

NEWS FILE

The Voice of the Canadian Food & Beverage Industry

Defining Consumer Tastes

The Ames, Iowa-based Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture reports that 62 per cent of U.S. consumers want to purchase food that is aligned to their values. Since the emergence of organic, fair trade and vegetarian diets, consumers have become empowered to delve deeper into food issues. They want to understand every aspect of their food purchases, and how these purchases affect the world around them. Two new terms encapsulate this trend: causer and locavore.

“Locavore is a term that we started four years ago and represents people who are interested in eating local food,” explains Jennifer Maiser, one of the founders of the Locavores, based in San Francisco. “It began as eating from within a 150 mile radius from our homes. But I advocate people deciding what a good local radius is for them.” Hand in hand with that trend is causers, who have greater awareness about where and how produce was grown, and use their purchasing power as a statement.

“The reason why a consumer purchases what they do as

opposed to what they purchase becomes significant,” says Melisa Zapisocky, Leadership Training Program Coordinator for the Edmonton-based Alberta Farmers’ Market Association. Causers and locavores are also attracted to the concept of contributing to the surrounding environment by tying purchases to core values, as compared to consumers buying organic produce solely for perceived health benefits. “People are slowly learning that the everyday choices we make have an impact on the world,” says Zapisocky. “Nobody wants to consciously contribute to global warming, or support mistreated workers in developing countries. People are learning they can make small changes in their lifestyle that have less of a negative impact on the environment.”

As consumers exhibit increased interest in food purchases the onus is now on retailers to shift their marketing strategy. “Producers and retailers have to pay more attention to their customers and be willing to diversify their product [offerings],” says Zapisocky. Increased information about food products, such as place of origin, can be used as selling points. Rob Clarke, executive director of Transfair, the only Canadian affiliate of Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International, agrees. “Given globalization, there is a greater expectation for suppliers to understand the conditions of their source,” he says. “With fair trade we’re providing third-party certification all the way from the farmer’s field to the grocery store.”

— By Kailash Maharaj and Shivana Maharaj

Mixed Future for Maple Leaf Plants

By voting yes on a new contract, unionized employees at One Maple Leaf Foods plant in Winnipeg have assured their facility’s future. But the future remains uncertain for a second Maple Leaf plant whose employees turned down the company’s request to re-open contract negotiations a year early. That decision has cost the (Continued on page 10)



GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT

EARLY RISERS

Despite breakfast being touted as the most important meal of the day, capturing consumer attention in the cereal category has never been easy. This month, *Food in Canada* went on the lookout for some of the most deliciously nutritious varieties from around the globe.

- U.K.-based Jordans Cereals has been pouring out new flavours since the 1970s. A consumer favourite, 3 in One offers healthy indulgence through the power of three – multigrain flakes chock full of

fibre, energy-filled wholegrain oat clusters and sweet freeze-dried strawberries.

- Kraft Foods’ Post Corn Flight has been a hit in South Korea. The cereal’s sugar-coated flakes contain eight vitamins and iron, and offer both flavour and nutrition.
- The French liven up their mornings with Nestle Fitness Chocolate. The cereal features wheat flakes coated with rich chocolate, is high in iron, and offers almost five grams of fibre per serving.
- A vegan favourite from Germany, Ballstoos by Seitenbacher is an all-natural spelt cereal sweetened with apple



juice and cinnamon. The healthy breakfast is high in protein and fibre and can be enjoyed with or without milk.

NEWSFILE

(Continued from page 8)

facility approximately 550 new jobs that will now go to the first plant instead.

The job shuffle is being sparked by the planned expansion of Maple Leaf's meat cutting plant in Brandon, Man. The company is adding a second cutting shift in Brandon and increasing its workforce there from the current 1,300 to about 2,000 over the next two years. At the same time, Maple Leaf decided to move its hamboning operation from Brandon to its newer Warman Road plant in Winnipeg. However, because the Warman Road employees voted against renegotiating their contracts (which expire next May), Maple Leaf approached the employees at the Lagimodiere Boulevard plant instead.

