

food in canada

THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN FOOD & BEVERAGE INDUSTRY

Naturally Sweet

SATISFYING
CANADIANS'
SWEET TOOTH
THE NATURAL
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TOP 10 PROFILES

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you need to
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COCOA GETS RESPONSIBLE

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THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN FOOD & BEVERAGE INDUSTRY



PUBLISHER | Jack Meli
(647) 823-2300 jmeli@foodincanada.com



EDITOR | Carolyn Cooper
(416) 442-5600 x3232 CCooper@foodincanada.com



MANAGING EDITOR | Deanna Rosolen
(416) 442-5600 x3234 DRosolen@foodincanada.com



ART DIRECTOR | Melissa Crook
(416) 442-5600 x3260 MCrook@bizinfogroup.ca



ACCOUNT MANAGER | Daniela Piccone
(416) 510-6773 DPiccone@foodincanada.com



PRODUCTION MANAGER | Steve Hofmann
(416) 510-6757 SHofmann@bizinfogroup.ca



CIRCULATION MANAGER | Cindi Holder
(416) 442-5600 x3544 CHolder@bizinfogroup.ca

Editorial Advisory Board: Tim Brown, president & CEO, Nestlé Waters North America; Carol Culhane, president, International Food Focus Ltd.; Gary Fread, president, Fread & Associates Ltd.; Linda Haynes, co-founder, ACE Bakery; Dennis Hicks, president, Pembertons; Larry Martin, Dr. Larry Martin and Associates; Brad McKay, CEO, HFS Food Service; Susan Niczowski, president, Summer Fresh Salads; The Hon. Lyle Vanclief, former Minister of Agriculture; John Placko, culinary consultant.

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BIG Magazines LP

President of Business Information Group | Bruce Creighton
Vice-President of Canadian Publishing | Alex Papanou
Executive Publisher | Tim Dimopoulos
Editorial director | Lisa Wichmann

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Phone: 1-800-668-2374 **Fax:** 416-442-2191
E-mail: jhunter@businessinformationgroup.ca

Mail to: Privacy Officer, 80 Valleybrook Drive, Toronto, ON M3B 2S9

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Rae Lindsay
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EDITORIAL

Tax write-offs



Last month Denmark voted to abolish its decades old sugar tax on soft drinks. The move follows the country’s decision last fall to scrap its one-year-old “fat tax” – the world’s first and so far only tax on foods high in saturated fat – as higher food prices put the bite on domestic sales.

Denmark’s soft drink tax, in place since the 1930s, added approximately \$0.29 to every litre of sweetened beverages. Critics of the tax blamed it for increasing cross-border shopping, the loss of local jobs and a general lack of business competitiveness and economic growth. Its removal, they say, could add up to 5,000 Danish jobs, and a recovery of around \$51.27 million in lost revenues. The tax will be cut in half by this July, and fully removed by January 2014. Another proposed sugar tax was also dropped.

The so-called fat tax, launched in October 2011 in an effort to check consumption of foods containing 2.3 per cent or more of saturated fat, added approximately \$2.83 per kg of saturated fat to the price of products such as meat, dairy and processed foods. Rather than encouraging healthier eating, as it was intended, the taxes together drove up food costs while harming local businesses.

Why then are several U.S. states and cities still considering similar taxes aimed at “bad” foods? The concept of a fat or junk food tax has been kicked around in the U.S. for several decades, with many states already maintaining a sales tax on soft drinks. While the American medical industry supports the concept, there is still much controversy surrounding these punitive taxes, and studies are not definitive in showing that they actually curb unhealthy eating habits in the long run.

There will always be a market for products deemed detrimental to your health. But as the Danish example shows, making it harder for consumers to purchase them only results in shoppers looking to other markets to spend their money. The answer to the health and obesity crisis facing the western world hinges on much more than price sensitivity. Ultimately, education, and a commitment by the industry to drop unhealthy ingredients and increase its offering of better-for-you foods, will go much further in changing consumer behaviour than simply restricting choice. ●

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Ultima(te) goodness

Ultima Foods has launched a program that supports community kitchens in Canada. Called “iögo, supporting goodness,” the goal of the program is to help people discover or become more familiar with the essential role community kitchens play across the country. Through the program, Ultima Foods will contribute financially, donate iögo products, deploy a visibility campaign, sell an iögo cookbook with a share of the proceeds going toward community kitchens, and implement a corporate volunteer program.



News > file



Le grand fromage

The Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) has announced the winners of the 8th Canadian Cheese Grand Prix awards. And for the first time ever an Ontario-made fresh cheese, Quality Cheese Ricotta, was declared the Grand Champion.

The biennial event is sponsored and hosted by DFC, and celebrates the “high quality, versatility and great taste of Canadian cheese made from 100% Canadian milk.”

A jury of food industry experts selected the ricotta from among 19

other category winners. In total, 225 different cheeses from producers across the country were entered in this year’s competition. Also this year there were two new categories introduced, Gouda and Fresh Cheese with Grilling Properties. Cheeses were judged on appearance, flavour, colour, salt content, texture and body.

Quality Cheese Inc., based in Woodbridge, Ont., manufactures, distributes and retails Italian specialty cheeses. The jury recognized the company’s Ricotta for its creamy texture and milky aroma.

SIAL showcases the world

SIAL Canada and SET Canada took place in Toronto from April 30 to May 2. As well as showcasing a wide variety of new products from Canada and around the world, the show featured a number of events, including the Coffee Cup by SIAL international coffee contest, and the Olive d’Or olive oil competition.

Coffee Cup by SIAL winners:

- **Single Origin Category** - Ethiopia SIDAMA Espresso, Guillaume Kitzel Ouimet, Gold Bean winner; Café Emilia Supremo, C.I. South Commerce Groupe S.A., Silver Bean winner; Café Honduras, Trading Corporation, Bronze Bean winner.



- **Blend Category** – L’ESPRESSO, Barocco Coffee Company, Gold Bean winner; APPIAN, Barocco Coffee Company, Silver Bean winner.
- **Certified Category** – Organic Kona Forest Estate, Mountain Thunder Coffee, “Favourite” prize winner.



Olive d’Or winners:

- **Light category** – Deprado of Portugal, Gold Drop winner; El Empiedro, SCA, Olivarera La Purisima of Spain, Silver Drop winner; Ol Istria Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Agrolaguna D.D. of Croatia, Bronze Drop winner.
- **Medium category** – IGP Toscano, Frantoio Franci of Italy, Gold Drop winner; Senorio de Vizcanta, Aceites Vizcanta S.L. of Spain, Silver Drop winner; Oro Bailen Reserva Familiar, Galgon 99 S.L. of Spain, Bronze Drop winner.
- **Intense category** – Venta Del Baron, Almazara de Muela S.L. of Spain, Gold Drop winner; Parqueoliva Serie Oro, Almazaras de la Subbetica of Spain, Silver Drop winner; Rincon de la Subbetica Alamoda, Almazaras de La Subbetica of Spain, Bronze Drop winner.

FOOD ALLERGEN STUDY

The University of Manchester in the U.K. has launched an international study into food allergies. The three-year project, called Integrated Approaches to Food Allergen and Allergy Risk Management, aims to establish a standardized approach to allergen management for food processing companies. It also aims to develop tools to inform new health advice to prevent the development of food allergies.

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IN BRIEF

- **Leclerc Group** and **Louis Garneau Sports**, both of Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que., have joined forces to launch an energy bar called **LG1**, the first of a line of sports nutrition products. The new recovery bar is caramel and peanut flavoured with 12 g of protein. Both companies had a hand in developing the bar.
- P.E.I.-based **Island Abbey Foods Ltd.** has launched a new line of Honibe Honey Lozenges made with pure dried honey from Quebec. The company will source the honey in Quebec and sell the products in the province.
- **Happy Planet** has unveiled a new look to its lemonade and smoothie product lines. The company says the new logo and design have a fresh, fun and happier look.

The rebranding was first launched on its soups.


- Concord, Ont.-based **Neal Brothers Foods** is celebrating its 25th anniversary. While the brothers started their company by making croutons in their mom's kitchen, the business today produces cheese snacks, salsas, dressings, sauces, popcorn, tortillas and pretzels, and distributes other brands.
- Kitchener, Ont.-based **Brick Brewing Co. Limited** has launched a sponsorship between its Seagram brand and the Hamilton Tiger Cats football team. The sponsorship grants Seagram exclusive pouring rights in the spirit-based cooler category at all concession stands, private boxes and suites where alcohol is sold throughout the stadium. The partnership also provides Seagram with in-stadium signage during each Ticats preseason, regular season and playoff home games.

- **Pillitteri Estates Winery** has won the Ontario Food Exporter Award, which recognizes the winery's role in Ontario's agri-food industry and economy.



(Left to right) Ontario premier Kathleen Wynne congratulates Charlie Pillitteri, CEO of Pillitteri Estates Winery, on the winery's award.

- **Manitoba Agri-Health Research Network, Inc. (MAHRN)**, a developer



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of functional agri-ingredients, and Minnesota-based **TruHealthMD**, a developer of food-based solutions for chronic disease, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to more rapidly advance the development and commercialization of condition-specific food and nutrition therapies.

- **Waterloo Brewing Co.**, a division of Brick Brewing Co. Limited, was recognized by the Monde Selection, the International Institute for Quality Selections based in Belgium. Monde Selection is an internationally acknowledged standard for product excellence. The company was awarded the honour for its Waterloo Dark, IPA and Amber beers.
- **Corby Distilleries Limited** now has exclusive rights to represent **The Wine Group LLC** brands in Canada for the next five years. The Wine Group's brands

include Cupcake Vineyards, Big House Wine Co., Cocobon, Concannon Vineyard, Grayfox Vineyards and Mogen David Wine Co. In other news, the company was again recognized as One of the Best Workplaces in Canada by the *Globe and Mail*.

- **Metro Ontario Inc.** received a Vision Award at the Foodland Ontario Retailer Awards, an annual ceremony celebrating grocery retailers' ongoing commitment and efforts to promote Ontario-grown produce.
- **The Coca-Cola Foundation**, the philanthropic arm of The Coca-Cola Company, has awarded \$150,000 in grants for two Canadian organizations to support community nutrition literacy and active living programs, and to help combat obesity. The Canadian Institute of Child Health will receive a \$100,000 grant, and Diabetes Québec will receive \$50,000.

REDUCING PACKAGING WASTE

Schneiders Lunchmate has partnered with TerraCycle Canada to reduce packaging waste through the Schneiders Lunchmate Brigade, a free recycling fundraiser that encourages families and organizations to collect and return used Lunchmate kits. The used kits can then be turned into new and innovative products.

There is no cost to consumers to belong – they simply sign up at www.terracycle.ca. Participants can fill up any box with used Lunchmate kits and once enough waste is collected they log into their account, print a free prepaid UPS shipping label and return their box at no cost. TerraCycle will total the amount collected and twice a year send the earned donations to the participants' school or charity of their choice.



PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



Sitka

- Pump Solutions Group has named **Russell Sitka** its new director of Business Development, Americas; and appointed **Doug Cumpston** its new director of Global Segment Marketing (Energy).
- Brick Brewing Co. Limited has appointed **Sean Byrne** as CFO.
- **Richard Phillips** has been appointed the new president of the Canada Grains Council.



Cumpston

- **Dave Johnson** has joined Arctic Glacier Holdings Inc. as vice-president, Sales.
- **Wei Tang** has joined Novel Ingredient Services as director, Technical Services. Novel Ingredient Services supplies botanical and nutraceutical raw materials.
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has a new associate deputy minister. **Timothy Sargent** will take on the role and replaces **Claude Carrière**, who has retired.

George Brown College celebrates a year of FIRSt

This month Southern Ontario's newest research and technology centre is celebrating one year of success.

The Food Innovation & Research Studio (FIRSt) at George Brown College's Centre for Hospitality & Culinary Arts in Toronto is recognizing a full year of helping burgeoning food entrepreneurs commercialize their food and beverage products. The studio allows local food businesses, restaurateurs and producers in the emerging healthcare nutrition market access to skilled industry professionals, facilities and equipment, networking opportunities and research funding.

Last March the studio became one of four Canadian community colleges

to obtain \$1.75 million in funding over five years through the Technology Access Centre Grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). According to Winnie Chiu, director of Food Innovation and Research for the Centre for Hospitality & Culinary Arts, the grant has allowed the studio to offer a more extensive list of services to local businesses. They range from recipe testing, concept ideation, sensory evaluation and product testing, to competitive market segment analysis, ingredient labelling and ensuring compliance with government regulations.

Chiu says the studio also focuses on promoting innovation in the local region, with an emphasis on better-for-you products. There are currently 10



Students working in the Food Innovation & Research Studio gain real-life product development experience.

food and beverage clients at different stages of product development working with FIRSt. They include Mill Pond Cannery & Preserves, producers of 100-per-cent Ontario fruit butters, energy bar manufacturer Square Snacks Inc., and Your Fitness Dish, makers of the QuinWow Beverage line of quinoa-based drinks. *pg.14* ➔



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While the studio employs full-time food scientists, a culinary technician, and business development professionals, Chiu says it also offers an opportunity for culinary students to work on product R&D. “We always try to do real-life projects with our students. Our students are incredibly creative, and our industry partners are interested in their talent. We are also teaching the next generation of entrepreneurs.”



Stephanie Lariviere, winner of the Mary FitzGerald Award, with Les Mallard of Chiquita.



Jane Proctor, winner of the Canadian Produce Person of the Year Award, with Shannon Shuran.



Adrian Huisman (right), winner of the 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award, with Michael Ecker.

CPMA celebrates people in produce

The Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) held its 88th Annual Convention and Trade Show in Toronto in April.

As part of its convention program, the CPMA also gave out awards to

industry leaders for their commitment to the produce industry in Canada. The Fresh Health Award went to Hugh Bowman, CEO and owner of Bayshore Vegetable Shippers Ltd., and Joni Bowman from Learning Tree Canada.

Each year Chiquita presents the Mary FitzGerald Award to a Canadian member of the produce industry who

is under 40, and this year it went to Stephanie Lariviere from Erie James Ltd. The CPMA’s 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award went to Adrian Huisman of Vineland Growers Co-operative. Jane Proctor, vice-president of Policy and Issue Management at the CPMA, received the Canadian Produce Person of the Year Award.



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SUPPLIER NEWS

> **EnWave Corporation** of Vancouver has signed a royalty-bearing commercial license and Equipment Service Agreement with a major North American enzyme producer. EnWave will supply two commercial powderREV machines for the production of several dehydrated enzymes used in food-related applications.

