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FOOD *in* CANADA

Canada's food & beverage processing magazine

Great Catch

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COMING
Next Month

Don't miss these great reads
in the January/February 2017
issue of *Food in Canada*

- > **Bake & Snack Report:**
Chips & tortillas
- > **Food Trends:** Spice
- > **Ingredient Spotlight:** Seeds
- > **Food in Canada's 2017
Resource Guide Book**



Research Chefs in Canada

And much more...

Make sure you don't miss this issue!

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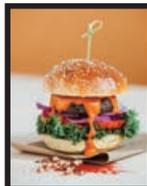
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Social media superstars

About a year ago I received an email from a well-known actor telling me about her online newsletter. Over the past year her informal essays (as well as stories from friends and guest writers) on everything from food and fashion to art and politics, have both entertained me and enraged me. It's also become the first email I open in the morning when it arrives each week, probably because reading it over a cup of tea feels like a lively conversation with a thought-provoking friend.

Establishing that “personal” connection with consumers has become a key goal for online marketers, especially as more of us live a good portion of our lives online. Content provider Written.com notes that 18.7 million people worldwide now publish some form of blog (Wikipedia defines blog as “a discussion or informational website...consisting of discrete, often informal diary-style text entries”) on either blogging websites or social networks. The statistics are overwhelmingly favourable for businesses connecting with consumers in this way. “Eighty-one per cent of U.S. online consumers trust information and advice from blogs,” notes Written.com. “Sixty-one per cent of U.S. online consumers have made a purchase based on recommendations from a blog.” And incredibly, “small businesses that blog get 126 per cent more lead growth than small businesses that do not.”

If you don't think your online game is up to par, consider working with an established social media influencer. A good place to start is the Food Bloggers of Canada (FBC). The organization now

has 2,300 active members writing about every conceivable aspect of the Canadian food and beverage industry. Many of these sites are incredibly creative and well researched. “People are starting to realize that it's not this hobby profession anymore,” explains Ethan Adeland, FBC co-founder and managing director, Sponsorship & Marketing. “There's great value both in the quality of what people turn out, and the connections they can create with readers. They can become the human face behind the recipe or the product.”

As well as being both a resource and showcase for food blogs in Canada, FBC connects brands with online influencers to help companies create engaging digital content designed to inspire customers. “Our goal is to find synergies that are mutually beneficial,” says Adeland. Strategies may be as simple as having bloggers introduce followers to new products through recipes or reviews, or more complex campaigns involving support from multiple writers on different online media platforms. “You can start small and still see some amazing coverage on social media,” notes Adeland, “but you have to be realistic. You have to realize that blogging is part of an overall marketing and advertising pie, and it really depends on how much you're willing to put towards it.” Something to think about as you consider how to best reach your customers in 2017. 🍓

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PLATINUM



NATIONAL



Guinness really is better in Ireland

A new study in the *Journal of Food Science* provides what it calls “some limited scientific evidence” to support a popular theory among Guinness lovers that the stout tastes the best when you’re drinking it in Ireland. For one year, four lucky researchers travelled to 14 countries and visited 71 establishments serving Guinness in 33 cities to collect data for 103 tastings. While the tasting scores of Guinness were high everywhere, tastings in pubs in Ireland scored significantly higher.



News > file



Winnipeg’s oldest brewery under new management

Fort Garry Brewing Company Ltd., Manitoba’s oldest brewery, has new owners. Saskatchewan’s Golden Opportunities Fund Inc. has been identified as the entity that acquired the brewery from Vancouver-based Russell Breweries Inc. While the sale was made public in October, the deal only became official after formal approval by Russell stakeholders at a meeting in late November.

“The Fort Garry Brewing Company is a long-standing brewery with many years of history behind it,” says Wanda Hunchak, vice-president of Westcap Mgt. Ltd., the firm that manages Golden Opportunities. “The company has a strong management team and the craft brewing market is showing signs of strong growth.”

“We are happy to be returning ownership largely to Manitobans,” Hunchak adds. She reports that the Golden Opportunities Fund has partnered with local Winnipeg investors, including Winnipeg lawyer David Filmon, and Charlie Spiring, founder and former CEO of Wellington West Capital. The new owners paid \$7.7 million for the brewer of local beers such as Fort Garry Pale Ale and Frontier Pilsner.