"For the Lagimodiere plant employees, we have negotiated a raise of three per cent a year over the next three years," says Blake Crothers, a spokesperson for United Food and Commercial

The Winners Circle

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada presented its seventh annual Agri-Food Awards of Excellence last month during the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto. The awards, which recognize achievement, innovation and leadership within the agri-food industry, were presented by Gerry Ritz, minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, and minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.

This year's winners, by category, were: Dr. Vernon Burrows, research scientist emeritus, Voluntarism; Chris Herrmann, Youth Leadership; Manitoba's Prairie Orchard Farms, producers of omega-3 pork, Innovation; Quebec's Semican International Inc., producers of Equavena Hullless Oats, Agri-Food Export; Quebec's Des Aulnages



(Left) Hon. Gerry Ritz and (right) Royal Agricultural Winter Fair CEO Bill Duron present Dr. Vernon Burrows with the award for Voluntarism.

Workers Union Local 832, which represents the Maple Leaf workers. "As well, the move of the hamboning operation to the Lagimodiere plant will increase the workforce to about 1,000." The company is also promising a major expansion to the Lagimodiere plant beginning

Stream Watershed Committee, Environmental Stewardship; and the B.C. Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, Agricultural Awareness and Education.

in the spring.

At press time, according to Crothers, contract negotiations were slated to begin for the Warman Road employees in February or March. "The company is not sure what it's going to do about that plant yet," he says. — Myron Love



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Canada

Heart health in a Nutshell

A heart-shaped nut grown in Ontario's Niagara region has recently been discovered to be both a tasty treat, and good for the heart. Dr. Rong Cao, a research scientist specializing in functional foods and nutraceuticals at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, has discovered that "heartnuts" are a good source of antioxidants. "They are full of essential fatty acids, vitamin E and polyphenolic antioxidants," says Cao. "Components like essential polyunsaturated fatty acids, which help reduce cholesterol, are lacking in most Western diets."

Cao was introduced to heartnuts two years ago. Fascinated with their shape and sweet taste, he decided to investigate the nuts' nutritional value. The heartnut is a hybrid of the Japanese walnut, grafted to an unrelated root stock to make it strong enough to survive the Canadian winter. As a result, the shape of the nut changed into a heart. It has a sweet taste, similar to the flavour of a walnut or butternut. Cao examined and compared three varieties of heartnuts with two Persian walnut varieties, defatting, extracting and separating the nuts into three different fractions in order to study them.

According to Cao, in a healthy human, oxidative stress (free radicals) is balanced with an antioxidative defense system. Problems arise when the balance is tipped and people need extra antioxidants that the body cannot produce on its own. Antioxidants help fight free radicals in the body that can lead to diseases such as cancer and coronary heart disease.

After Cao heard about heartnuts he contacted Ernie



Grimo's nut nursery in Niagara-on-the-lake, Ont. to supply him with walnuts and heartnuts. According to Grimo the most difficult thing about heartnuts is cracking the shell without breaking the heart shape of the nut. "I usually use a hammer and stand the heartnut on its edge," says Grimo. "Then I tap the nut until the shell breaks and it opens." Although Grimo is still trying to find a suitable

device to efficiently crack heartnuts, he thinks that the heartnut will become commercially viable.

Heinrich Stubbe, owner of Stubbe Chocolates in Ottawa, agrees. Stubbe volunteered his time and resources to cover a few dozen heartnuts in chocolate so they could be auctioned off at a charity event. "I jumped at the opportunity to work with heartnuts," says Stubbe. "When I heard they were beneficial for your health, I knew right away what I was going to do with them."