> The Standards Council of Canada has accredited Saint-Hyacinthe, Que.-based **Biovet's** microbiology and PCR agri-food laboratory. The lab now conforms to the requirements of CAN-P-1587, CAN-P-4E (ISO/IEC 17025:2005). This certification mainly deals with microbiological food testing, in particular the detection of *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella spp.*, and *E. coli* O157 H7 (BAX methods).

> Michigan-based **Kalsec** has expanded its manufacturing capabilities with a new finishing centre for its natural spice, herb and vegetable extracts.

> **Dealers Ingredients Inc.** of Brampton, Ont. is now distributing the Suprasel OneGrain sodium reduction solution and Loso OneGrain salt replacer in Canada. Both ingredients are from The Netherlands-based Akzo Nobel company. Suprasel OneGrain is a one-to-one salt replacer that has many of the same properties as regular salt. Loso OneGrain is offered as a 30-per-cent and 50-per-cent replacer for salt and can be used in any application.

> The **Edison Awards** recently recognized two of 3M's recent technologies. The **3M LED Advanced Light** received a Gold Edison Award in the Lighting category and the **3M Molecular Detection System** earned a Silver Edison Award within the Diagnostic/Analytic Systems category.

> **Cascades Antibacterial paper towel** received a Gold Edison Award in the Edison Awards Consumer Packaged Goods: Cleaning Solutions category.

> **FMC Corporation** has acquired

the pectin-related intellectual property developed by **Vigido AG**, a subsidiary of UniPektin Ingredients AG and the former exclusive marketer of the pectin products of Pectine Italia S.p.A., a company whose pectin business FMC acquired last year.

> **DuPont Nutrition & Health** is expand-

ing its microcrystalline cellulose (MCC) offering through an extended agreement with Taiwan-based **Mingtai**, one of the world's leading manufacturers of MCC. The agreement includes development, production, distribution, marketing and sale of the hydrocolloid to the global food industries.

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Market Outlook

Uncertainties seem to be the rule again. The bombing in Boston, extended winter affecting grains and energy,

explosion at a fertilizer plant, now apparently a plot to blow up railroad tracks. All of this is exacerbated by a U.S. Congress that would rather play politics than make good policy. So, let's try to work through the miasma and focus on some basics.

First, South America has a big crop of corn and soybeans. That will eventually refill the pipeline, even though Brazil's infrastructure is quite inadequate — it will spread sales out over a longer period. Second, there is a latent large grain crop in the U.S., despite the wet, cold spring. History shows that cold wet springs usually give rise to normal crops. The market seems to be aware of that so far. Finally, export demand is, at least to date, quite insipid. This may reflect the equally insipid world economy, aided and abetted by the poor policy and uncertainties mentioned above.

Some of the grain contracts are sitting on long-term support. Others, especially new crop contracts, have already broken through. Unless something changes, we see the grain markets holding at lows at best, or continuing to work their way down.

As implied in the crude oil comments above, there is at least technical evidence that oil is nearing its low around \$87.50. If this level doesn't hold, then the next major support plane is all the way down at \$81.77. Barring some major political event, we expect the Canadian dollar to follow oil. ●

— By Larry Martin

Market Trends is prepared by Dr. Larry Martin, who offers a course on managing risk with futures and options, Canadian Food and Agri-business Management Excellence (CFAME), a management training course for food industry personnel. Contact him at larry@agrifoodtraining.com or at (519) 841-1698.

Market Highlights

Just as grain futures appeared to be settling down to reflect what was really going on in the markets, the USDA dropped a bomb that took 15 per cent off the price of corn in two days. So far, no major market analyst can explain the huge increase in USDA inventory forecasts for corn, and there is major skepticism about the magnitude of their forecasts of South American production. General concerns about the economy and the bombing in Boston hit oil prices and the Canadian dollar. The operative term for markets is turbulence.

- » **Grains and Soybean oil** – Corn prices were hit hardest because the USDA's corn inventory numbers were most offside. The other grains went to major support on old crop, but failed to go through. November soybeans, however, are making new lows since last spring. In addition to the USDA report, markets are concerned about cold and rain holding up planting progress, while the cold in the western prairies continues to harm an already stressed winter wheat crop.
- » **Corn** – July futures dropped from \$7.17 to \$6.19 after the USDA report. Since then, July moved sideways in a narrow band between \$6.16 and \$6.47. The supply numbers are made more dramatic by a decline in export sales. Bullish factors, on the other hand, are late planting in the U.S. and major improvement in ethanol economics. With the USDA's confusion, it's hard to know what buyers should do. At most we would hold Calls around \$6.50 on July and \$5.60 on December.
- » **Soy oil** – The USDA's bearish numbers are even affecting soy oil. After trading in a range between \$0.483 and \$0.532 since last September, the August contract is strongly testing the lows as this is written. If support holds at the current level, we continue to suggest that buyers buy the bottom and cover against the top. If the market breaks to the downside, then we need to find a new level of support: this is a major support plane.
- » **Wheat** – December Chicago wheat futures dropped below the long-term support of \$6.99, set last May before rallying back to the \$7.20 to \$7.30 area. Though there is powerful support in around \$7, this market is looking for direction. We would buy just above \$7, using stops just below and/or cover above \$7.60.
- » **Sugar** – Sugar joined the grain markets in trending downward. Continued strong supply in several major countries is feeding the downtrend. The July contract broke through \$0.175 for the first time and remains under \$0.18. This is the lowest it has traded since November of 2010. The chart does look like it could be making a bottom in this area. We would continue to buy hand to mouth but protect against the \$0.19 area.
- » **Natural gas** – The natural gas market has finally done a turnaround after three-and-a-half years of trending downward. Extra demand from the extended cold weather into April is the immediate reason for the turn. More fundamentally, considerable research into new uses is putting a larger floor under demand and will continue to do so. Arguments are being made in the U.S. that products made from natural gas burn much cleaner than coal. The U.S. has a huge supply and is expected to be a net exporter in coming years. July futures broke resistance and rose to \$0.045. We have suggested for two months that buyers should price ahead. If you did it with futures, we would hold to \$0.05, but protect above it.
- » **Crude Oil** – Crude oil futures were hit hard by the Boston bombing and ensuing concerns about the economy. June dropped from \$94 to \$88, but couldn't close below support. This looks like a good place to put in buy orders barring another jolt to the economy.
- » **Canadian dollar** – The loonie rallied to \$0.99 until oil prices declined, and the loonie followed. Currently trading at \$0.9736, it remains a penny above support. We have suggested that buyers short the loonie. We would hold that position and take profit just above support or on two closes above \$0.99.



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More Junk Science? The anti-BPA crusade is back

By: Ronald Doering

The 25-year controversy involving BPA in food packaging won't go away. It continues to hang ominously like a black cloud over the food industry.

Bisphenol A, more commonly known as BPA, is a chemical used primarily in the production of polycarbonate plastic and epoxy resins. The polycarbonate is used in food contact materials such as food containers and processing equipment. Epoxy resins are used in protective linings for a variety of canned foods and beverages, including infant formula.

Over the years Health Canada (HC) conducted periodic reviews of BPA to determine whether dietary exposure to it could pose a health risk to consumers. Based on the overall weight of evidence, including reaffirmation by other international regulatory agencies (notably the U.S., Europe and Japan), HC's Food Directorate has concluded again unequivocally that the current dietary exposure to BPA through food packaging uses is not expected to pose a health risk to the general population, including newborns and infants. In response to growing consumer concern,

HC hosted a huge expert meeting in November 2010 in collaboration with several national regulatory authorities and international bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to review the current science. The clear conclusion of this expert meeting confirmed that BPA was safe for food packaging. Moreover, HC has continued to do a number of studies, reports and surveys, all of which are posted on-line. HC has made a real effort to make the science available to the lay public and to try to interpret it in ways that the ordinary consumer can understand. HC's study of BPA levels in canned drinks, for example, notes that a person would have to consume 940 canned drinks in one day to reach the tolerable daily intake.

Still, the issue is raging back in the media and the blogosphere. This latest anti-BPA crusade seems to have arisen from the recent media re-discovery of BPA alarmist Dr. Frederick Vom Saal who has made it clear that in his opinion "there is no scientific argument... there is overwhelming evidence of harm." France's recent decision to ban the manufacture, import, export and marketing of all food containers containing BPA (effective in 2015) has added some scientific "credibility" to the anti-BPA movement.

The controversy among scientists has often been personal and bitter. Even highly respected Professor Richard Sharpe of the UK's Medical Research Council was so angered by the bad science of the critics of PBA that he wrote an essay in 2009 in which he documented their consistent violation of the "fundamental principles of scientific inquiry." Sharpe argued that the "scientific mess" around PBA was caused by "supposedly fellow scientists" who "literally play loose with the



scientific evidence." Not to be outdone, Vom Saal insists that all the scientific studies that have found BPA safe cannot be trusted because of an industry-funded conspiracy in the United States. For scientists, that's serious name-calling.

Even if there is little health risk, governments are forced to waste scarce resources to respond to the perception of risk. According to Professor Sharpe "repetitive work on bisphenol A has sucked in tens, probably hundreds, of millions of dollars from government bodies and industry which...looks increasingly like an investment with a nil return." My colleague at Carleton University's Food Science and Nutrition Program, internationally recognized professor of chemistry David Miller, shares this concern: "The unsaid danger here is how much money and effort is being put on BPA instead of things that might have a larger health impact."

The continuing BPA controversy highlights another important issue—the problems that scientific uncertainty pose for government regulators. Professor Sharpe thinks that the basic problem is that "politicians — people in decision-making positions — don't understand uncertainty." Maybe. In my experience, it is just as problematic that most scientists don't understand the regulatory system. Integrating science-based risk assessment and policy-based risk management is diabolical in its complexity, yet one of the most important public policy challenges of our time. ●

Ronald L. Doering, BA, LL.B., MA, LL.D., is a past president of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. He is Counsel in the Ottawa offices of Gowlings. Contact him at Ronald.doering@gowlings.com

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Compound coating, with its ease of use and versatility, can replace chocolate in confectionery, bakery, and ice cream novelty applications. Its potential hues are as numerous as holidays on the calendar.

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Gummies / jellies

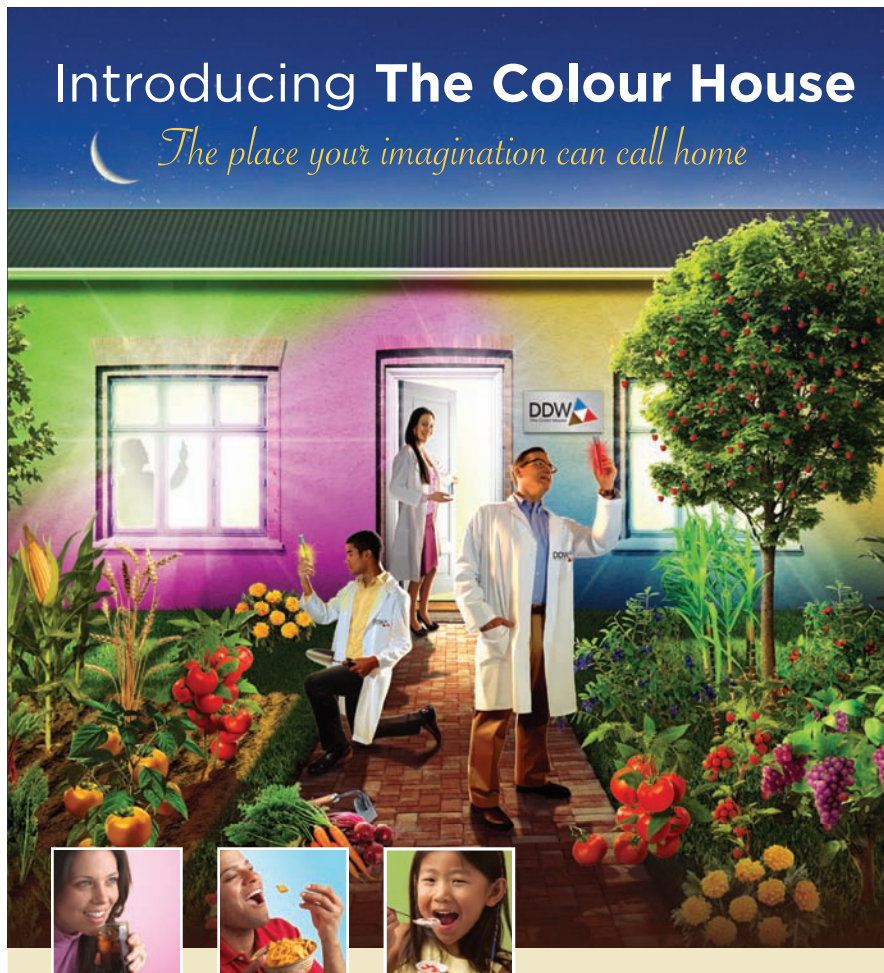
Gummy and jelly candies are largely synonyms. Manufacturers dissolve sugar(s) in water and concentrate the solution by heating. Additional ingredients include starch, pectin, or gelatin.

Traditionally a children's snack, the category now includes vitamin supplements and ingredients like juice favored by adult consumers. According to Innova Market Research, recent launches include pomegranate, white tea coloured with purple/black carrot, and lemon ginger enhanced with turmeric.

The most common natural colourings include carmine for red, turmeric for yellow, and anthocyanins for red hues. Acidity factors into natural colouring selection because anthocyanins move from red to purple hue as pH increases. Anthocyanins are quite stable in acidic gummies unless Vitamin C is present, in which case a carotenoid, — such as beta-carotene, paprika and annatto — offers better stability.

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The “natural context” of food

By Gary Gnirss

Recently, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) visited a small burger establishment. But it wasn't for lunch. It was to take issue with claims made that the beef was “all natural” and “hormone free.” The latter claims are not explicitly regulated, but are subject to the CFIA's interpretation of what could be misleading. The agency's thinking on such matters is expressed in their guidelines related to Natural, Naturally raised, Feed, Antibiotic and Hormone Claims.