Fort Garry was founded in 1930, acquired by Molson in 1960 and closed in 1990 after the merger of Molson and Carling O’Keefe. The brand was revived in the mid-1990s by the late Richard Hoeschen, great-grandson of the founder, and then acquired by Russell in 2007.

Golden Opportunities was launched in Saskatchewan in 1999, where it raises about \$40 million per year, and it began raising money in Manitoba in 2008. The fund raises about \$1 million per year from Manitoba investors and has a mandate to invest in the province’s companies. This deal is the largest investment that the fund has made in Manitoba. Golden Opportunities has invested almost \$341 million in 127 companies since its inception and has more than 28,000 shareholders across the two provinces. Investments in the fund also include a 20 per cent provincial tax credit.

The deal to acquire Fort Garry is being done simultaneously with another transaction that will see the rest of Russell’s B.C. brewing operations acquired by

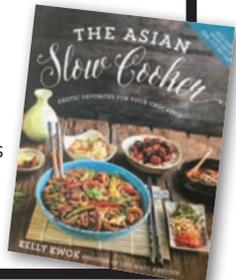
another company owned by Yong Lin and Xiaomin Wang for \$1.8 million. The two deals will effectively wind down Russell.

—Myron Love



Popular Canadian food blogger Kelly Kwok has taken her favourite childhood recipes and adapted them to suit the needs of today’s busy family in her new cookbook *The Asian Slow Cooker: Exotic Favorites for Your Crockpot*. Featuring 80 recipes that can all be made in a slow cooker (or one pot), the book aims to eliminate that last-minute scramble to get dinner on the table. It also seeks to help home chefs overcome any fears they might have about cooking Asian food from scratch.

“All of these recipes are meant for anyone who wants to explore new and exciting ways to prepare Asian cuisine at home. I believe making them in the slow cooker helps take the fear out of cooking with traditional and unfamiliar Asian ingredients, since it does most of the work for you,” writes Kwok in the book’s introduction.



Gay Lea investing in dairy innovation

Mississauga, Ont.-based Gay Lea Foods Co-operative Limited has announced an investment of \$140 million over four years to establish what it's calling "an innovative nutrition and nutraceutical-grade dairy ingredients hub" in Canada.

"As a dairy farmer and co-operative member owner, I am excited that Gay Lea Foods is driving growth through innovation and the development of new markets that will increase demand for milk from Canadian dairy farms," says Steve Dolson, chair of Gay Lea Foods. "I am also proud that Gay Lea Foods is once again leading the way by demonstrating that rural Ontario is capable of world class innovation and



food manufacturing."

Phase one of this project is expected to begin in early 2017, with a \$60-million

expansion plan in the village of Teeswater in Bruce County, Ont. Phase one will also include a \$3-million investment to build a Research & Development Centre of Excellence in Hamilton, Ont. This working laboratory and innovation incubator will be "the nexus between R&D and commercialization throughout Gay Lea Foods' operations," according to Gay Lea, and will also service Gay Lea's partners in the dairy, food and health sectors.

The first phase also includes upgrades and expansion at Gay Lea's Toronto area food manufacturing facilities to increase the company's capabilities and competitiveness, improving cost efficiencies, while also working to reduce its overall environmental footprint. ➔

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Dairy Farmers of Canada unveils new logo

The Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) has unveiled a new logo. According to the DFC, the logo was designed to be eye-catching, easier to understand, to create a stronger brand identity and integration, and to leverage the positive relationship farmers currently have with consumers.

“I am very proud to show Canadians the new face of Dairy Farmers of Canada, after months of discussion and consultation,” says Caroline Emond, executive director of DFC. “It is exciting for our organization to move into a new era, and vitally important that we continue to evolve as an organization within an innovative and dynamic sector. Today we highlight and celebrate the hard work of our dairy farmers, as well as their great contribution to the overall physical, emotional and



economic health of Canadians.”

The standing cow in the new logo was inspired by “the simple, natural purity of milk,” according to the DFC. The box it stands on could represent all different kinds of farm ground and bedding, while the bright blue colour was chosen to be optimistic and represent freshness. Overall the logo aims to represent Canada’s farmers, their pride and commitment

to the animals they raise, and the natural healthy products they provide for Canadians.