Cao hopes to continue his research on the heartnut and its healthy components. "If this becomes a regular snack in people's diets, it could make a difference in their health," he says. "What better way to build up antioxidants than with a heart-shaped, sweet tasting nut." *— Lisa Murphy*

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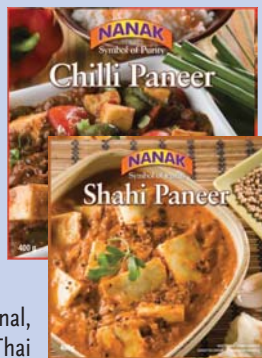
IN BRIEF

- **SIAL Montreal** has been granted international status as a trade show by **Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)**, on the same grounds as SIAL Paris or Cologne's ANUGA. Canadian agri-food companies wishing to exhibit at SIAL Montreal can benefit from government aid as export support activities if they include SIAL Montreal in their activity plan for the upcoming 2008, 2009 and 2010 editions. For more information companies can contact their local or national professional association to be linked to their governmental counsellor. SIAL Montreal is now an annual event, with the next show taking place April 23 to 25, 2008, at the Palais des Congrès de Montréal.
- Toronto-based **Steam Whistle Brewing** was presented with the Small Employer Award by the **Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council** and the **Royal Bank of Canada** at the second Annual Immigrant Success Awards in September.
- This year Dijon, France-based **Maille** celebrates 260 years of business. In October the company added two new varieties to its line of premium condiments, Creamy Dijon and Green Mustard. Maille has been part of the Unilever portfolio since 2000.
- The **Ontario Food Protection Association's** Sanitarian of the Year Award this year went to **Errol Semple**, who is now retired from Maple Leaf Foods.
- Burlington, Ont.-based **Pinty's Delicious Foods** has entered into an agreement with Homewood, Ill.-based **Silliker, Inc.** to have its workforce trained with **Alchemy Systems'** interactive, group-based training platform, **SISTEM**.
- **Tree Brewing**, a Kelowna, B.C. craft brewer, has increased its sales 41 per cent from the same time last year.
- **Smucker Foods of Canada Co.**, a subsidiary of Orrville, Ohio-based **The J.M. Smucker Co.**, has acquired the Canadian Carnation brand of milk products from **Nestle Canada**.
- Winnipeg-based **Manitoba Harvest's** Hemp Bliss Organic Hempmilk was voted Best New Food Product at the Natural Products Expo East in Baltimore, Md. in September.
- A study published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* found that substitution of canola oil for common dietary fats in the U.S. would help Americans meet dietary fat recommendations. Canola oil has the lowest amount of saturated fat of all commonly used vegetable oils, according to the **U.S. Canola Association**.
- **Kellogg's** has launched its Get the Facts banner, shown on the top right-hand corner of its ready-to-eat cereal packages. The banner includes a breakdown of calories, total fat, sodium and sugar per serving as well as nutrients.
- The **International Association for Food Protection** held the first China International Food Safety & Quality Conference and Expo in Beijing in September. The event attracted more than 600 food safety professionals from around the globe.
- The **United Nations** announced that 2008 will be the International Year of the Potato, in an effort to raise awareness of the global importance of the potato in fighting hunger, providing food security and alleviating poverty.

NEW CONSUMER PRODUCTS

The Ethnic and Specialty Food Expo and All Things Organic shows were held in conjunction Sept. 30 to Oct. 1 in Mississauga, Ont. The event showcased a record 80 exhibitors and attracted 1,400 buyers from across Canada. Following is a sampling of some of the unique new products on display.

- Surrey, B.C.-based **Nanak** introduced its range of **vegetarian Indian meals** available in Chili Paneer, Matar Paneer, Palak Paneer, Paneer Tikka Masala and Shahi Paneer.
- Perth, Ont.-based **Perth Pepper and Pestle** launched its **dietetic condiments** sweetened with sorbitol and sucralose. Varieties include Red Pepper Jelly in Original, Spicy Bombay, Mega Garlic and Thai Basil; and Dietetic Sweet Mustard in Original, Cranberry, Spiced Walnut, Mega Garlic and Curry.
- Thamesville, Ont.-based **Sunshine Farms** showcased its **Certified**



Organic Pickles and Preserves. Crunchy flavours include Organic Asparagus, Organic Baby Dills and Organic Pickled Beets.