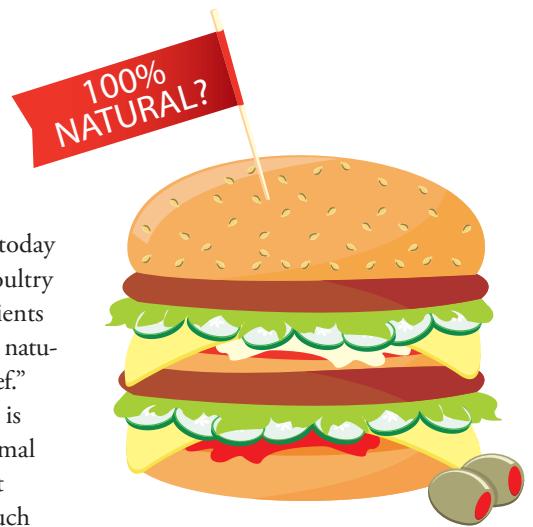
The CFIA was for the most part concerned with the context of the claims. As with most claims, the context is an important factor in evaluating whether it is or is not misleading. However, sometimes that context is not so easy to fully appreciate. For example, a potato that conforms to the CFIA's “natural” guidelines as expressed in the *Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising*, can be so claimed. Meat, poultry and fish cannot. In those cases, the agency extends the interpretation of “natural” to include production methods. Since beef is raised and thus influenced by humans it somehow is no longer “natural,” whereas wild turkey — not the bourbon kind — and wild caught

fish could be “natural.” On labels today the proper context of meat and poultry that are made with natural ingredients would be something like “beef with natural ingredients” and not “natural beef.”

A claim such as “hormone free” is objected to by the CFIA since animal products contain hormones, albeit naturally. The proper context of such a claim would be “raised without hormones” where this is the case. If hormones are not permitted to be used, such as is the case with poultry, then the context of the claim would have to express that fact in order to avoid the pitfall of a “false uniqueness.”

Other commonly seen claims relate to raising animals without antibiotics, vaccines or animal by-products. Grain-fed or free-range claims are also popular. When such claims are made the CFIA expects the producer to be able to substantiate them. This often involves establishing protocols that are independently verified and auditable. Claims related to organic meat and poultry have an advantage in that rules are defined in national standards. Even in this case, the application of the CFIA's strict context considerations could mean that a free-range claim for poultry would be best if expressed as relating to all organic products, since all organic poultry must be free range. While the original intention of the claim might be well meaning, context is important.

The advantage of clear guidelines for “natural method of production” claims is that everyone would benefit if producers were to take greater stewardship of their agricultural practices. A producer, for example, may elect to vaccinate poultry, but in all other respects follow organic agricultural principals. That poultry product obviously could not be represented as “organic,” but for the producer and the consumer it



would be an advantage to differentiate that product from others based on other applicable production methods.

It's important that the CFIA provides consistent and predictable guidelines on such matters. The agency is currently finalizing its update to natural production type claims, and we should see these guidelines soon. As already discussed, the context of claims plays an important role in what might be considered misleading. That context would be best if looked at from the colloquial perspective of consumers, as opposed to the arbitrariness of absolute context. In that way organic poultry can simply be called free range. Eggs can then also be represented as free range as opposed to “from free range chickens.”

Beyond having clearer rules on context, there is also a need for better defined criteria of such types of claims, including what constitutes minimally processed and even what free range might mean in view of various animal husbandry practices. Some of this can itself be very controversial. But while the development of perfect guidelines on such claims might be a bit idealistic, we are at a time where natural production claims need some attention in order to enhance their contemporary meaningfulness and predictability. ●

Gary Gnirss is a partner and president of Legal Suites Inc., specializing in regulatory software and services. Contact him at president@legalsuites.com



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IFS PACsecure goes global

By Larry Dworkin

The global demand for food safety from consumers, governments and food retailers has put unprecedented scrutiny on the international food supply chain. As packaging is a key component, the IFS PACsecure food safety standard for individual packaging materials is being rolled out globally as companies from Canada, the U.S., Brazil, Chile and Europe are being trained and audited to its criteria. The standard is also expected to receive recognition from the Paris-based Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) by the end of spring.

Developed by PAC — The Packaging Association, in conjunction with IFS Management GmbH, more than 70 Canadian and U.S. firms recently completed a one-day training course to help them to become compliant with the standard. Several have already been audited to its requirements and their names are being submitted to the GFSI as part of the benchmarking process.

More than 13,000 certifications

One-day training courses for packaging plant managers and quality and assurance personnel were held recently in Vancouver, Montreal and St. Paul,

Minn. More are being planned for later this year in the U.S., Europe, Brazil and Chile.

For its part, IFS is one of the world's largest safety and quality standards organizations, with more than 13,000 certifications for its GFSI-recognized food safety standard. In addition to packaging, it manages standards governing logistics, brokers, cash and carry/wholesale, household and personal care goods.

IFS PACsecure was developed by PAC through a 100-plus member steering committee comprising some of North America's leading global packaging and food manufacturers. Its aim is to provide packaging firms with the ability to certify primary and secondary packaging materials for the food industry.

One size does not fit all when it comes to implementing a food safety standard.

Identifying Risks

Over the past decade, PAC has developed the food safety standard based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) criteria for individual packaging materials directly related to the 24 common manufacturing processes required for flexible plastics, rigid plastics, paper, metals and glass packaging. This involved developing individual workbooks for each of the processes. In effect, it takes the standard “down from the 60,000-ft. level to the shop floor,” allowing individual firms to use a science and risk-based approach in developing their individual HACCP programs.

The standard is being managed by a joint effort of PAC through its technical expertise and know-how in the packaging industry, and IFS through its global

network of food safety and quality standards infrastructure.

One size does not fit all

Because of the many different processes involved in packaging manufacturing, one size does not fit all when it comes to implementing a food safety standard for the different materials. That's why PAC developed the 24 individual workbooks so each firm can follow the HACCP processes based on the plant schematic that relates directly to their manufacturing operation.

In support of the standard, PAC has also developed a number of related tools and services. These include:

- Providing a hazard analysis implementation tool outlining the physical, chemical and biological implications of almost every material, chemical and process used in the manufacture of packaging materials. Work has been completed on paper and flexible plastics packaging.
- Providing a good manufacturing practices audit tool that identifies acceptable limits, monitoring procedures, deviation procedures, verification procedures and records for the above mentioned materials, chemicals, processes and, shortly, allergens. Work is completed on paper and flexible plastics packaging.
- Seminars to better understand issues such as the composition and implications of materials, inks, dyes and adhesives involved in packaging.
- Providing both an online training tool about food safety in packaging plants for employees, as well as a “how to” guideline covering recall and traceability issues. ●

Larry Dworkin is director, Government Relations, for PAC — The Packaging Association. For more information visit www.pac.ca



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Turn up the heat on pathogens

By Ron Wasik

We cook our food for two reasons, to make it more edible and to make it safer to eat because we know that enough heat will kill most, if not all, of the micro-organisms in the food. So, if cooking makes our food safer, why not cook food processing equipment to get rid of the bugs deep inside the inner workings where conventional sanitizers simply can't reach?

Anyone that has ever had to clean up a food processing line implicated in a recall because of a pathogen in a fully cooked product will tell you that there is as much good luck as good science behind finding and then eliminating a bug. It was during such an event several years ago that I contacted a large processor in the U.S. to find out what methods they had tried and which had worked. To my surprise, they told me that in extreme cases they cooked every piece of equipment. To do this they first stripped out the motors and sensitive electronics, broke the equipment down and then cooked it in one of their large ovens normally used for smoking meats. Yes, they had ruined some expensive equipment and, yes, tearing equipment apart and reassembling

it was problematic, but it had worked for them. This approach reminded me of Russia's desperate scorched-earth strategy to deal with the invading German army during WWII. Thankfully, I didn't have to go to that extreme, and I never heard of anyone else doing that since then, until very recently.

Fast forward to the International Production and Processing Exposition in Atlanta, Ga., this January, where I heard Steve Tsuyuki, senior director of Food Safety and Quality Assurance at Maple Leaf Consumer Foods, talk about what his company calls "heat intervention" (HI).

Heat Intervention Options

1. Oven cooking: Equipment is moved off the line and into large smoke house chambers or ovens where it is heated to at least 74°C (165°F) for at least 30 minutes. There are some drawbacks to this technique:

- Moving the equipment off line.
- Large pieces need to be broken down to fit into the available oven.
- Sensitive components have to be removed to avoid being heat damaged.
- Transporting the equipment off site if a large oven is not available onsite increases the risk of damage and re-contamination.
- Reassembly is required.
- Extended downtime.

2. Steaming in-place: Equipment is covered in a plastic vapor barrier shroud and then steam-heated to at least 74°C (165°F) for at least 30 minutes. Steaming in-place, or "tent steaming" as Maple Leaf calls it, has some advantages over oven cooking:

- Equipment is treated in-place.
- Individual pieces can either be treated independently or two or more pieces can be steamed together. The number of pieces one can do at once depends on the ability to build a



secure envelope around the equipment and to provide enough steam to maintain the target temperature for 30 minutes within the enveloped area.

- Some sensitive components can be left in place. Proximity sensors should be removed. Maple Leaf has found that some heat-sensitive components can be safeguarded by covering them with a vapor barrier and then blowing compressed air at 10 psi over them during the steaming process.
- Relative to the cost of an oven, the materials needed to steam in-place are inexpensive and readily available. The suggested list includes a steam source with a flexible hose, a pipe (manifold) to disperse the steam, compressed air and tubing for cooling sensitive components left on equipment, temperature probes to track equipment temperatures, polyethylene vapor barrier roll stock, shrink wrap film, vapor barrier tape, scissors and tie wraps.
- The vapor barrier envelope is itself sterilized, minimizing the risk of recontamination during its removal.
- Significantly less reassembly is required.
- Down time is minimized if is done as part of routine deep cleaning.

HI is not a silver bullet. It is, in fact, a blunt instrument. Before implementing HI, conduct a safety risk assessment. And remember, this method must be regarded as another intervention step in your sanitation program, not a replacement for other validated sanitation measures. Keep the heat on pathogens. ●

Ron Wasik, PhD, MBA, is president of RJW Consulting Canada Ltd., www.rjwconsultingcanada.com

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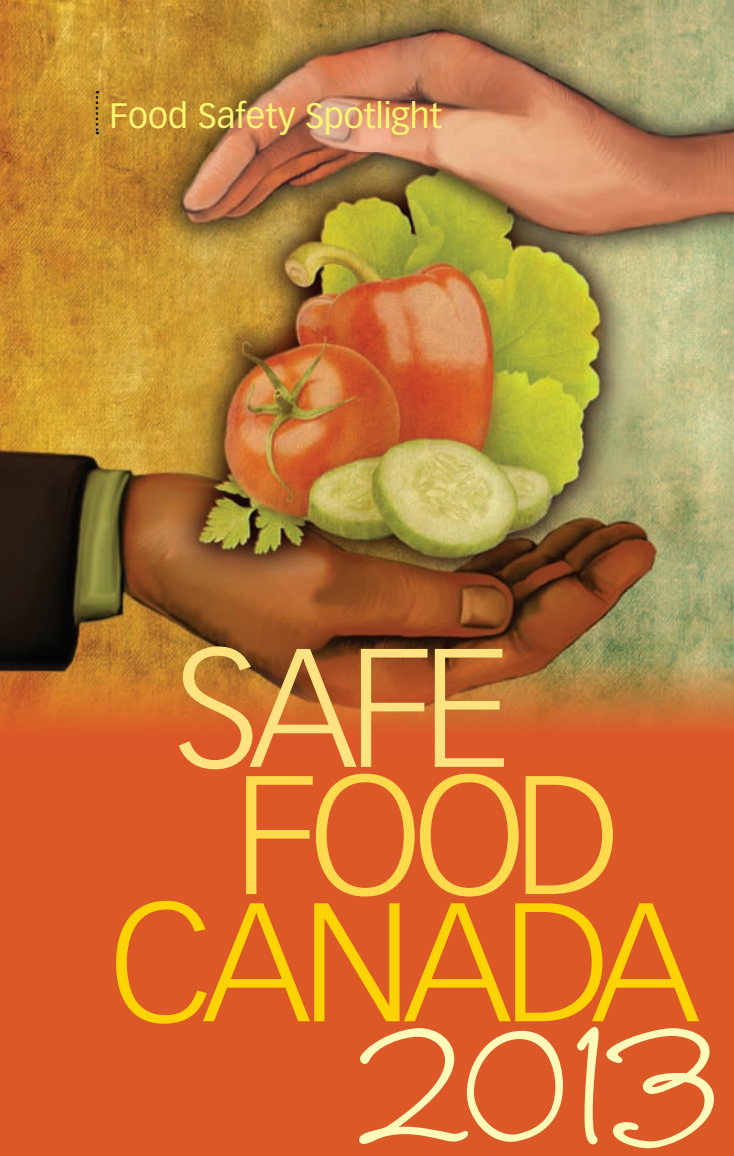
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SAFE FOOD CANADA 2013

NSF International – Guelph Food Technology Centre (NSF – GFTC) held its fourth annual Safe Food Canada symposium in February, drawing close to 200 industry attendees interested in the latest research on safe food handling and production.

This year's event presented a variety of updates on food safety regulations, compliance and auditing, beginning with an important discussion by Stan Hazan, senior director of Scientific & Regulatory Affairs for NSF International, on implementation of the *Food Safety Modernization Act* (FSMA). As well as a comprehensive overview of FSMA, Hazan discussed the Act's reach, coverage and structure, as well as its impact on Canadian food and beverage manufacturers exporting to the U.S. Hazan also touched on the differences between FSMA and the new *Safe Food for Canadians Act*.

Tom Graham, national inspection manager for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), returned this year to update attendees on Canada's changing regulatory environment. Graham spoke about the CFIA's Food Safety Enhancement Program, an approach to encourage the development and implementation of HACCP-based systems in all feder-

ally registered establishments. The Food Safety Enhancement Program manual was updated following the Weatherill Report recommendations, to specify the records-maintenance standards that the CFIA expects food processors to meet. Graham noted too that the agency learned a lot about food safety control during the investigation into the *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreak at XL Foods earlier this year.

Other sessions focusing on auditing included a look at the expansion of the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) by NSF – GFTC president and chief technical officer Frank Schreurs, and an examination of new packaging auditing standards by Karen-Leacock Bingham, project manager, Food Safety & Quality Services for NSF – GFTC. Both speakers noted that certification of suppliers to food and beverage manufacturers, including packaging and equipment suppliers, is increasing, driven by producer requests and competition within the sector. In addition, Schreurs outlined six areas still of special concern for manufacturers when it comes to food safety and compliance: equipment design and construction; segregation of high-risk areas; internal audits; change management of resources and processes; management commitment; and supplier programs.