Provision Coalition tackles food waste

Guelph, Ont.-based Provision Coalition has released a new online toolkit to help



evaluate and reduce food loss and waste at the processing level.

Although it’s not the primary source of food waste in Canada, Canadian manufacturers and packagers accounted for 20 per cent of the food wasted in 2014, according to a report commissioned in part by Provision Coalition. “Food loss and waste is not just a pressing economic issue, it has a direct connection to Canadian food security and environmental impact from wasted resources,” says Cher Mereweather, executive director with Provision Coalition. “Including food loss and waste in the federal government’s new food policy would go a long way to addressing this issue across the supply chain from farm to consumer.”

Provision Coalition’s online food loss and waste toolkit has been developed specifically for use in the more than 6,000 food and beverage manufacturing businesses in Canada. It offers manufacturers the ability to quantify avoidable food waste in order to develop, implement and measure cost-effective reduction strategies.

LA ROCCA’S GREATEST HITS

To celebrate 30 years in business, Richmond Hill, Ont.-based La Rocca Creative Cakes celebrated with the launch of a limited-edition Greatest Hits Cake. Available at participating grocery stores from the end of September through the 2016 holiday season, this unique cake creation blends classic “hits” from La Rocca’s 30-year history in business. Billed as “seven tasty tracks in one delicious serving,” here’s how the layers break down:

- Base:** Devil’s Food Chocolate Sponge Cake
- 2nd layer:** White Chocolate Truffle
- 3rd layer:** Chocolate Covered Almond Meringue
- 4th layer:** Dark Chocolate Truffle
- 5th layer:** Red Velvet Sponge Cake
- 6th layer:** Signature Cream Cheese Icing
- Topping:** Edible vanilla-flavoured “pearls” (the symbol of the 30th anniversary)



The tool offers three methods to estimate the amount (in quantity and dollars lost) of organic waste generated, with each method increasing in the level of detail and precision. Users are able to identify the root cause and develop solutions to take action. It's available at no cost to industry. To develop this toolkit, Provision Coalition partnered with industry stakeholders across the supply chain.

The toolkit can be found at: provision-coalition.com/tools/foodwastereduction-andpracticestoolkit

Effort needed to reduce calories from non-alcoholic beverages



Last year the Canadian Beverage Association set a goal to reduce the daily per capita calories consumed through liquid refreshment beverages (LRBs) — all non-alcoholic beverages except dairy products and hot coffee and tea — by 20 per cent between 2015 and 2025.

How are they doing so far? A report released by the Conference Board of Canada in October has established a baseline for the “Balance Calories initiative,” showing what additional efforts will be required to meet that target. Interestingly, the report showed that daily per capita calories consumed through LRBs had already dropped by a whopping 20 per cent between 2004 and 2014 to 142.5 calories. But from this

baseline of 142.5 calories, the further 20-per-cent calorie reduction goal won't be achieved through projected trends alone, according to the Conference Board report — concerted industry

efforts will be necessary to reduce LRB calorie consumption by an additional 9.5 percentage points “beyond that which can be expected through forecast market trends.” ➔



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“The Future of Local” explored at workshop

It was all about the “local” at an event held in Scarborough, Ont. last month, as food producers and processors, foodservice operators, and other food industry professionals joined Gordon Food Service and several Ontario producer associations to discuss local food-related marketing tools and techniques.



Canadian grocery spending habits changing

Nearly one-quarter of Canadians are currently worried about how to pay for groceries, while more than 50 per cent are now altering their grocery shopping habits thanks to fluctuating food prices, according to a recent study. Lead researcher Sylvain Charlebois, dean of the faculty of management at Dalhousie University in Halifax, called the findings “surprising.” Surveying more than 1,000 adults in Canada online during the month of October, the research sought to determine if price swings caused shoppers to rethink how they choose their groceries.



Called “The Future of Local,” the workshop focused on helping foodservice chains and independents collaborate on in-restaurant marketing approaches to add value to their businesses by promoting the locally grown, raised and processed ingredients they already buy.

“We believe consumer interest in buying local ingredients will continue to grow, fuelled by a view that supporting regional/provincial producers and processors will create more sustainable food systems and is more socially responsible,” says Lisa MacNeil, president of Gordon Food Service Ontario. “We are delighted to be working with farming organizations, which represent over 30,000 farms and six million acres of Ontario farmland, in order to foster increased awareness and

knowledge sharing about the high quality and competitively priced ingredients available in Ontario. We would like to thank Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Egg Farmers of Ontario, Grain Farmers of Ontario, Mushrooms Canada, Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers and Turkey Farmers of Ontario, for joining our mission.”

