chips, you're actually improving someone's well-being.

Contact your local Tree of Life Canada representative for more information.



Bob's Red Mill New Gluten Free 1-to-1

Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods invites you to replace your flour, not your recipe with the new Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour. The flour easily makes your favourite recipe into a gluten free version when you substitute the Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour for conventional flour. Like all of Bob's Red Mill's gluten free products, Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour is made in a dedicated facility and is batch-tested in the company's quality control laboratory with an R5 ELISA Gluten Assay test to verify their gluten free integrity.



Ocean's World Cuisine Pasta Sauces from the Heart of Italy

Authentically made in small batches in Parma Italy, this line of Italian pasta sauces includes Siciliana, Arrabiata, Puttanesca and Pomodoro & Ricotta. Drawing from the purest, all natural ingredients, these unique Ocean's World Cuisine pasta sauces deliver exceptional taste and quality.

For further information, email: talktous@oceanbrands.com or visit www.oceanbrands.com.



Camino's Simply Dark Hot Chocolate

Camino's Simply Dark Hot Chocolate is gaining strong momentum, having just been introduced last fall. Created for the dairy conscious, Simply Dark hot chocolate is incredibly rich and delicious, and is literally made with dark chocolate as an ingredient for an extra indulgent taste. This vegan-friendly hot chocolate is made without milk ingredients and can be prepared simply by adding milk or milk substitute (taste panels have preferred it best with almond milk). Fairtrade certified, certified organic, gluten free, non-GMO and made with a premium Peruvian/Dominican Republic cocoa blend makes Camino Simply Dark hot chocolate fantastically rich and velvety!

Gluten Free, Wheat Free Wraps

La Tortilla Factory's Ivory Teff Gluten-Free wraps contain absolutely no trans fats, are a good source of dietary fibre and have 18g of whole grains. These gluten-free wraps are a perfect way to enjoy all your favourite dishes while maintaining a gluten-free diet and lifestyle. Welcome back to burritos, tacos, enchiladas, pizza crusts, wraps sandwiches and more!

Contact your local Tree of Life Canada representative for more information.



Candy Meister – Natural Hard Candies from Germany

Candy Meister hard candies are made by a traditional and family-owned business in Germany. Maximize on the biggest trend in the grocery industry by offering your customers natural & non-GMO options in the confectionery aisle. All of the candies are non-GMO, corn syrup free, not too sweet and made with natural colours and flavours. Furthermore, most of the candies are also vegan, gluten free and dairy free. The delicious treats are available in colourful fruity, herbal and special flavours. Once your customers try them, they will come back for more!

Contact Sue at New Age Marketing for more information, email sue@newagemarketing.ca or call 604.227.6610



MADD Virgin Drinks

Customers who prefer an alcohol-free alternative, for whatever reason, or want to provide their family and friends with a fun choice when entertaining, can take pride in serving MADD Virgin Drinks. Ten per cent of net sales go to MADD Canada to support their ongoing efforts to reduce impaired driving. MADD Virgin Drinks - The Drinks to drink when you're not drinking.
Contact your Tree of Life representative.



McDonald's Canada Breaks New 'Ground' as McCafé Premium Roast Coffee Hits Grocery Aisles



McDonald's Canada is expanding its coffee portfolio with the national launch of McCafé Premium Roast ground coffee as well as on-demand single-serve formats compatible with both the TASSIMO and Keurig brewing systems. Coffee remains the beverage of choice among Canadians with at home being the place where two-thirds (65 per cent) of coffee is consumed. While drip coffee makers are still popular, 33 per cent of Canadian households now own a single cup brewers. "There is no better way to connect with Canadians than with a great cup of coffee," said John E. Betts, president and CEO of McDonald's Canada. "By offering our McCafé Premium Roast coffee in a variety of formats on grocery shelves, we are making it even easier for our customers to integrate their favourite coffee into their everyday routines, building an even stronger connection to our brand." The launch is part of the company's ongoing strategy to gain greater market share. Since launching in 2011, the McCafé brand has established itself as a dominant player in the Canadian quick-service coffee landscape. Offering McCafé Premium Roast coffee through grocery store channels builds on this success and is an integral part of the brand evolution in ways that are both convenient and relevant for customers. McDonald's Canada is partnering with Kraft Canada to produce and sell the products in grocery stores coast-to-coast.