The idea of implementing a risk-based food safety program was picked up by Cliff Trollope, business resilience practice leader at MNP, who noted that the more producers are doing "proactive preparedness" and program governance, the easier any food safety problems, such as a recall, is to handle. Trollope also cited the importance of including all departments of a food business in the implementation of any food security and recall plans. He reminded producers that any planning must take into account how your business will stay operational during a food safety emergency. "This will all take time, but you only have to build it once," said Trollope, "then continue to test and maintain it."

The day was capped by an intriguing discussion by Ross Roxburgh on leadership from within businesses rather than simply from the top down. Roxburgh, who is executive director of the Niagara Institute, a division of the Conference Board of Canada, emphasized the ability of middle management and staff to drive positive change and influence behaviour within organizations through their own interpersonal relationships. In this way, employees can learn to help develop a company-wide culture of food safety, regardless of the area in which they work.



Karen-Leacock Bingham



Frank Schreurs

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Best practices in the spotlight

This year also marked the launch of NSF – GFTC’s first Food Safety Recognition Awards, presented by Paul Medeiros, director of Consulting Services for NSF – GFTC.

The awards were created to recognize Canadian food and beverage businesses and industry professionals who embody the highest standards of food safety. Based on the evaluations of a jury of industry peers, as well as regulators and educators, two companies and one individual were chosen as winners in three categories. This year’s winners, along with finalists, were:

- *Allied Trades Food Safety Award* – Sani Marc Group of Victoriaville, Que. was recognized for its support of the food and beverage industry through the use of quality and process management systems to deliver product and service excellence. Cambridge, Ont.’s Axiom Millwrighting & Fabrication Inc. was the finalist.

- *Food Safety Excellence Award* – Brampton, Ont.-based Skilcor Foods Inc. won for its demonstration of commitment to stellar results with food safety performance and continuous improvement. Weston Bakeries’ Amherst, N.S. facility was the finalist.

- *Food Safety Leadership* – Marilyn Allen, a consultant with Anaphylaxis Canada, was given the leadership award for her ability to drive food safety excellence and to inspire others through her passion and actions.

A fourth category, Food Safety Outreach, was not awarded this year.



Paul Medeiros presents the first Food Safety Recognition Awards to (top) Skilcor Foods Inc., Sani Marc Group and Marilyn Allen. [pg. 28](#)



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↪ from pg. 27

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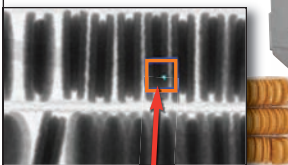
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Birko offers several products that fight *Listeria* in produce operations, including: Ultra Quat, a 10-per-cent active four-way quaternary ammonium compound; Birk-Ox, an EPA-registered 5.6-per-cent active peracetic acid liquid post-rinse sanitizer; Birkoside MP-2, a 15-per-cent active PAA antimicrobial processing aid for direct application to produce; Veggiexide, a food-grade, antimicrobial intervention; Pow-Quat floor cleaner; and Algae Guard Quat Blocks, which help control microbial growth in cooling unit condensate drain pans. There's also Sterilex CW502 powder for use on floors and floor drains. www.birkocorp.com

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Top 10 Company Profiles

Each year *Food in Canada* looks at 10 growing food and beverage businesses and their innovative products, packaging or technology. Here are our picks for 2013, in no particular order.

BY DEANNA ROSOLEN

1 Full of Beans

Bornholm, Ont. www.full-of-beans.ca

Kim and Ben Dietrich are the owners of Full of Beans, a business they launched in 2009.

» Challenges getting started



Kim Dietrich

“We faced many challenges with food regulations and labelling,” says Kim. “But we were dedicated to making this business work to provide the opportunity for me to stay home with our children and provide a healthy, tasty product for our consumers.”

» First product

“We first started selling bean soup mixes from beans grown on our farm and other local farms, and our famous Gluten



Free Brownie Mix,” says Kim. The company started with five products and today has 16.

» Where are your products sold?

Online at www.full-of-beans.ca and www.foodiepages.ca. They're also sold at a variety of stores across Ontario.

» Highlights

Kim won the Woman of the Year Award – Agriculture in 2012, and the company won the Regional Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence in 2011.

» Future plans and Opportunities

The company plans to expand its facility. Kim also says the company is “contemplating building an on-farm store with other local products available.”

» Unique traits

The company's gluten-free baking mixes are made with Whole Romano Bean Flour, which is recognized by the Celiac Association as a substitute for people suffering from celiac disease. This flour is also high in protein and fibre, and is grown in Ontario on the company's farm.

2 Doi Chaang Coffee Company

Vancouver, B.C. www.doichaangcoffee.com

The company is owned by the father-son team of John M. Darch and John A. Darch. It was founded in 2007.

» Challenges getting started

“Great coffee was already coming out of Doi Chang Village (in Northern Thailand) before Canadian Doi Chaang Coffee Company,” says Katharine Sawchuk, Doi Chaang's Media manager. “However, many of the Akha Hill Tribe knew they weren't getting paid what their product was worth. John M.

Darch stepped in and agreed to launch the Doi Chaang Coffee Company in Canada if he could do one thing: gift half the company to the Tribe. He called it ‘Beyond Fair Trade.’”

» First product

Six blends, all in a half pound bag: Dark, Medium, Signature, Peaberry, Espresso and Decaf.

» Where are your products sold?

Retailers across North America, and online at <http://doichaangcoffee.com/products>.

» Highlights

The company created the Doi Chaang Coffee Academy where Doi Chang farmers can aid fellow farmers with cultivation and processing. Doi Chaang has won numerous awards including the Top 10 Small & Medium Sized Enterprises of 2012 at the World Business & Development Awards held during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

» Future plans and opportunities

The company plans to re-brand its bags this fall, launch new coffee blends, introduce its own Doi Chaang K-Cups, and expand in Eastern Canada, as well as into the U.S.

» Unique traits

“We're not just another coffee company,” says Sawchuk. “Because of



(From left to right): Wicha Promyong, president, Doi Chaang Coffee Original Company; Piko Saedoo, founder of the Doi Chaang Coffee Original Company; and John M. Darch, co-founder and chairman, Doi Chaang Coffee Company.



our unique Beyond Fair Trade business model there is a guarantee of quality through the farmers' hard work and the pride they take in the business. We are also organic, 100-per-cent Arabica, hand-washed and hand-sorted, and roasted locally."

3 Hall's Kitchen Inc.

Toronto, Ont. www.hallskitchen.ca

It was an extended hospital stay after an accident that inspired chef Katharine Hall to establish Hall's Kitchen. Hall and her partner, Kitt Ritchie, launched the company in 2009.

» Challenges getting started



Ritchie says learning about food and food labelling regulations was a challenge. "Finding a commercial space that allowed food manufacturing and accommodated our commercial kitchen was also extremely challenging," she says.

» First product

The company launched with four soups and now has 10. The very first product was Bangkok Curry, Coconut and Lime Soup.

» Where are your products sold?

Mostly independent specialty food and health food stores in Ontario and Quebec, and some stores in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Manitoba. The company plans to expand into Alberta and B.C.

» Highlights

"We started offering our soups in foodservice, to cafés and restaurants in Toronto and the GTA this year," says Ritchie.

» Future plans and opportunities

Ritchie says they are going to begin offering small-scale co-packing and consulting services to other food companies that are either starting out, or are too small to use large co-packers.

» Unique traits

"We make premium, high-quality vegan soups and stews that are extremely high in fibre and in nutrition," says Ritchie.

4 Monkey Butter Enterprises, Inc.

Vancouver, B.C. www.monkeybutterpb.com

Sisters and newbies to the food industry Gillian and Kathleen Gook wanted to spice up peanut butter. So in October 2011 they launched a line of gourmet peanut butter blends.

» Challenges getting started

Challenges included finding affordable space, ordering products and finding suppliers.

» First product

The company launched with six flavours, but its very first blend was Dark Chocolate Cherry Peanut Butter.

» Where are your products sold?

The company has signed on with a distributor and now is listed in Save On Foods, Urban Fare, and lots of specialty stores.

» Highlights

The company offers seasonal flavours, including gingerbread peanut butter for Christmas. It also offered a coconut peanut butter, red hot cinnamon peanut butter, and vanilla bean espresso peanut butter. The sisters are working on a S'Mores peanut butter for summer. They recently launched Bow Wow Butter peanut butter for dogs.

» Future plans and opportunities

The sisters hope to expand distribution across Canada and plan on growing Monkey Butter and its product offerings.

» Unique traits

Besides the unique flavours, Gillian says their peanut butters are all-natural, contain very low sugar, with no trans fat or added saturated fats (no palm oil), and are made by hand.



5 Canpressco Products Inc.

Saskatoon, Sask. www.threefarmers.ca

Just as ancient grains were well-known to our ancestors, camelina oil was commonly used by them too. Canpressco revived the culinary oil and launched its first product under the Three Farmers brand in December 2009 in Saskatchewan.

» Challenges getting started

Creating awareness for camelina oil. "It is a brand new product in Canada and so there is a very big educational component," explains Natasha Vandenhurk, the company's director of Sales & Marketing. Other challenges included marketing budgets and distribution.

» First product

A 500-mL bottle of Original Camelina Oil.

» Where are your products sold?

The company's products are sold in health food stores and specialty and natural grocery stores across Canada, Whole Foods in Eastern and Western Canada, Longo's in Ontario, and Federated Coop.

» Highlights

The company has grown from 110 direct-to-store sales to more than 650 retail locations since summer 2012. The company also appeared on CBC's Dragon's Den in October 2012 and landed a deal with Arlene Dickinson. "In the



(From left to right): Natasha Vandenhurk, Dan Vandenhurk, Ron Emde, John Ondrusek, Colin Rosengren and Elysia Vandenhurk.

TOP 10 COMPANY PROFILES

Den,” says Vandenhurk, “we forecasted tripling our sales over the previous year. We managed to surpass this forecast by the end of 2012.” The company has also tripled its acreage to 900 from 300 acres.

» *Future plans and opportunities*

Growing the number of stores to more than 1,500 across Canada, launching new corporate gift packs and expanding its product line under the Three Farmers brand.

» *Unique traits*

The product is the first camelina oil available on the Canadian market. It's the only cold pressed, high omega-3 oil that can be used in the kitchen for salads and for cooking. Every bottle can be traced back to the farmer and field in which it was grown.

6 Wellness Foods

Toronto, Ont. www.wellnessfoods.ca

Wellness Foods launched 10 years ago when founder Cathy Richards wanted a filling and nutritious snack but couldn't find one on the market.

» *Challenges getting started*

Getting the name out and into stores.

» *First product*

The Simply Bar.

» *Where are your products sold?*

In Loblaw's (Natural Value), Superstore, Metro-Pharmacy, Whole Foods, Bulk Barn, Sobeys Urban Fresh, GNC, CVS and thousands of health food stores across North America. They're also sold online.

» *Highlights*

In the last year the company introduced Simply Whey and Simply Protein Chips. In just 10 years the brand has expanded from one employee to a team of seven. Last year at Kosherfest 2012, the company won the best Savory and Salty Snack Food award for Simply Protein Chips.

» *Future plans and opportunities*

New products are in the works.

» *Unique traits*

The snacks have the most protein for the least calories compared to other natural food snacks. There are no “junk” ingredients added. Each Simply Bar has 16 g of protein and is easy to digest. There's no gluten, no dairy and they're low in fat, low in sugar and are low GI.



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7 J.J. Stewart Authentic
Foods & Soda Company
Charlottetown, P.E.I.
www.jjstewartfoods.com



The beverage company is owned by Thom and Heather MacMillan, who launched it in 2009.

» *Challenges*

Finding employees who would work with us to move our company forward, says Thom. Another challenge is new market development.

» *First product*

J.J. Stewart Root Beer Soda.

» *Where are your products sold?*

Specialty shops in P.E.I., Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, B.C., Ontario and Manitoba. They also mail order across Canada.

» *Highlights*

The company moved into a new facility in 2011 with a new production kitchen, warehouse and office. The Tourism Industry Association of P.E.I. presented the company with the Dr. Kent Ellis award for Quality of Excellence in March 2013.

» *Future Plans and opportunities*

Thom says they plan to develop new products and expand further across Canada and into New England.

» *Unique traits*

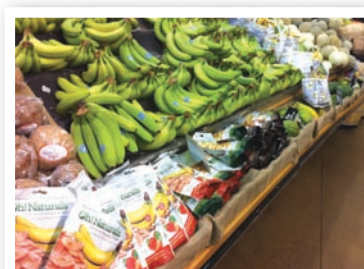
They use local products when possible, quality ingredients, and produce their products in small batches.

8 Oh! Naturals
Calgary
www.oh-naturals.com

The company, which is owned by Charanjit Singh Parmar, Rhonda Goldberg and David Krygier, launched in 2012 with banana chips.

» *Challenges getting started*

None of the principals had any experience in the food industry, says Krygier. "We were all from the rag trade [clothing] and we may have committed every rookie error. The only thing we got right was the quality of the chips."



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» **First product**

Banana Chips in three flavours: strawberry, chocolate and natural.

» **Where are your products sold?**

Canada Safeway stores in Western Canada and at Calgary Co-op stores.

» **Unique traits**

The product is nothing like the bulk banana chips on the market. They are naturally sweet and made with Chuoi Xiem bananas. They are peanut- and gluten-free and have no added sugar, salt and dairy.

9 Tonica Beverages Ltd.

Toronto, Ont. www.tonicakombucha.com

The company is owned by Zoey Shamai, who launched it as The Fairy's Tonic in 2008 and then as Tonica in 2011.



Zoey Shamai

» **Challenges getting started**

It was a very new concept in Toronto.

» **First product**

The Fairy's Tonic. This was strong, with a very intense fermented flavour. Today Tonica has a more accessible flavour.

» **Where are your products sold?**

In more than 400 stores across Canada, such as Whole Foods, Choices, Organic Garage, The Big Carrot, Planet Organic Market, Pusateri's and Tau.

» **Highlights**

The company doubled its sales in 2012 and moved into a larger facility, upgraded its bottling machinery and hired on another team member. Last November, Tonica's winning pitch aired on CBC's Dragon's Den.

» **Future plans and opportunities**

To continue ex-

panding in Western Canada and into the Atlantic provinces. In Ontario, the company is focused on expanding its foodservice distribution.

» **Unique traits**

Tonica uses an artesian brewing method to create a pleasant flavour. The bottle carbonation process is completely natural and produces a delicate champagne-like effervescence.