The November session was co-hosted by Centennial College and was held at the college’s new Leed Silver certified Culinary Arts Centre. This was the second workshop in a series, the first of which was held in October at Niagara College’s Canadian Food & Wine Institute Innovation Centre.

Packaging industry focuses on sustainability

Packaging industry professionals gathered in Toronto last month to discuss sustainability solutions at the Paper and Paperboard Packaging Environmental Council’s (PPEC) annual event.

Entitled “How Green is Your Customer?” this year’s event focused on issues and opportunities involved in corporate sustainability. As well as acknowledging that operating sustainably was now a cost of doing business, speakers stressed the importance of collaboration with competitors to achieve industry-wide sustainability goals, as well as to continue to meet the “green

MAPLE LEAF TO CLOSE THAMESFORD, ONT. PLANT

Maple Leaf Foods is closing its turkey processing plant in Thamesford, Ont. The work currently being done at that plant will be moved to Sofina Foods’ new facility in Mitchell, Ont. The transition is expected to occur over the next 18 months, and the move will result in approximately 400 jobs lost.

The Mississauga, Ont.-based company says the closure was necessary due to the age of the Thamesford plant, noting it wouldn’t be financially feasible to maintain or upgrade the facility. “This was a very difficult decision given the impact on our employees and the community, but necessary given the substantial physical limitations at our 80-year-old Thamesford plant,” says Maple Leaf CEO Michael McCain. Maple Leaf says it will work with the community to find a new use for its facility. It will also try to find “alternate employment” for the workers currently employed in Thamesford.

needs” of CPG customers and consumers. More packaging companies are also looking to collaborate with retailers and producers on environmental goals, and to help work towards Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs.

Discussion also centred on innovations in both products and operating efficiencies as ways the paper packaging industry is decreasing water wastage, as well as waste to landfills. PPEC executive



director John Mullinder noted that the organization is committed to a landfill ban, especially for corrugated packaging.

Speakers debated whether the aim of reusing packaging materials — the second of the “three Rs”: reduce, reuse, recycle — is still valid, as recycling becomes more important in building a circular economy in the packaging industry. “You reuse until you can recycle. They are complementary, and it becomes a balancing act between economic and environmental impacts,” commented Scott Tudor, director of Sustainability for Sobeys Inc. John Coyne, vice-president, Legal & External Affairs and general counsel for Unilever Canada Inc., agreed, noting that “Both are necessary, but we need to perfect recycling as we’re doing this.” Coyne added that landfill bans will inevitably become more of a priority for governments, meaning sustainability programs are now essential for businesses.

Canada invests in dairy to boost sector under CETA

The Canadian government has announced an investment of \$350 million for two new programs to help boost the dairy sector in anticipation of the

Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) coming into force.

“This is an opportunity for Canadian dairy producers and processors to modernize their operations and become more competitive in Canada and in →


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international markets. I encourage producers to leverage the new market access provided by CETA and other free trade agreements in order to grow their business,” says Chrystia Freeland, Canada’s Minister of International Trade.

The two new programs are:

- \$250 million over five years for a Dairy Farm Investment Program that will provide targeted contributions to help Canadian dairy farmers update farm technologies and systems and improve productivity through upgrades to their equipment. This could include the adoption of robotic milkers, automated feeding systems, and herd management tools.
- \$100 million over four years for a Dairy Processing Investment Fund that will help dairy processors modernize their operations and improve efficiency and productivity, as well as diversify their products to pursue new market opportunities.

SUPPLIER NEWS



- > **Reiser** has begun a significant expansion of its Canton, Mass. headquarters to support the continuing growth of its business. The construction will add 46,000 sq. ft. of space, increasing the size of the facility by approximately 70 per cent. Construction began earlier this year and is targeted to be completed in 2017.
- > **Dealers Ingredients** has launched its new website at dealersingredients.com. The site features a solution-oriented ingredient product drop down menu, up-to-date news and event announcements, supplier partnerships and the Dealers Joint Trial Program.
- > **DuPont Nutrition & Health** has announced a joint development and licensing agreement for exclusive rights to selected fucosylated human milk oligosaccharides (HMOs), including 2'-fucosyllactose, with **Inbiose**, a Belgium-based producer of specialty carbohydrates.

