



More Reasons to Celebrate

May is always one of my favourite issues of *Food in Canada*. That's because this is the month we present our list of Top 10 Innovators, emerging entrepreneurs and growing companies that are forging forward with creative new food and beverage products. But this month we have yet another reason to celebrate, as we officially mark our 70th anniversary.

It's hard to believe that *Food in Canada* has been an outstanding voice in the food and beverage processing and production industry for seven decades. And of course, a lot has changed for both the industry and the magazine in all that time. Looking back over those early issues has been a fascinating history lesson, reviewing the evolution of our industry as it is mirrored in the magazine's own progression. From 1938, when Canada's economy in general was still largely commodity-based, through the war years, the increasing automation of the agri-food industry, and onto the explosion of consumer goods and advances in food science that followed, the food and beverage industry has always been one of Canada's most significant economic, social and political influences. Those early years of *Food in Canada* were also significant ones for business, when producers began recognizing the potential that research and development, packaging and marketing could have on the burgeoning industry.

While on the surface it appears that many of the issues surrounding food and consumer needs have changed dramatically over the years, others are still all too familiar – consider, for instance, that while food rationing is hardly a problem in today's Canada, the use of food banks nationwide grew 123 per cent between 1989 and 2004, according to the Ontario Association of Food Banks. At the same time, industry issues such as labour, productivity, automation, regulation and recipe development are still ongoing concerns, as is the need to constantly adjust to changing consumer needs and scientific discoveries.

In fact, in comparing some of the products that we wrote about in the 1940s, '50s and '60s, with those of today's Top 10 companies you get some idea of how far the industry has progressed to meet consumer demands and embrace emerging science. It's hard to imagine if those early producers could have conceived of delicious chocolate treats infused with health properties, or non-sticky, single-serve honey drops, or even authentic ethnic meals based on centuries-old recipes. What they would recognize, however, is the passion and the entrepreneurial spirit that inevitably goes into the development of new products, as well as the enthusiasm involved in bringing them to consumers across Canada. Let's hope that's something that will never change.

So from our team to yours, let's celebrate!

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(Back, left to right) Deanna Rosolen, associate editor; Ingrid Eilbracht, publisher; Tristan Cater, account manager; (front, left to right) Carolyn Cooper, editor; Wioletta Wesolowski, art director.