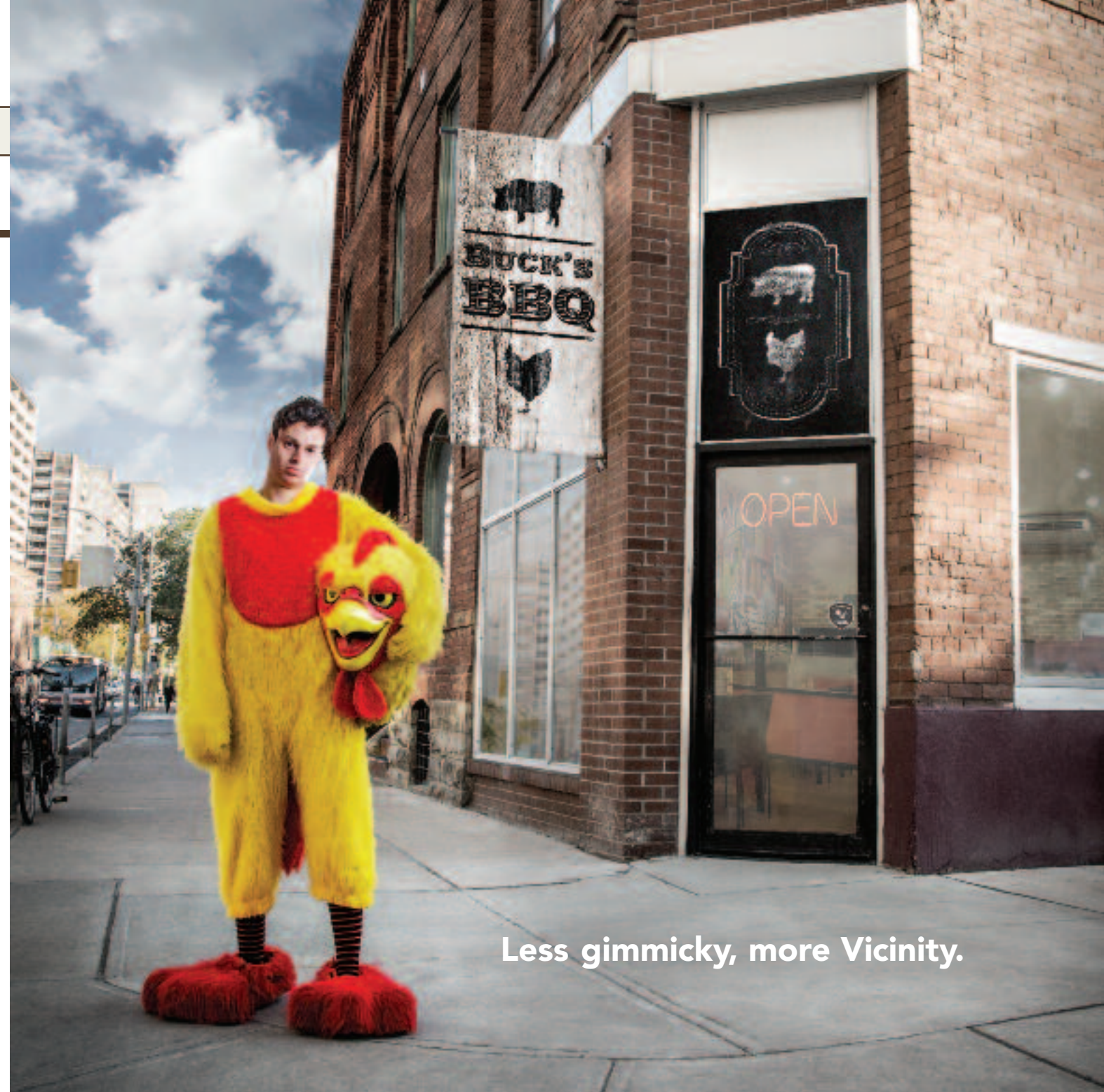
CHEEMO Introduces Heritage Perogies

Canadians love their perogies. This fact is substantiated by a recent consumer survey that found perogies to be the clear choice as the closest thing to Canadian cuisine. Now consumers will have the opportunity to enjoy even more flavours of perogies with the introduction of CHEEMO's new Heritage Perogies. "We're excited to launch Heritage Perogies this fall," says Edmonton-headquartered Heritage Frozen Foods Ltd. President Joe Makowecki. "The two new flavours - Harvest Potatoes with Aged White Cheddar Cheese and Harvest Potatoes with Farm Style Cream Cheese and Savoury Dill - have an authentic home-style shape and are made using natural wholesome ingredients grown by Canadian farmers." "Our Heritage Perogies, like all of our CHEEMO offerings, meet our company's ongoing commitment to producing quality products that are tasty, convenient to prepare and value priced," says Makowecki. "Our company is proud to present consumers with a hearty option for a healthy diet while at the same time supporting Canada's agriculture industry. I am very pleased with the positive response our new Heritage Perogies are receiving in the marketplace."



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The Allure of the Mediterranean

The simplicity of the Mediterranean diet is timeless.

New trends in specialty Italian and Mediterranean food products continue to emerge however in response to changing consumer needs.

One category which has experienced significant growth in recent years is gluten free. Gluten free is the fastest growing food intolerance indicating the market for gluten free products has strong potential for the future. Canada's gluten-free market had a compound annual growth rate of more than 26 per cent over the past five years. This is a vast category encompassing many items for consumers with dietary needs, which applies mainly to pasta and pasta sauces, but is also now widely applied to other product categories. In the gluten free pasta category, Bosa Foods has expanded the number of products distributed to include a

range of new gluten free gnocchi products, gluten free pasta options, and gluten free pasta sauces.

Another category which has grown significantly is frozen specialty imported products. With consumers looking for more convenience, there has been a shift toward convenient meals that are ready-to-cook, pre-cooked or oven-ready. One of the most popular frozen food entrées is pizza, with sales now approaching half a billion dollars annually and \$130 million in Western Canada. Frozen imported Italissima Italian pizzas that cook to perfection within 15 min-

utes, a line of imported Italian stuffed pasta that are ready to be served in only two minutes, as well as a line of frozen imported Italian desserts (tiramisu, mousse, etc.) are only a few new additions to the exciting and growing frozen category. Mediterranean foods will always retain their allure to the North American consumer. It is important to continue to be at the forefront of innovation by staying attuned to changing needs, whether they be dietary or new formats to address convenience.

Bosa Foods has been a distributor of specialty Italian and Mediterranean food products for over 57 years, and is proud to represent and distribute some of the finest Italian and Mediterranean products under established brands within the retail and foodservice markets in Western Canada. The company is constantly searching for and adding on new products to ensure changing individual tastes and the preferences of today's consumers are catered to.



Chris MacDonald, business development manager, Bosa Foods.
www.bosafoods.com



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