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VANCOUVER RESEARCHER WINS FOOD SAFETY AWARD



A Vancouver researcher has been honoured with an award for her efforts to tackle food fraud and keep contaminants out of the food supply. Yaxi Hu, a 24-year-old PhD student in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems at the University of British Columbia, has developed

a quick and accurate method for detecting industrial and naturally occurring food contaminants, including banned food dyes and potentially harmful biotoxins. Her work stands out because it applies solid state nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy (a technology typically used in biology and medical research) to food science.

The Mitacs Award for Outstanding Innovation-PhD was presented to Hu by Mitacs, a national non-profit organization that partners companies, government, and academia to promote Canadian research and training. “Maintaining consumer confidence is essential to our food supply,” says Hu. “The method we are developing is less labour-intensive, and more fast and accurate, making it a viable platform for food inspection agencies, the food industry and researchers as they work to prevent food adulteration and ensure contaminants remain well below what are considered harmful levels.”

> **Spiroflow Automation Solutions, Inc.** has opened its new office in Greer, S.C. The office will provide capacity for increased customer support, engineering, sales, service, human resources, and leadership functions.



> On Oct. 27, **Nourish Food Marketing** welcomed clients, guests and the media to celebrate the opening of its new test kitchen and creative studio in Toronto's Liberty Village. The new test kitchen and studio is a creative setting for both the culinary staff and photography/videography team to prepare, cook, taste and create in a custom designed space.



> **CHEP**, a global leader in supply chain management solutions, has been named by *Canadian Occupational Safety Magazine* (COSM) as one of Canada's safest employers. CHEP received the Gold Award in the retail and service sector at a gala event in Toronto in October.

> Vancouver-based **VersaCold Logistics Services** has announced that seven more of its facilities have been approved to export meat and meat products to China. VersaCold now has 10 total approved facilities in Canada. ➔

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PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



Goldner

> Eriez has promoted **Andrew Goldner** to director-Export Sales. > Delta, B.C.-based The Original Cakerie, a manufacturer of frozen desserts for retail and foodservice customers across North America, has named **Paul J.**

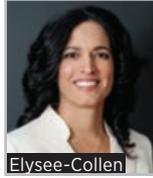


Saad

Lapadat as CEO of a new holding company established to accelerate growth. > Dempsey Corporation, a supplier of specialty and functional food ingredients across Canada, is strengthening its food sales team. **Adeelah Saad** has joined Dempsey as Account Manager - Food covering Western Canada; **Jeffery**



Stolec



Elysee-Collen

Stolec has been promoted to senior account manager in Ontario; and **Belinda Elysee-Collen** is now regional sales manager.



Warren

> Edlong Dairy Technologies has hired **Beth Warren** as Chief Commercial Officer, responsible for global sales, marketing and customer service.

> The Canadian Meat Council has elected **Troy Warren** as president and chair of the board for 2016 to 2018. > **Allen Kirkpatrick** is now the executive director of the Canadian Corrugated and Containerboard Association. The appointment follows the retirement of former executive director **David Andrews**, who will remain on the board as a director.

Hendrick's Gin unveils unique "CORGAN" for the holidays



To the delight of holiday shoppers at the Toronto Eaton Centre on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1, Hendrick's Gin unveiled what it called the CORGAN: the "Cucumber Organ of Remarkably Glorious Nirvana." Built from scratch using technology created specifically for this demonstration, this unusual organ's keys were made from real, whole cucumbers — 49 to be exact. Some of Toronto's top organists performed an array of holiday tunes on the CORGAN, while cucumber carollers distributed cucumbers and tiny Hendrick's gin and tonics to weary shoppers passing by.