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10 Gunn's Hill Artisan Cheese

Near Woodstock in Oxford County,
Ont. www.gunnshillcheese.ca

Shep Ysselstein studied cheese making in B.C., in the U.S. and in Switzerland. Today he is the cheesemaker behind Gunn's Hill Artisan Cheese.

» *Challenges getting started*

Learning how to make cheese, meeting all the regulations and financing. It was an expensive project.

» *First product*

The first cheeses are the same as those Shep currently makes: 5 Brothers, Handeck, and Oxford's Harvest.

» *Where are your products sold?*

At a shop in the cheese plant, and in about 100 specialty stores, cheese shops, restaurants and farmer's markets.



Shep Ysselstein



» *Highlights*

The company was Category Champion in the Firm Cheese Category at this year's Canadian Cheese Grand Prix. Gunn's Hill also received a Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence, Entrepreneur of the Year from the local chamber of commerce, and Niche Market Award from the Oxford County Federation of Agriculture.


» *Future plans and opportunities*


To grow the company, Shep would also like "to bring part of the farm to the cheese plant so people can see how it works from the grass to the curd."


» *Unique traits*


Shep says his "cheeses are different than others on the market, which is why we don't call them Cheddar or Gouda. They taste different and hopefully better." The company also only uses milk from his family's farm. 🍷

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P-10416-4b

COCOA GETS RESPONSIBLE

Faced with global cocoa shortages, chocolate manufacturers are stepping up their commitment to sustainability **By Rebecca Harris**

Peter Higgins has seen the results of his company's efforts to help cocoa-growing communities in West Africa firsthand. During a "life-changing" trip to Ghana in 2011, the president of Vancouver-based Purdy's Chocolates met with a group of single mothers who had received small-business training and grants through the World Cocoa Foundation and Winrock International, two non-profit organizations that Purdy's supports.

One by one, the women proudly talked about how they were able to grow their entrepreneurial ventures, which ranged from selling clothes to running a restaurant. Higgins also met with farmers who were taught sustainable farming practices, such as shade management and disease control. The practices increase crop production, and in turn, farmers' income levels. "Although we're not professing to change the world here...I think it's really important that we're helping to do our part," says Higgins.



While chocolate manufacturers have supported cocoa sustainability for years, their focus is now razor-sharp. In West Africa, which produces 70 per cent of the world's cocoa, dwindling supplies are being outpaced by soaring demand for chocolate. According to the International Cocoa Organization, global cocoa demand will outstrip supply through 2014/2015 because of pests, disease and aging plantations. To that end, chocolate manufacturers are stepping up their commitment to cocoa sustainability and promoting economic and social development in cocoa-growing regions. In doing so, they're aiming to secure the very future of chocolate.

In November 2012, Mondelez International — which owns Cadbury and was spun off from Kraft last year — announced a \$400-million investment in its cocoa supply chain over the next 10 years. The program, called Cocoa Life, is the company's largest cocoa sustainability effort to date and aims to improve the



to distributing 12 million cocoa trees over the next 10 years. Canada is one of five countries now selling Nestlé Cocoa Plan-sourced chocolate, which are available in Nestlé's Kit Kat, Aero and Coffee Crisp bars, and in Smarties.

For its part, Mars pledged in 2009 that all cocoa used in its chocolate products will be fair-trade certified by 2020. The company, whose brands include M&Ms, Mars, Snickers, Twix and 3 Musketeers, now has partnerships with three fair-trade organizations: Rainforest Alliance, UTZ and Fairtrade International. In 2011, 10 per cent of the cocoa Mars purchased was from certified sources, compared to five per cent in 2010. In 2012, the company was on track to exceed its 20-per-cent goal, and purchased almost 90,000 tons of certified cocoa.

Even with these commitments, the world's biggest chocolate manufacturers are being urged to do more. In February, Oxfam launched

livelihoods of more than 200,000 cocoa farmers and one million people in cocoa-farming communities.

Cocoa Life's approach includes helping farmers improve their yields, helping to eliminate child labour, and protecting the landscapes in which cocoa is grown. In the year prior to the program launch, Mondelez purchased 20,000 tons of Fairtrade certified cocoa and 15,000 tons of Rainforest Alliance certified cocoa.

"We're focused on improving conditions of the smallholder farmers in developing countries that grow [the cocoa] we need, because it makes sense for our business," says Stephanie Minna Cass, senior manager, Corporate and Government Affairs at Mondelez Canada. "While we don't have all the answers, we're seeking new forms of partnerships — including farmers, suppliers, NGOs, governments and others — to bring about change."

In 2011, Nestlé launched its Cocoa Plan, a \$120-million investment over 10 years to help cocoa farmers in the Ivory Coast through a number of programs, including distributing higher-yielding, disease-resistant plantlets that produce more income; providing education for farmers and their families; and improving infrastructure in farming communities.

The company's vision for the plan "is to help cocoa farmers run profitable farms, respect the environment, have a good quality of life and for their children to benefit from an education and see cocoa farming as a respectable profession," says Catherine O'Brien, vice-president of Corporate Affairs at Nestlé Canada.

To carry out its sustainability goals, Nestlé has partnered with the Ivory Coast's National Centre of Agronomic Research to open a \$5-million research facility to produce higher-yielding cocoa trees. The company says it is committed

a campaign to push Mars, Mondelez and Nestlé — which collectively control more than 40 per cent of the global cocoa market — to address the exploitation of women cocoa workers. The campaign was the result of Oxfam's Behind the Brands study, which ranked the top 10 global food and beverage companies on a number of policies and environmental impact. On the themes of women and land, the companies scored particularly low.

"Investing in women cocoa farmers is a win-win for everybody," says Irit Tamir, senior campaigns and advocacy advisor for Oxfam America's Private Sector department. By helping women, she explains, companies will not only increase



Peter Higgins of Purdy's Chocolates meets with cocoa farmer leaders in Ghana.



their yields, they'll help reduce child labour. "Child labour is the result of poverty-stricken families, so [if] you increase the sustainable livelihood of women cocoa farmers, they're more likely to send their children to school and less likely to send them into the field," adds Tamir.

More than 60,000 people worldwide signed petitions urging the companies to do what's right for women. Mars and Nestlé responded swiftly, pledging to tackle the inequality and poverty faced by women in the cocoa supply chain. While Oxfam is still in talks with Mondelez, at press time the company had just announced it would sign the UN Women's Empowerment Principles, commit to extend its reporting on gender rights, and advocate for industry action.

"We're focused on improving conditions of the smallholder farmers in developing countries that grow [the cocoa] we need, because it makes sense for our business."

Awareness of manufacturers' sustainability efforts will undoubtedly appeal to consumers who are increasingly concerned about where and how their food is sourced. According to a 2011 Nielsen survey, sustainable practices are a key factor influencing where Canadians shop and what they buy. Among the findings, 63 per cent of those surveyed said "raw materials that aren't harmful to the environment" influence their purchasing decisions; 56 per cent said groceries that are not manufactured using unethical labour is a key influencer; and 48 per cent are influenced by companies that support social causes.

"Consumers are becoming much more aware of how food is being grown and the environmental and social costs for growing that food," says Tamir. "There is going to come a day when consumers will take a product and scan it...and it's going to tell them every single thing they want to know about that product." Companies can either get ahead of that, says Tamir, or be faced



photos: Nestlé



Farmers harvesting cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire.

photo: © Nestlé

with more campaigning from advocacy groups, "and consumers making choices based on how their food is grown."

At the store level, Higgins says Purdy's gets "a fair bit" of questions about its cocoa sources, and notes that it is an important aspect for consumers. "Our customers really connect with the information and what we're doing [in cocoa sustainability]," he says. And while Higgins doesn't think consumer concern about the issue is a "make or break for companies," he does believe commitments around cocoa sustainability are just "the right thing to do." ●

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Naturally Sweet

As consumers increasingly seek alternatives to both sugar and artificial sweeteners, several products are stepping in to satisfy North America's sweet tooth in a more natural way

BY CAROL NESHEVICH


*W*ith North America's obesity rates and diabetes diagnoses continuing to skyrocket, it's no wonder consumers are looking for ways to reduce their sugar intake. Artificial sweeteners like aspartame or sucralose have long been considered one way to reduce the calories associated with sugar, but many consumers are becoming increasingly wary of these artificial options. "So, what people are looking for is something they can consider a safe alternative," says Marva Ward, national product educator at Puresource, Inc., a Guelph, Ont.-based natural product distributor.

There's one natural alternative that everyone seems to be talking about these days. "Stevia is becoming the real buzz word," says Ward. Derived from the leaf of the stevia plant, it's a high-intensity sweetener that has no calories and is zero on the glycemic index, making it ideal for diabetics. Stevia

was just approved by Health Canada as a sweetener in food and beverage products in November 2012 (prior to this it was allowed only as a dietary supplement, sold primarily at health food stores). In 2008, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) allowed the use of a highly purified form of stevia called "rebaudioside A" as a food additive, so a great deal of stevia-based product development has already been occurring south of the border.

Less is more

Right now, one of the main applications for stevia is in the beverage sector. Because it's about 250 to 300 times as sweet as sugar, you need much less stevia to achieve the same sweetness, so food and beverage manufacturers must replace that volume with something else when reformulating recipes to include stevia. This is why drinks are a natural fit. "The beverage manufacturers have it easy, because they can make up that volume



Stevia plant

with water,” says Melanie Goulson, Product Development and Applications manager for Truvia, a stevia-based sweetener made by Minneapolis, Minn.-based Cargill, Inc. “We’re seeing great success in reduced-sugar juices and sodas, teas, powdered soft drinks, flavoured waters, sport drinks — so certainly beverage is a leading category....But in other food products, you do have to take that missing bulk into account.”

Still, Goulson believes stevia “could be used to reduce sugar in any application,” as long as food and beverage developers take a “holistic” approach. “In my group, we’ve found there’s no drop-in solution; so it’s important to consider how the ingredients in the whole food system are working together,” she says. “You have to first consider your goals for sweetness and calorie reduction, and then you optimize around the

“What people are looking for is something they can consider a safe alternative.”

sweetness, the acidity, the flavours, the mouth feel — if you take the whole system into account and rebalance it, you can get really great-tasting results.”

When can we expect to see “sweetened with stevia” on product labels on Canadian store shelves? “I anticipate we will see [product] launches even within the year [in Canada], because people have been considering applications and toying with the idea prior to its approval and anticipating its approval,”



says Brea Ostendorf, global commercial manager for Truvia. Already available in the U.S., Truvia tabletop sweeteners are expected to start hitting Canadian store shelves as early as this month, while the Truvia baking blend is expected to be here in late 2013 or early 2014.

Natural essence alternatives

Following in the footsteps of stevia, monk fruit extract is another high-intensity, zero-calorie sweetener that’s appropriate for use by diabetics. It was just approved as a food additive by Health Canada this March, a few years after its approval by the FDA in 2010. “Monk fruit is newer to the game, so it’s a little bit behind stevia in getting out there to the final consumer end products,” says Chris Tower, president of Newport Beach, Calif.-based LAYN USA, Inc., which produces both stevia- and monk fruit-based sweeteners. That said, “One can look at the popularity of stevia and stevia-related products to serve as a likely mirror to the future for monk fruit.”

And like stevia, “The beverage sector is clearly going to be the real opportunity for monk fruit,” says Tower. It’s already being used in a few tabletop sweeteners in the U.S., such as Nectresse and Monk Fruit in the Raw, and Tower says his company is currently in discussions with numerous food and beverage manufacturers. He says monk fruit differs from stevia in its taste — it has less bitter tones than stevia — and is also differentiated by the fact that it’s a fruit extract. “I think people will appreciate the

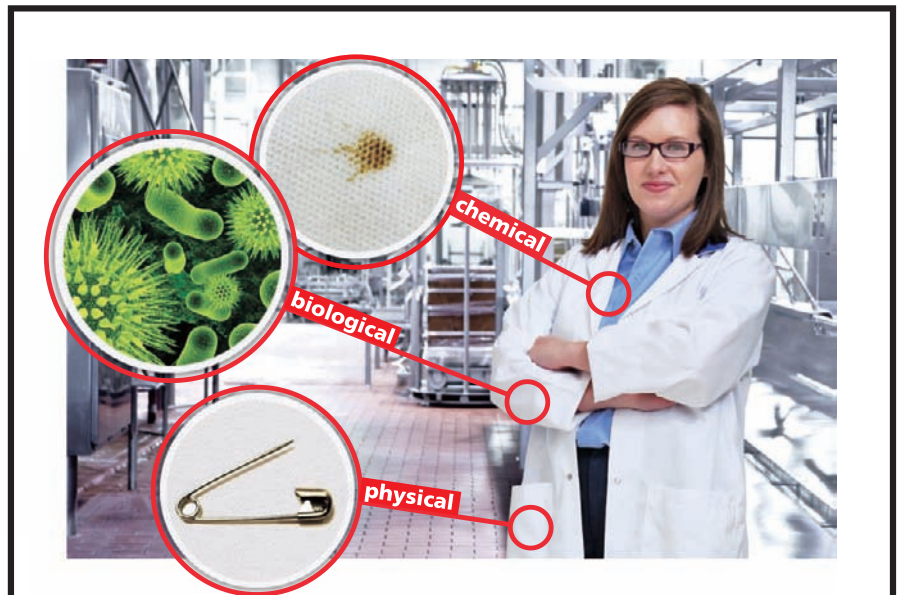


health associations of that,” he says. The fruit itself has been grown for centuries in the Guilin, Guangxi province in southwest China, a beautiful mountainous region, and Tower thinks the romantic aspect of this will also appeal to consumers.

While stevia and monk fruit are preparing to take the sweetening world by storm, other more traditional natural sweeteners are also gaining attention as alternatives to both sugar and artificial sweeteners. They may not have to be calorie-free or rate a zero on the glycemic index, but their natural essence is nevertheless appealing to consumers looking to get back to basics. Honey has always been a natural way to add sweetness, for instance, while agave nectar is becoming popular with raw foodists and vegans as an alternative to honey. And maple syrup has been in the spotlight lately for its recently confirmed health properties. “Maple syrup — that’s probably one of the healthiest sugars one can get,” says Ward, adding, “Maple syrup has a fantastic mineral content.”

Healthy benefits

In the past few years, several scientific studies have revealed that maple syrup is rich in antioxidants, and that even though it’s not “low-cal” and it’s relatively high on the glycemic index, there are some clear health benefits to consuming maple syrup.