- Windsor, Ont.-based **Island Cuisine** featured its line of frozen **Caribbean Meals** made with all-natural herbs and spices and containing no preservatives, additives or MSG. The meals are available in Curry Chicken, Jerk Chicken, Curry Goat, Oxtail Stew and Curry Shrimp.
- Toronto-based **Pure Fun** launched its **Organic Candy Canes** just in time for the holiday season. The candy canes are free of synthetic flavours and are gluten-free, vegan and kosher.
- Orillia, Ont.-based **Everything Maple** promoted its award-winning **gourmet maple sauces, dressings and blends**. Show favourites included Maple Barbeque Sauce, Maple Balsamic Reduction, Maple Roasted & Parmesan and Hot Maple Mustard.



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SUPPLIER'S UPDATE

Exton, Pa.-based **Gamajet Cleaning Systems, Inc.** has named the **John Brooks Company, LTD** as its exclusive Canadian distributor. John Brooks Co. will handle the sales and repairs for Gamajet's full line of rotary impingement tank cleaning machines and systems. • The **Industrial Accident Prevention Association** has launched a machine safety course, **Interlocking-Devices: Selection and Use**, in an effort to reduce machinery-related accidents in the workplace. • Netherlands-based **VION N.V.** has entered a joint venture with Brazil's **Rebière**, a leading gelatine producer. VION company **Rousselot** will acquire a majority share in the company. • Columbus, Ohio-based **Grote Company** has acquired U.K.-based **Advanced Food Technology Ltd.** The acquisition will enable Grote to offer a complete automated sandwich production solution from one reliable source. • New Zealand-based **The Rank Group** has purchased **SIG Combibloc**, **Evergreen Packaging** and **Blue Ridge Paper Products**. The latter two companies, under the name **Evergreen Packaging Inc.**, will combine resources with SIG Combibloc to offer food and beverage manufacturers an integrated source for fresh and aseptic packaging. • Belleville, Ont.-based **Bioniche Life Sciences Inc.** received the Animal Pharm industry excellence award for its vaccine against *E. coli* 0157:H7 at the Animal Pharm Awards in London, England in September. • **ORAFI Active Food Ingredients'** new large-scale production facility in Chile is now operational. The facility supplies prebiotics, in both powdered and liquid form, to the North American and South American markets. • Bridgewater, N.J.-based **National Starch Food Innovation** announced that it has broken ground on its multimillion-dollar **Texture Center of Excellence**, scheduled to open in 2008. The Center, located in Bridgewater, will help accel-

ate innovation and new product development. • Germany-based **Südzucker AG** has announced the creation of a new functional food group, **BENEO**, combining the strengths of food ingredient companies **Orafti**, **Palatinit** and **Remy**. The three units will be known individually as **BENEO-Orafti**, **BENEO-Remy** and **BENEO-Palatinit**. **BENEO-Orafti** launched an upgraded version of its **Orafti Highly Soluble Inulin** product at the recent **Food Ingredients Europe** show in London, England, called **Orafti HSI Ultra**. The product has the same benefits as **Orafti HSI** but with less small sugars. • Chicago, Ill.-based **Alcan Packaging Food Americas** was named 2007 Supplier of the Year by the **American Meat Institute** at the **Worldwide Food Expo** in October. • Geneva, Ill.-based **FONA International** has been included in the first-ever *Inc.* magazine list of the fastest-growing private countries in the U.S. Meanwhile, in September the company received certified organic status by **Quality Certification Services**. • Milwaukee, Wis.-based **Rockwell Automation, Inc.** has announced it will acquire Austin, Tex.-based **Pavilion Technologies, Inc.** • **Handtmann** and Netherlands-based **Ruitenbergh Ingredients** have partnered to develop the new **Rudin VegaCasing**. The meat-free casing was introduced for use with **Handtmann's ConPro** system at the recent **Worldwide Food Expo** in Chicago this October. • **Spaltech International**, manufacturers of **Spaltemp Liquid Circulating Temperature Control Systems** and **Vacu-Bin Resin Handling Systems**, has recently moved to a new location in **Halton Hills, Ont.** • **Kalsec** has opened a state-of-the-art customer-focused research centre in **Kalamazoo, Mich.** The **Paul H. Todd Jr. Research Center** is focused on advancing science and technology in the food and nutraceutical ingredient markets.

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PROCESSES AND PACKAGING

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Gerhard Berssenbrügge, CEO, Nestlé Germany

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