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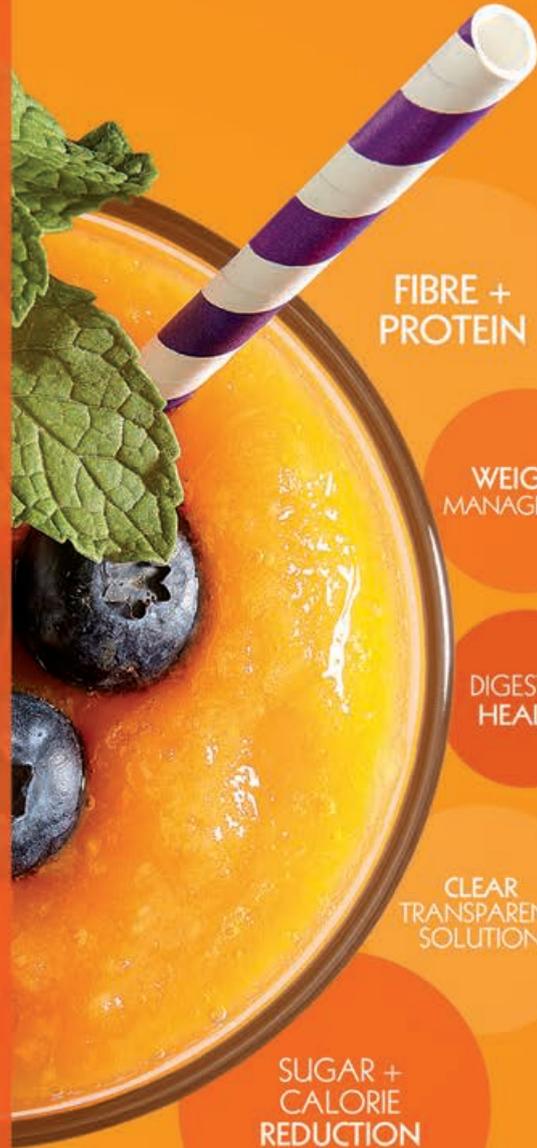
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IN BRIEF



> Starting in September 2017, Toronto's **George Brown College Chef School** students will have the opportunity to pursue a bachelor of commerce with a culinary specialization. This is the first program of its kind in Canada.

> **Fresh Media** of Charlottetown, P.E.I., won the award for the best agricultural social media marketing program in Canada in the last year at the Canadian Agri-Marketing

> Just one year after becoming the first-ever Canadian whisky to win Jim Murray's coveted title of World Whisky of the Year, **Crown Royal Northern Harvest Rye** was named the Best Canadian Whisky of the Year in the 2017 edition of *Jim Murray's Whisky Bible*.



> **CAFE** (the Canadian Association of Family Enterprise) has honoured **Doi Chaang Coffee Co.**, a Vancouver-based family-owned and operated company established in 2007, with the 2016 Family Enterprise of the Year (FEYA) award.



Association's Best of CAMA 2016 Awards held last month in Calgary.

> **Evergreen Herbs Ltd.** of Surrey B.C and **Jaycee Herb Traders** of Guelph, Ont. have announced a strategic partnership under the new banner **Green Thyme Herbs Ltd.**



> **Vitalus Nutrition Inc.** and **Gay Lea Foods Co-operative Limited** have entered into a joint venture to process dairy ingredients and butter in Winnipeg. The joint venture includes plans for significant upgrades to modernize an existing food manufacturing facility, creating a need for new skilled labour, increased drying capacity in Western Canada, and new butter production to respond to market demands.

> **Diamond Estates Wines & Spirits Inc.** held the official groundbreaking ceremony for its new retail and wine tasting facility in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. in October.



> Toronto-based **Global Egg Corporation** is acquiring the **Cargill** Etobicoke egg processing facility in Etobicoke, Ont. from U.S.-based Cargill, Inc.

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> **SUNSET's** innovative **Dill It Yourself Pickle Kit** received rave reviews from attendees at the PMA Fresh Summit in Orlando, Fla. in October, where it earned a PMA Impact Award as well as a Best of Show award for Best Product Promo.



> **The Gustavson Brand Trust Index (GBTI)** measures Canadian consumers' opinions about 276 corporate and product brands across 27 categories. This year, the "winners of consumer trust" in the food-related categories included: Beer - **Alexander Keith's**; Coffee/Tea - **David's Tea**; Confectionery/Snack Foods - **Laura Secord**; and Dairy - **Agropur** (Sealtest, Quebon, L'Extra, Natrel, IOGO).

> **The Canadian Institute of Food Science & Technology (CIFST)** has announced the recipients of its 2016 Institute Awards. They are: Fellow of the Institute, Rotimi Aluko; President's Award, Jenny Tian; Institute

Award, Anne McCannel; William J. Eva Award, Dérick Rousseau; Food Safety and Quality Award, The Food Safety Team, Manitoba Agriculture; and Student Leadership Award, Lan Shi.