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Food Trends



“We’re not advocating that everybody eat a litre of syrup a day — everything in moderation,” concedes Ray Bonenberg, president of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association. “We are, however, working toward educating people that as a substitute for sugar in your coffee or tea, or in your baking or cooking, there are some definite benefits to using maple.”

When it comes to food and beverage products sweetened with maple syrup, however, Bonenberg says these tend to be primarily niche items made by smaller food companies and maple syrup producers themselves, such as maple jellies, maple butter, maple barbecue sauce, and even maple candy floss. The price of the syrup — somewhat expensive because it is so labour-intensive to make — can be prohibitive for larger, mass-produced applications by mainstream food and beverage companies. “The trick, of course, is marketing to the niche market,” says Bonenberg.



And what about simple, familiar fruit juice concentrates as sweeteners? From a marketing perspective, having “sweetened with real fruit” on a label “is more appealing to consumers than high-fructose corn syrups or other processed sugars,” says Greg Kaiser, president of San Dimas, Calif.-based Encore Fruit Marketing Inc. Apple, pear and white grape tend to be the most commonly used fruits for sweetening food and beverage products, as they don’t have overwhelmingly strong flavours.

Still, Kaiser says the use of fruit juice concentrates for sweetening is not really growing. “This application has been around for about 20 years, and probably has passed its peak. The use of fruit juice concentrate...adds extra cost as compared to processed sweeteners, and also adds some shelf-stability issues in certain processed foods due to the composition of the juice concentrates,” says Kaiser. “I personally believe the market is fairly static right now with brands that have created a loyal following and market share, but I don’t see any large growth potential in the near future. In fact, as we see major brands focused on reducing carbohydrates to battle obesity, the bigger focus today is how to make foods and beverages taste sweet without adding sugars — and that includes fruit concentrates. This is why we see items sweetened with non-caloric ingredients like stevia growing in market share.” ●



A fish tale for importers and exporters

By Chris Doyle

driven by the strong expansion of fish production, advanced distribution channels and consumer demands for more nutritious foods, the world's fish supply has grown steadily over the past five decades. Beginning in 1961, the average rate of growth was 3.2 per cent over a nearly 50-year period, outpacing an average yearly increase of 1.7 per cent in the world's population, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

FAO statistics found that the global per capita consumption of fish and fishery products increased from an average of 9.9 kg in the 1960s, to 11.5 kg in the 1970s, 12.6 kg in the 1980s, 14.4 kg in the 1990s, and 17.0 kg in the 2000s. Consumption reached 18.4 kg in 2009.

Fish and fishery products are among the globe's most traded food commodities. Since 2002, China has been the world's top exporter of fishery products. A number of developing countries, such as Thailand, Viet Nam and Chile, have also become major players on the international stage.

With the proliferation of the export market, concerns about the safety of fish and fishery products have led many importing countries to implement compliance and certification programs. In Canada, importers of fish and fishery products intended for commercial sale must hold a Fish Import Licence or a Quality Management Program Import Licence (QMPI) to ensure their products meet Health Canada requirements.



Under the compliance program, importers are:

- Required to make every shipment available for inspection prior to distribution and sale in Canada;
- Required to notify the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) of every import shipment within 48 hours;
- Obligated to keep accurate and complete records of imported shipments so that shipments can be easily traced; and
- Required to obtain information on the manufacturing processes and controls used in the production of all imported ready-to-eat and canned products.

Holders of a QMPI license must also:

- Develop an acceptable quality

management system demonstrating how they will meet, as a minimum, the product inspection frequencies, methods and standards set by the CFIA;

- Implement and comply with their written QMPI program; and
- Forward all product inspection results to the CFIA.

Employing a risk-based approach to determine the frequency at which to inspect imported product, the CFIA audits and inspects importers to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of their licence, which must be renewed on a yearly basis. Fish and fishery products from processors who have never shipped products to Canada are inspected at a 100-per-cent rate, requiring a representative sample to be taken and analyzed from each first shipment to the nation.

Under Canadian seafood regulations, importers are required to analyze products at designated frequencies to ensure they meet safety standards established by the CFIA. Testing is mandatory for a number of microbiological, chemical and physical contaminants, including antibiotics, histamine, pesticides, herbicides and fungicides, heavy metals and additives. Within the regulatory requirements, importers are strongly urged to utilize testing laboratories that employ CFIA approved methods and are accredited to ISO 17025 by the Standards Council of Canada.

Worldwide fish and seafood export sales exceed US\$100 billion annually. From an everyday business perspective, it is critical for importers to comply with local safety standards and work with recognized experts who can assist them with their compliance efforts. ●

Chris Doyle is technical services manager at Silliker Canada Co. in Markham, Ont. Contact him at info@silliker.com



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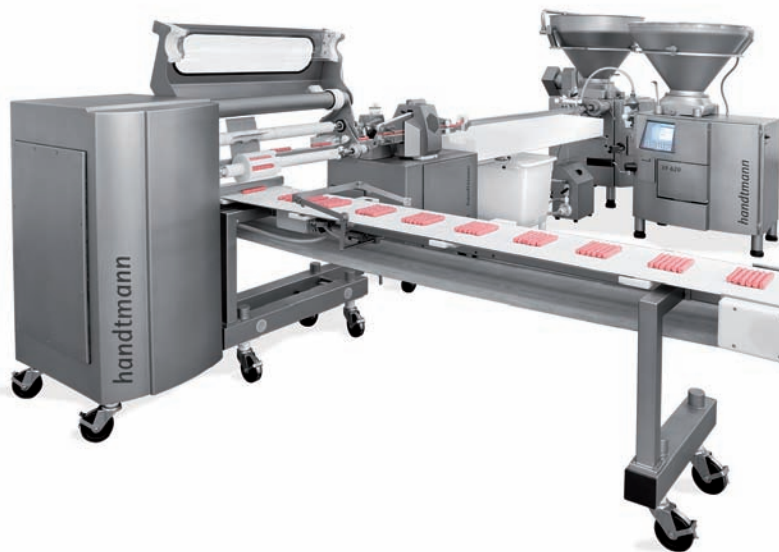
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MNP SENCRL s.r.l.
TRANSFORMATION BIOALIMENTAIRE

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ConPro

Production continue



Des économies permanentes avec le boyau végétal

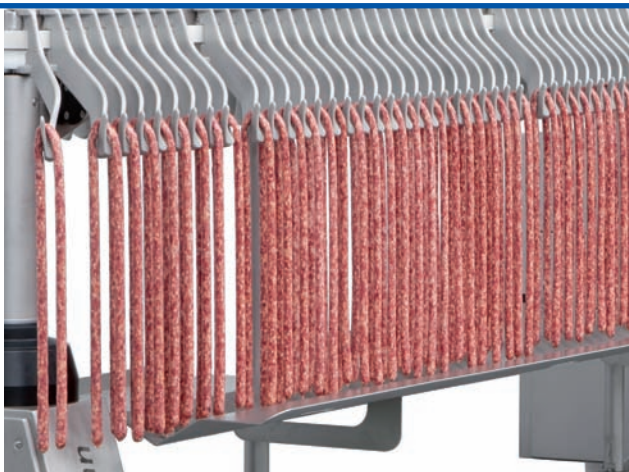
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Ideas for the future.

Nouvelles

Le SIAL 2013 mise sur l'innovation

Chaque année, les visiteurs du SIAL Canada — qui s'est tenu à Toronto cette année du 30 avril au 2 mai — attendent avec impatience de voir certains des plus intéressants nouveaux aliments et boissons sur le marché, en montre dans la section Innovation du SIAL spécialement aménagée à cet effet.

Les 10 produits gagnants, choisis à la fin mars par le jury du SIAL composé de professionnels de l'industrie, reflètent certaines des tendances de consommation influençant désormais le marché, notamment les produits sans gluten, biologiques et santé.

Les voici sans ordre particulier:

- *Barres collation Go Pure*, Biscuits Leclerc, Canada — Barres de céréales renfermant une portion complète de fruits, ne comptant que 100 calories par barre.
- *Mélange de croustilles de la cordillère des Andes*, Inalprocess, Équateur — Croustilles fabriquées à partir de pommes de terre andines comportant des vertus médicinales naturelles.
- *Vinaigre de pommes Gingras*, Pomdial, Canada — Vinaigre de cidre de pommes vieilli en fût de chêne.
- *Saucisses italiennes biologiques sans*



gluten, Les Viandes DuBreton, Canada — Saucisses de porc sans gluten offrant des garanties éthiques,

biologiques et écologiques.

- *Nouilles SeaSnax Oodles*, SeaSnax, Corée du Sud — Nouilles à base d'algues, sans gluten, certifiées non transgéniques.
- *Pâté au saumon de l'Atlantique fumé*, A Acadien Atlantic, Canada — Pâté au saumon surgelé, portionné individuellement.
- *Mycryo — Beurre de cacao pur pour la cuisson*, Cacao Barry, Canada — Beurre de cacao 100% végétal, maintenant disponible en contenant de 200 g pour la boulangerie résidentielle.
- *Pâtisseries Dufflet sans gluten*, Duf-

flet, Canada — Une gamme de gâteaux sans gluten faits à la main avec des ingrédients entièrement naturels.

- *Switter poudre d'agave*, LOC Industries, Mexique — Poudre d'agave biologique enrichie d'inuline.
- *Lov Organic*, T. Importation, France — Thé certifié biologique fait d'ingrédients naturels dans un emballage attrayant et pratique.

Le gagnant du grand prix de SIAL 2013 est Pâté au saumon de l'Atlantique fumé par Acadien Atlantic.

Prix Rosemary-Davis

Pierrette Desrosiers a été l'une des cinq femmes travaillant dans l'industrie de l'agriculture et de l'agroalimentaire à recevoir le prix Rosemary-Davis 2013 de Financement agricole Canada (FAC) le mois dernier. Les gagnantes, choisies



dans les différentes régions du pays, sont reconnues comme des chefs de file de l'industrie et des modèles dans leur communauté. Elles peuvent être productrices, exploitantes dans l'agro-industrie, enseignantes, vétérinaires, chercheuses ou agronomes. Sur la photo, Mme Desrosiers — psychologue du travail, conférencière et accompagnatrice (coach) — de Saint-Herménégilde, reçoit son prix de Vincent Giard, vice-président de l'exploitation pour la FAC au Québec.

Sur la couverture (de gauche à droite): Andrew Raphael, MNP; Ezio Di Emanuele, MNP; Sylvie Cloutier, présidente-directrice générale, CTAC; Louis Grossbaum, MNP; Henry Mizrahi, président, Les Aliments Lesters Itée; Henry Rosenblum, MNP; Éric Doyon, président, Aliments In Foods inc.; Liliane Colpron, présidente, Boulangerie Première Moisson; Pierre Turner, vice-président Assurance-qualité, A. Lassonde inc.; Stéphane Bouchard, vice-président Ventes, Distribution Régitan Itée; Nicole Lelièvre, présidente, OGEM Itée (eau Saint-Justin); Sheldon Krakower, MNP; Isabelle Renaud, MNP.

BIENS DE CONSOMMATION

> Les céréales **Kashi** aux flocons d'avoine à saveur de bleuets se veulent la toute nouvelle variété de la marque Kashi d'aliments biologiques de **Kellogg**. Constituée d'un délicieux mélange de bouchées d'avoine à grain entier et de bleuets, chaque tasse des nouvelles céréales contient six grammes de protéines et 45 % de l'apport quotidien de

fibres réputé contribuer à réduire le cholestérol. Elle renferme également des vitamines C et E, et procure 100 % de l'apport quotidien recommandé en acide folique, vitamines B6 et B12. Les céréales Kashi aux flocons d'avoine à saveur de bleuets sont exemptes de gras trans, de saveurs et colorants artificiels, et elles sont faibles en gras saturés.



> **Red Bull Canada** a lancé trois nouvelles variétés de sa boisson énergisante Red Bull, sous le nom **Red Bull Éditions**: The Red Edition à la canneberge, goût sucré/acidulé; The Silver Edition à la lime, goût frais de citron; et The Blue Edition aux myrtilles, goût fruité. La nouvelle gamme de boissons, qui renferme la même formule que la boisson énergisante originale, sera disponible au détail en canettes de 250 ml à compter du mois d'avril.

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- Boulangerie **Canada Bread Itée** a annoncé qu'elle prévoyait fermer sa boulangerie de Shawinigan. Cette dernière fabrique des petits gâteaux sous les marques Chevalier, Cadbury et Obsession. Selon la compagnie, cette fermeture permettra d'améliorer la rentabilité de son réseau en réduisant ses coûts indirects et en se concentrant sur les produits à profits élevés ainsi que sur les nouvelles possibilités du marché.
- **Cascades** a annoncé que l'agrandissement de son usine de papier tissu de Lachute a reçu la certification LEED, niveau Or. Il s'agit du premier bâtiment dédié à la production de papier au Canada à obtenir la certification LEED-NC (Nouvelle Construction).



- La coopérative **Agropur** située à Longueuil célèbre son 75e anniversaire cette année. L'entreprise est la plus grande coopérative laitière du pays avec plus de 3 200 producteurs de lait membres et 25 usines à travers le Canada et les États-Unis, transformant plus de 3,2 milliards de litres de lait par an.



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L'avenir se prépare aujourd'hui

reconnaissance, innovation, collaboration



Photo : Normand Blouin/KlixPix

En collaboration avec le CTAC, MNP a l'honneur d'offrir aux entreprises bioalimentaires québécoises une tribune pour partager leurs opinions avec d'autres intervenants du secteur. La diversité et la franchise des participants à l'édition 2013 de la table ronde réunissant des cadres du Québec ont permis de faire le point sur l'évolution du secteur bioalimentaire au Québec.

Reconnaissance

Un thème majeur a trouvé écho chez les participants, à savoir que le secteur de la transformation bioalimentaire est le plus important secteur manufacturier au Québec et utilise des produits agricoles de partout dans la province. Les participants ont convenu que les gouvernements doivent reconnaître davantage son apport important à l'économie, au tissu social et au patrimoine des collectivités d'ici.

Innovation et perspective

Bien que les participants estiment que les coûts d'exploitation et la réglementation au Québec représentent un défi et doivent être réduits, l'innovation est selon eux la clé pour demeurer concurrentiel. Les fabricants québécois ont besoin bien plus de soutien que de protection puisqu'ils devront rivaliser de plus en plus avec des importateurs bioalimentaires novateurs. Même si beaucoup de nos fabricants sont de petite ou de moyenne taille, de l'avis général, c'est en investissant davantage dans l'innovation en matière de production, de service, de conception et de marketing que les fabricants bioalimentaires pourront soutenir la concurrence d'un marché mondial de plus en plus complexe.