> Victoria, B.C.-based **Jusu Bars Inc.** has acquired Calgary-based Cru Juice Inc.

> **Allan Cosman**, past president and CEO of **Ferrero Canada** and past vice-president of Ferrero International, received the **2016 Award of Distinction** from Food & Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC).



(L to R) Rudy Sequeira, Ferrero Canada Ltd.; Shelley Martin, Nestlé/FCPC; Allan Cosman; and Marc Guay, past president of PepsiCo.

> Manitoba pork processor **HyLife Ltd.** has announced an investment up to \$125 million to modernize and expand its integrated pork production and processing system, beginning as early as 2017. This will include another expansion of Hylife's flagship pork processing facility in Neepawa, Man.



> B.C.-based **Hempco Food** and **Fibre Inc.** has found a home for its new hemp foods processing facility in Nisku, Alta., near the Edmonton International Airport, after several months of searching for a new location to expand its hemp seed food processing capacity. Hempco has now entered into a "lease with option to purchase agreement" with Redco Properties Ltd. for a 56,000-sq.-ft. new building location on 4.7 acres.

Canada's first aquaponic food bank farm opens

Canada's first "aquaponic food bank farm" has opened up at the Mississauga Food Bank in Mississauga, Ont. What does this mean? Aquaponics combines aquaculture (raising fish) and hydroponics (growing plants in water and without soil) together in an integrated system.



The Mississauga Food Bank unveiled this new system in November, offering clients access to fish and vegetables. The food bank's executive director Chris Hatch explained in a CBC.ca article that they couldn't get enough fresh produce for the food bank clients, which is what drove them to look at aquaponics.

The farm will produce about 40 heads of lettuce a week, and fish will be harvested every six months, which will produce about 57 kilograms of fish every year. Hatch says this is equal to approximately 10,000 servings of fish and lettuce.

Operating as a closed system, the farm's fish are fed high-quality food and the waste goes into filtration tanks; the waste then breaks down and releases nutrients for plant growth. Water goes to the plant beds where the roots are hanging in the water, and since there's no soil, the plants take the nutrients they need and the cleaner water goes back to the fish tanks.

The aquaponic farm project has been in the works for three years, with construction beginning in August 2016 and the growing starting in late September.

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MARKET COMMENTARY — The U.S. election

The national sport since the U.S. election is to speculate about what Trump's win fallout will mean for Canada. This is mildly entertaining since it's clear that there is no consistency to what this man believes, so no one knows. There are at least five areas that will have economic implications for Canada, directly or indirectly: infrastructure investment; taxation; regulation; energy/environment; and trade.

Trump wants to invest in infrastructure, reduce and simplify taxes, and reduce the regulatory burden (and likely reduce the size of the civil service). All of these will give a shot in the arm to the economy, leading to growth, declining unemployment, and increased inflation. The positive sides of this will likely spill over to more opportunities for Canada, the extent depending on trade policy. So will the negative side. As suggested above, Dr. Yellen at the U.S. Fed is hardening her position on interest rates. Any sign of increased growth and inflation will speed it up. Canada will either follow suit or have even more inflation as the loonie swoons farther.

If Trump actually backs off U.S. climate commitments, unleashes coal and puts grain ethanol on a free market, it will clearly affect Canada's grain industry. Perhaps even greater are

the implications on all Canadian industry of carbon taxes, high minimum wages and Ontario's devastating Green energy program. The extra costs of doing business may send Canadian companies into the U.S. because our governments make it impossible to compete.

Trade policy is extremely intriguing. Most analysts say that TPP's major benefits would be to agriculture, and mostly to livestock and meat, which provide an effective way to export embodied resources like water and land to a growing, prosperous region of the world with shortages of both. With China's president calling for a 21-nation Asia Pacific free trade area, maybe everyone, including Trump, will re-evaluate their positions, including Canada. Canada is at a crossroad. We can be a leading participant or the forgotten northern backwater. With all of our resources, we're already at a \$9 billion annual deficit in trade of manufactured food products. Having high energy costs, high minimum wage rates and puny plants that can't gain economies of size because of lack of market access will ensure our standing as a quaint backwater. ●

Market Trends is prepared by Dr. Larry Martin, who offers a course on managing risk with futures and options in Guelph, Ont. through agrifoodtraining.com. Contact him at DLM@explornet.com or (519) 841-1698.