Collaborer pour concurrencer

En cernant les enjeux communs et en s'y attaquant par l'entremise d'associations comme le CTAC, les entreprises collaborent à l'élaboration de solutions novatrices et fortifient ainsi le secteur dans son ensemble. Plusieurs défis communs pouvant être surmontés par un effort concerté ont été cernés,

Participants à la table ronde de direction (de gauche à droite) : **Éric Doyon**, président, Aliments In Foods inc.; **Henry Mizrahi**, président, Les Aliments Lesters Itée; **Lilliane Colpron**, présidente, Boulangerie Première Moisson; **Pierre Turner**, vice-président Assurance-qualité, A. Lassonde inc.; **Stéphane Bouchard**, vice-président Ventes, Distribution Régitan Itée; **Nicole Lelièvre**, présidente, OGEM Itée (eau Saint-Justin). En médaillon : **Claude Trottier**, président et directeur de l'exploitation, Canards du Lac Brome Itée.

notamment promouvoir les protocoles québécois de salubrité alimentaire, soumettre les aliments importés à la même inspection minutieuse que les produits nationaux et s'assurer de pouvoir compter sur une main-d'œuvre qualifiée.

Une meilleure collaboration au sein du secteur de la transformation bioalimentaire ouvre davantage la porte à une collaboration avec le reste de la chaîne de valeur agroalimentaire, et la coopération à l'échelle locale donne aux entreprises québécoises les outils pour affronter une concurrence mondiale.

Les fabricants bioalimentaires québécois sont confrontés à un marché de plus en plus mondialisé et en constante évolution. Pour survivre et prospérer, ils doivent prendre des décisions éclairées et aller au-delà de la gestion anticipative. MNP fait partie de la communauté bioalimentaire du Canada depuis plus de 70 ans et est fier d'aider les entreprises québécoises de ce secteur en leur fournissant des services de comptabilité, de fiscalité, de financement ainsi que des services-conseils qui sont opportuns. Nous comptons continuer à offrir de l'information qui dépasse les chiffres et à organiser d'autres tribunes semblables.

MNP remercie son coorganisateur, le CTAC, et tous les participants d'avoir partagé leurs points de vue fort appréciés et instructifs qui contribueront au succès continu du secteur québécois de la transformation bioalimentaire.



Andrew Raphael, associé et directeur, Transformation bioalimentaire, MNP SENCRL, srl.

L'accès aux marchés — possibilités et défis

Le magazine national Food in Canada est heureux de vous présenter — en partenariat avec le cabinet de services conseils MNP SENCRL, srl et le Conseil de la transformation agroalimentaire et des produits de consommation (CTAC) — sa première table ronde annuelle en français, par le biais de son supplément Accent alimentaire sur le Québec.

Avec pour thème “L'accès aux marchés — possibilités et défis”, l'objectif de cette rencontre avec des dirigeants d'entreprises oeuvrant dans différents segments de l'industrie alimentaire, est de discuter des grands enjeux du secteur et de partager des pistes de solutions. Voici vos hôtes:

Partenaire du secteur agroalimentaire

MNP s'est établie à Montréal il y a moins de deux ans avec la mission d'offrir des solutions de comptabilité et des services conseils aux entreprises québécoises. En réalité, nous sommes ici depuis plus de 40 ans, mais sous quatre bannières différentes qui ont fusionné avec MNP. Notre cabinet a développé une offre de services qui s'adresse tout particulièrement au domaine de la transformation bioalimentaire.

Louis Grossbaum

Associé-directeur régional, Services-conseils

MNP SENCRL, srl



La voix de l'industrie

Le CTAC est une consolidation des forces de l'industrie alimentaire qui regroupe 80 % du volume d'affaires d'un secteur d'activités qui génère 23 milliards de dollars par année. On parle de 165 000 emplois directs et indirects. Depuis le mois de février 2013, l'alimentation est devenue le premier domaine manufacturier au Québec. À lui seul, ce secteur remet au gouvernement provincial un milliard de dollars en impôts, taxes, redevances et charges sociales. Nous avons donc une voix dans l'économie du Québec, et c'est avec fierté que nous la faisons entendre.

Sylvie Cloutier

Présidente-directrice générale

CTAC

Sylvie Cloutier, CTAC — Avant d'entrer dans le vif du sujet, est-ce que chacun d'entre vous pourrait prendre quelques instants pour présenter son entreprise?

Pierre Turner — Industries Lasonde, dont le siège social se situe à Rougemont au Québec, exploite 14 usines au Canada et aux États-Unis et emploie environ 2 000 personnes. Nous sommes un chef de file nord-américain dans le développement, la fabrication et la vente d'une vaste gamme de jus et de boissons de fruits et de légumes commercialisés sous les marques Everfresh, Fairlee, Fruité, Graves, Oasis et Rougemont, ainsi que sous des marques privées. Nous produisons également des jus, boissons et sauces à base de canneberges, ainsi que du cidre de pomme et des boissons à base de vin. Nous fabriquons aussi des produits alimentaires spécialisés sous des marques telles que Antico et Canton.

Éric Doyon — Aliments In Foods est une jeune entreprise en affaires depuis moins de trois ans, mais dont l'expertise de la direction repose sur la réputée compagnie Europe's Best. Nous nous spécialisons dans le développement et la mise en marché de produits novateurs faits d'ingrédients simples et sains. Nous proposons actuellement deux gammes de produits : InSnax, des croustilles de pita; et InCuisin, des plats d'accompagnement surgelés, dont des purées de pommes de terre et des risottos surgelés. Nos produits se retrouvent dans la plupart des grandes chaînes de supermarchés à l'échelle nationale, et nous travaillons à nous positionner comme un consolidateur au Québec à moyen terme.



“Le cycle d'innovation [est] de plus en plus rapide et le temps accordé pour démontrer l'attrait d'un nouveau produit est de plus en plus court.”

—Éric Doyon

Henry Mizrahi — Aliments Lesters a été fondée en 1931. Nous en sommes à la troisième génération de propriétaires exploitants. Nous fabriquons environ 250 produits différents avec le soutien de quelque 250 employés. Nous sommes directement associés à l'histoire de Montréal, avec le smoked meat et les hotdogs steamés que les gens aiment tant. Nos produits sont vendus sur l'ensemble du territoire canadien par les principaux distributeurs et grandes chaînes alimentaires.

Liliane Colpron — Première Moisson compte 22 magasins dans le Grand Montréal. Nous fabriquons 90 % de ce qui est vendu dans nos boutiques; il s'agit de notre première mission d'entreprise.

Nous sommes aussi devenus producteurs et distributeurs de produits de boulangerie pour les grandes chaînes, par lesquelles nous desservons tout le Québec. Notre réseau rassemble près de 1 200 employés. Nous exploitons trois usines: une pour les viandes, une pour le pain et une pour les viennoiseries. Depuis notre fondation il y a 22 ans, nous nous concentrons sur les produits santé.



“Moi, ce que je n’arrive pas à comprendre, c’est comment un produit en provenance d’Europe peut être vendu ici moins cher que dans son pays d’origine?”

— Nicole Lelièvre

Stéphane Bouchard — Distribution Régitan est une compagnie de distribution alimentaire établie depuis 1920. Elle est constituée de trois entités : Distribution Régitan (distributeur aux petites, moyennes et grandes surfaces), Allied Foods (importateur de produits cachers) et Troïka Foods (distributeur de produits surgelés). Distributeurs à plus de 2 000 détaillants alimentaires, nous sommes aujourd’hui l’un des plus grands distributeurs privés dans l’est du Canada. Notre clientèle englobe tous les créneaux de marché, de la petite pharmacie à la grande épicerie et aux chaînes pétrolières. Nous nous concentrons sur le détail, les produits d’épicerie, le vin, la confiserie et les produits surgelés. Nous sommes le maillon qui relie le fabricant au détaillant.

Nicole Lelièvre — Office général des eaux minérales (OGEM) a été fondée par mon mari en 1971. L’eau que nous embouteillons est l’eau minérale naturelle gazéifiée Saint-Justin, du village du même nom en Mauricie. Unique au Québec de par sa haute teneur en bicarbonate de soude et sa mise en bouteille de verre à la source même — située dans un milieu naturellement protégé par de l’argile — l’eau Saint-Justin est digestive. Notre eau se retrouve chez tous les grands détaillants, notamment Metro, Loblaws, Sobeys et Costco, dans le réseau des produits naturels ainsi que dans les hôtels, restaurants et institutions. On cherche actuellement à augmenter notre présence en Ontario, dans l’ouest canadien ainsi qu’aux États-Unis.

Claude Trottier — Canards du Lac Brome est le plus important producteur de canards canadien, avec un élevage de quelque deux millions de canards par année. L’entreprise produit des canards de Pékin depuis maintenant 100 ans. Le marché canadien représente plus de 80 % de notre chiffre d’affaires. Nous

sommes présents dans le marché du détail, de la restauration et aussi dans les quartiers chinois des principales villes canadiennes et américaines. Nous embauchons 200 employés et exploitons deux boutiques : une à Lac Brome et une à Montréal. Nous exportons aux États-Unis, au Japon, dans les Caraïbes, en Colombie, à Tahiti et autres.

Ezio Di Emanuele, MNP — Quels sont les trois principaux défis pour les entreprises d’aliments et de boissons au Québec? Pensez-vous que les enjeux diffèrent de ceux qui prévalent dans le reste du Canada?

N. Lelièvre — Le positionnement de Saint-Justin est au cœur de nos préoccupations, afin de nous démarquer des grandes multinationales et autres banques étrangères propriétaires de marques d’eau, qui ont des moyens financiers que nous n’avons pas, entre autres pour négocier l’espace sur les tablettes et la distribution destinée aux hôtels, restaurants et institutions. Les redevances imposées par le gouvernement pour la collecte sélective représentent également un défi pour un produit comme le nôtre, embouteillé dans du verre, même s’il agit de verre local recyclé à 60 %.

“On parle d’environ 10 % d’inspection des produits entrant, alors que tous les produits sortant sont inspectés.”

— Claude Trottier



P. Turner — Chez Lasseonde, un de nos soucis s’avère la consolidation de la clientèle. Nous ne sommes pas à l’abri qu’un client canadien soit acheté par un client américain et prenne des décisions à l’extérieur du pays. Notre deuxième défi consiste à continuer de suivre le mouvement des consommateurs en innovant : avec le contenu et l’emballage. Nos innovations visent à répondre à des consommateurs de plus en plus conscients du lien qui existe entre l’alimentation et leur santé. On doit également relever un troisième défi de consolidation des fournisseurs, en trouvant entre autres de nouvelles sources d’approvisionnement, comme nous l’avons fait au Mali avec la mangue, par exemple.

C. Trottier — L’importation représente assurément le premier défi auquel nous devons faire face, car les produits en provenance de pays étrangers ne satisfont actuellement pas les mêmes normes d’excellence exigées d’un producteur canadien sous

inspection fédérale. De plus, les produits d'importation ne sont pas soumis aux mêmes normes d'inspection que nos produits d'exportation quittant le Canada. On parle d'environ 10 % d'inspection des produits entrant, alors que tous les produits sortant sont inspectés. Conséquemment, un deuxième défi consiste à innover pour se démarquer des produits d'importation ou de ceux fabriqués à partir d'ingrédients importés, se retrouvant à côté des nôtres sur les tablettes, et en troisième lieu, à éduquer les consommateurs sur le véritable sens de "produit canadien".



“Nos innovations visent à répondre à des consommateurs de plus en plus conscients du lien qui existe entre l'alimentation et leur santé.”

—Pierre Turner

L. Colpron — Notre plus gros défi réside dans la compétition, souvent issue de gens que nous avons formés. Toutefois, la vaste gamme de produits que nous offrons représente un avantage sur lequel nous misons, toujours en gardant à l'esprit la diversité et la qualité. Pour nous, l'innovation et la création de nouveaux produits se révèlent à la fois un défi et un atout stratégique. Nous devons par ailleurs composer avec le défi des modes, comme nous le vivons actuellement avec l'engouement pour les produits sans gluten.

E. Doyon — En plus des défis de la consolidation des détaillants et celui de l'innovation précédemment abordés, j'ajouterais qu'avec le cycle d'innovation de plus en plus rapide, le temps accordé pour démontrer l'attrait d'un nouveau produit est de plus en plus court, car il y a toujours un petit nouveau qui attend son tour pour accéder aux tablettes. D'un autre côté, il s'agit aussi d'une occasion à saisir pour une entreprise flexible et innovatrice comme la nôtre.

H. Mizrahi — En résumé, nos trois défis sont la sécurité alimentaire, la gestion de nos coûts — en considération de la grande fluctuation du prix des matières premières — et la pénurie de main-d'œuvre qualifiée (sensibilisation des jeunes à notre secteur d'activité). Le défi de la sécurité mobilise sûrement nos plus grands efforts. Nous avons investi des millions de dollars en équipement pour maximiser les conditions sanitaires. Pour avoir visité de nombreuses usines aux États-Unis et en Europe, je peux vous assurer que les consommateurs canadiens sont parmi les mieux protégés au monde.

S. Bouchard — Pour ma part, l'opportunité se retrouve dans le rassemblement des associations de détaillants alimentaires canadiens. La lourdeur législative constitue un fardeau qu'il faut alléger. Nous devons créer une unité de ressources impartiale où chacun pourrait puiser l'information en matière de rappels de produit, d'emballage, de valorisation, et de gérance gouvernementale. Je vois là un défi de taille qui profiterait à tous les joueurs, et aux consommateurs en bout de ligne.

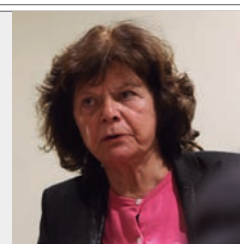
S. Cloutier — Quelle sera l'incidence de l'accord économique et commercial global (AECG) proposé entre le Canada et l'Union européenne sur vos activités?

N. Lelièvre — Moi, ce que je n'arrive pas à comprendre, c'est comment un produit en provenance d'Europe peut être vendu ici moins cher que dans son pays d'origine? Nous pensons que certains pays subventionnent le transport de leurs produits; ce qui n'est rien pour rendre la compétition loyale, ici comme à l'exportation. Mis à part les préoccupations en matière d'inégalité des coûts en transport, ça pourrait être bien si les échanges se faisaient de façon égalitaire, transparente et juste.

C. Trottier — J'ai également entendu parler de ces subventions de transport pour l'exportation, pas plus tard que la semaine dernière alors que j'étais en voyage au Japon. Si au moins les produits étaient systématiquement inspectés à leur arrivée ici, on pourrait compétitionner à critères égaux. Exportant nous-mêmes un peu partout dans le monde, je dirais que le Canada doit être le seul pays où 90 % des produits importés ne sont pas inspectés. Les accords de libre-échange ne pourront jamais être équitables dans ces conditions-là, et ils vont toujours coûter des emplois au Québec et au Canada.

“L'innovation et la création de nouveaux produits se révèlent à la fois un défi et un atout stratégique.”

—Liliane Colpron



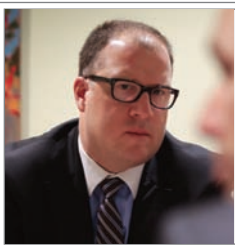
E. Di Emanuele — Chez MNP, nous avons constaté que bon nombre de nos clients partout au pays sont préoccupés par deux sujets d'importance, soit la relève et la gestion du risque d'entreprise. Quelle est votre position sur ces sujets?

P. Turner — À titre de compagnie publique, nos plans de relève sont revus périodiquement, ils sont entièrement intégrés

à notre exploitation. Pour la gestion du risque, je dirais que c'est le grand changement des trois dernières années, tant avec nos assureurs, nos partenaires financiers, notre conseil d'administration que nos clients.

L. Colpron — Chez nous, la question de la relève a été envisagée dès la fondation de l'entreprise. La deuxième génération est en poste depuis le début, et la troisième génération — actuellement aux études — a déjà témoigné de l'intérêt à prendre le relais. En ce qui concerne le risque, comme nous nous sommes toujours autofinancés avec les institutions traditionnelles, la prudence a constamment été notre mot d'ordre.

E. Doyon — En tant que jeune entreprise, cette dynamique de la relève nous intéresse particulièrement. Comme notre objectif à moyen terme (5 à 10 ans) est de nous positionner comme un consolidateur dans l'industrie au Québec et ensuite au Canada, nous sommes ouverts à considérer des offres d'acquisition qui permettraient de garder les talents localement et d'assurer la pérennité des entreprises. Il pourrait s'agir d'achats, mais aussi d'alliances stratégiques.



“L'industrie alimentaire connaîtra inévitablement de grands mouvements au Québec à court et moyen termes.”

—Stéphane Bouchard

S. Cloutier — Les fusions dans le secteur canadien du commerce de détail, l'incidence de Walmart et l'arrivée de Target au pays changent le paysage des supermarchés. Quelle incidence ces nouvelles réalités ont-elles sur vos affaires?

S. Bouchard — L'industrie alimentaire connaîtra inévitablement de grands mouvements au Québec à court et moyen termes. Des nouveaux créneaux de marchés naîtront. Les grands détaillants augmenteront leurs offres. De ce fait, toutes les parties devront user de stratégies pour gagner de l'espace tablette. Il n'y a pas que Target et Walmart qui sont les nouveaux joueurs dans l'industrie alimentaire. Par exemple, il y a Pharmaprix et Jean-Coutu qui génèrent déjà plus de 2,5 % des ventes alimentaires au Canada, un pourcentage qui ne cesse de croître. Les créneaux se croisent et la complexité s'accroît. La définition du “One Stop Shop” évolue.

C. Trottier — Nous avons tenté l'expérience avec Walmart quand ils se sont installés au Québec avec leur section épicerie. Étant donné la nature de nos produits de spécialité, les volumes n'étaient pas très élevés pour les frais déboursés. Les produits de niche, qui sont souvent achetés de façon impulsive, sont probablement moins à leur place dans ce genre de commerce que les produits de grand volume.

“Je peux vous assurer que les consommateurs canadiens sont parmi les mieux protégés au monde.”

—Henry Mizrahi



S. Cloutier — À part mettre de gros dollars sur la table, comment les produits québécois peuvent-ils gagner de la place sur les étalages?

C. Trottier — Le premier exercice est certainement d'arriver à convaincre les acheteurs de la valeur de nos produits et de l'importance de leur donner de la visibilité.

E. Di Emanuele — Comme dernière question de cette table ronde, à quoi ressemblera selon vous le secteur québécois de la transformation des aliments et des boissons dans cinq ans?

H. Mizrahi — Je suis encouragé par l'avenir. Nous évoluons dans un secteur dynamique, qui a amené de nombreuses innovations. Je crois que nous avons beaucoup à offrir aux marchés canadien et internationaux. Comme nous l'avons fait ces 10 dernières années, nous rechercherons la clientèle qui n'est pas satisfaite avec les produits ou services qu'elle reçoit — ce qui arrive fréquemment avec des compagnies devenues trop grosses — et nous nous en occuperons de façon exemplaire.

N. Lelièvre — Dans l'eau, nous n'avons pas le choix d'aller vers la diversification. Nous envisageons d'ajouter de nouveaux arômes de même que revoir nos contenants. Nous visons également informer davantage le consommateur sur la différence qui existe entre une véritable eau minérale pétillante et une eau de source à laquelle on a rajouté du gaz carbonique, ce qui crée de la confusion dans l'esprit de plusieurs. Nous espérons donc que les gens soient plus informés et puissent ainsi faire des choix en conformité avec leurs valeurs. 🍓



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De la ferme à l'assiette du consommateur, MNP aide les entreprises bioalimentaires à réussir. Aujourd'hui, nous servons plus de 15 000 clients de votre secteur et nous comprenons les défis et les occasions d'affaires qui y sont associés. Comptant sur une équipe de professionnels situés à travers le Canada, du Québec jusqu'en Colombie-Britannique, nous vous offrons bien plus que des conseils issus du même moule.

Pour découvrir comment MNP peut vous aider, communiquez avec les membres de l'équipe du Québec : Sheldon Krakower (sheldon.krakower@mnp.ca), Isabelle Renaud (isabelle.renaud@mnp.ca), ou Henry Rosenblum (henry.rosenblum@mnp.ca) au 514.861.9724.





Dans l'oeil du *Dragon*

Des entrepreneurs québécois oeuvrant dans le secteur de l'alimentation et des boissons tentent leur chance dans la version provinciale de la populaire série télévisée *Dragons'Den*.

PAR HÉLÈNA KATZ

Pour Cesar Kounkou, propriétaire de Les Aliments Kwanga Excellence de Montréal, tout a commencé il y a six ans en mangeant des rouleaux de manioc traditionnels avec quelques amis. “J'avais l'habitude d'en faire avec ma grand-mère au Congo; la tâche était longue et ardue”, explique M. Kounkou. Ses amis et lui se demandaient comment ils pourraient concevoir un produit similaire de façon plus efficace tout en conservant le goût traditionnel de leur enfance. Le manioc, originaire d'Amérique latine et importé en Afrique, “est consommé partout dans le monde sauf en Amérique du Nord et en Europe”, précise M. Kounkou.

Aujourd'hui, Kwanga Excellence produit 100 kg de farine de manioc fermenté et non fermenté par semaine dans une usine de 2 000 pi ca. Elle fabrique également des rouleaux de manioc, lesquels aux dires de M. Kounkou, ont un meilleur goût et une durée de conservation plus longue que les produits ➔ *continué sur p.61*

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Dion Wiebe, président, Rosdown Natural Foods, Abbotsford
(Colombie-Britannique)

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→ continué de p.58

traditionnels enveloppés dans des feuilles de bananier. Les consommateurs achètent les rouleaux de manioc dans un sac, et ils les cuisinent eux-mêmes. “Il suffit de faire bouillir de l’eau; le pain de manioc est prêt à manger 20 minutes plus tard. Cet aliment 100 % naturel ne contient aucun additif chimique.” Les produits se retrouvent au Québec et à Ottawa dans les magasins ethniques, les boulangeries et les restaurants, ainsi que chez Metro et Provigo.

Comme le manioc contient moins de 5 % de gluten, Kwanga Excellence vise le marché des produits sans gluten avec sa nouvelle baguette sans gluten à base de farine de manioc. M. Kounkou mentionne que les gens peuvent utiliser la farine de manioc dans leurs recettes de gâteau sans en altérer le goût.

Comme beaucoup de nouveaux entrepreneurs, M. Kounkou a besoin de capital pour faire croître son entreprise. À l’instar de plusieurs compagnies de transformation alimentaire, Kwanga Excellence a eu la chance de faire valoir son plan de mise en marché aux cinq investisseurs de l’émission “Dans l’œil du

de 100 000 \$ dans Chocadel proposée par Adel Khalil, mais la publicité qui découla de son apparition télévisée a payé des dividendes. La publicité a eu un bon impact, commente-t-il, occasionnant des retombées d’environ 50 000 \$. “Par la suite, j’ai reçu quatre offres, chacune plus intéressante que la précédente.” Conséquemment, il a commencé à travailler avec Horizon Nature en novembre dernier, laquelle s’occupe de la production et de la distribution, permettant à M. Khalil de se concentrer sur la recherche et développement.

Chocadel produit des tablettes de chocolat cru biologique depuis trois ans. “Le cacao est consi-

“Une fois que vous aurez gagné un dragon à votre cause, il vous ouvrira son réseau de contacts.”

dragon”, dont l’objectif consiste à obtenir un montant d’argent en échange d’actions dans l’entreprise. Certains entrepreneurs concluent une entente tandis que d’autres repartent les mains vides.

M. Kounkou et son associé ont demandé 40 000 \$ en échange d’une participation de 20 % dans l’entreprise. Les Aliments Kwanga Excellence n’a pas trouvé preneur. Les dragons, peu familiers avec le manioc, ont persisté à le considérer comme un produit de niche, soulignant la nécessité de le faire connaître davantage au public. M. Kounkou n’a pas été découragé pour autant : “Honnêtement, ça s’est très bien passé”, remarque-t-il. Il est reparti avec un prix de 7 000 \$ et une visibilité accrue pour son entreprise.

Maintenant, M. Kounkou vise la version anglophone de l’émission: Dragons’Den. Il est fin prêt à présenter son offre. Il est convaincu que les entrepreneurs qui réussissent sont ceux qui connaissent très bien leur produit, tout en demeurant humbles et modestes. “Dites-leur où vous êtes, où vous voulez aller, et que vous avez besoin d’eux pour vous y rendre, dit-il. Ils doivent sentir qu’ils montent à bord en compagnie d’un partenaire solide qui sait où il s’en va.” Les dragons, ajoute-t-il, peuvent apporter plus que de l’argent sur la table. “Une fois que vous aurez gagné un dragon à votre cause, il vous ouvrira son réseau de contacts.”

Les dragons n’ont pas non plus saisi l’offre d’investissement

déré comme la nourriture des dieux, évoque M. Khalil. Dans le temps des Mayas, celui qui possédait le plus de cacao dans son champ était considéré comme le plus riche. C’était comme de l’or.” Le cacao cru a été commercialisé pour la première fois en Californie il y a une dizaine d’années, précise M. Khalil, et il veut être le premier à le proposer aux Québécois. Il est d’avis qu’il s’agit du bon moment. “La prédilection pour les aliments crus à Montréal se fait beaucoup plus sentir aujourd’hui qu’il y a 10 ans”, dit-il.

Les tablettes de chocolat Chocadel sont apparues juste avant la Saint-Valentin en 2010, et elles se sont retrouvées dans une cinquantaine de magasins d’aliments naturels au bout de quelques mois. “Nous faisons tout à la main, insiste M. Khalil. Nous moulons à la main, nous versons à la main et nous décorons à la main.” Les tablettes de chocolat contiennent de



69 à 70 % de cacao, mais ne renferment ni noix, ni lait, ni sucre raffiné. La compagnie produit actuellement quelque 10 000 tablettes de chocolat par mois, lesquelles sont vendues au Québec, en Ontario, en Colombie-Britannique et en Californie.

François Gaudet, qui a fondé La Mouchetée dans la région du Saguenay en 2010, s'est présenté devant les dragons avec

une offre de truite fumée selon une recette familiale. "Ma mère faisait fumer le poisson au feu de bois et tout le monde en raffolait", se rappelle-t-il. Au moment de son apparition à l'émission Dans l'oeil du dragon, le fumoir que sa mère utilisait avait décuplé de taille. Ses produits sont disponibles dans sept points d'approvisionnement au Québec, dont le Marché

des saveurs du Marché Jean-Talon à Montréal.

M. Gaudet fait fumer 100 livres de truites d'élevage chaque semaine, mais il veut augmenter sa production à 2 000 lb tout en restant artisanal. La croissance nécessite toutefois de l'argent. "Je suis allé à la télévision pour trouver des mentors et des partenaires qui développeraient la compagnie à mon rythme", dit-il. Il a demandé 20 000 \$ aux dragons en échange d'une participation de 15 % dans son entreprise. "Ils aimaient tous le produit", raconte M. Gaudet.

Les dragons lui ont offert 40,000\$ contre 30 % des parts. Il a accepté l'offre, mais il s'est rétracté par la suite lorsqu'il fut question de la façon de produire ces truites fumées à la manière d'autrefois. "Je ne suis pas intéressé à industrialiser la production de La Mouchetée, explique-t-il. Je ne veux pas que mon entreprise devienne aussi grande qu'ils le souhaiteraient."

Mais, tout comme M. Kounkou, M. Gaudet n'est pas reparti bredouille, empochant un prix de 7,000\$ et bénéficiant d'une nouvelle appréciation pour son entreprise. "Avec les dragons, j'ai réalisé que ma compagnie n'avait pas de prix. J'ai un beau produit, un bon produit, se félicite-t-il. Je rencontre des gens qui disent ne pas aimer le poisson. Je le leur fais goûter puis... miam. De la poussette à la marchette, les gens mangent mes poissons. Je n'ai pas l'intention de les fabriquer autrement [avec un procédé industriel], car ils perdraient ce qui les différencie. ●"

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— Norman Leung
Ingénieur d'application, Marketing, Praxair

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The NAT color® range from Naturex offers endless possibilities in color through its E-Color™ and VegeBrite™ lines.

E-Color™ is a complete range of high performing color additives that is extracted and isolated from natural origins to ensure exact color targets are achieved. VegeBrite™ gives a comprehensive, vibrant palette of brilliant shades made exclusively from concentrates of fruits and vegetables, edible flowers and algae. Obtained without selective extraction or isolation, these ingredients perform superbly in a wide range of applications. For the best natural colors, contact our team of experts today.

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