MARKET HIGHLIGHTS

> Grains: The grain markets survived three bearish USDA reports because unexpectedly high demand offset increased yields. Much was higher than expected export demand, but record ethanol, and more and larger cattle and hogs drove domestic use. Currently, favourable South American currencies, removing Argentine export duties on corn and wheat, and excellent planting weather point to a potentially great crop.

> Corn: After the August low at \$3.25, March rallied through resistance at \$3.55 to \$3.68 before dropping back to the current \$3.50. Some analysts think it has bottomed because it withstood so much bearish news and the expected U.S. switch to soybeans next year. But there is a huge potential corn crop in Brazil and Argentina and the strong U.S. dollar is pressuring. Demand will need to stay strong to support corn prices. With support at \$3.25 and resistance at \$3.68 and \$3.90, we would protect against resistance and buy dips toward support.

> Wheat: March Chicago wheat threatened \$4.10 several times. It's currently at \$4.25 with strong \$4.50 resistance. Reduced crops in Europe, India and Canada support, but a big one in Argentina and huge inventories are the caps. Recent U.S. dry weather strength reminds us there is no correlation between November weather and July yields. Protect against \$4.50 and buy below \$4.15.

> Soy oil: March soy oil dropped since mid-October from \$0.367 to \$0.342 and is again being outperformed by meal. Brazil's crop, rapeseed in Europe and the expected U.S. switch to soybeans, along with improved palm supply, are bearish. Support is at \$0.325 and \$0.305. We would look to price in those areas and protect against resistance at \$0.387.

> Sugar: March sugar topped out at \$0.241 on a key reversal and backed off to the current \$0.20. Data suggest that stocks are the lowest in years, and will be reduced more, but the deficit is declining. Funds are driving the market down. \$0.20 is major support. If it holds, buy here. If not, next support is at \$0.188.

> Natural gas: Natural gas took one more run to \$3.65 on the March, then dropped to \$2.90 on good weather and weak demand. Bad weather is reversing it again. We would protect against resistance at \$3.35.

> Crude oil: Even with talk about OPEC controlling supply, Brent crude can't get above \$55, and even with positive sounds from Saudi's oil minister, March is under \$49. The market is also absorbing a strong U.S. dollar, and a potentially large new deposit in Texas. It is in a \$44 to \$54 range. We would buy the bottom and protect against the top.

> Canadian dollar: I was certainly wrong about the possibility of a Trump victory moving the U.S. dollar down! The election and increasing talk about raising interest rates are buoying it and pressuring the loonie to under \$0.74 on March. Strong support around \$0.73 may be a temporary floor, but Liberal energy policies are killing Canadian industry, and if Trump does what he says, we'll see more close down. Hold the \$0.755 Puts recommended some time ago and/or buy \$0.73s.





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Building confidence and competence with technology

Today's business realities are unlike anything that could have been predicted a decade ago. The days of selecting your suppliers based on their promise to supply "good" products, and consumers knowing only what you wanted them to know, are long gone. The internet, globalization of our food supply, shrinking margins and new regulations have driven epic changes in our industry. Rather than getting down on today's business realities, we should be thinking of them as opportunities.

Building confidence

It's clear that consumers are increasingly interested in food safety. It's also clear that this is an opportunity for manufacturers and their trading partners to engage consumers with messaging that will help build loyalty. Manufacturers also need to understand that communication and transparency are critical to managing the new normal in food safety. Sharing tips on safe food storage and preparation with shoppers helps build a reservoir of goodwill with shoppers that will help when issues like recalls or foodborne illnesses occur. Companies must be open and upfront with consumers in order to gain and retain their trust.

Building competence

Canadian and American food safety legislation is requiring food processors,

and now importers as well, to know much more about their suppliers. Until very recently, importers could import products from virtually anywhere while knowing little, if anything, about the products. All that the importer required was the supplier's written assurance that the product complied with the importing country's food regulations.

“The realities we face today are dramatically different than those we faced a decade ago.”

Domestic food processors in Canada and the U.S. didn't have it quite that easy. A food processor shipping food and/or ingredients across provincial or national borders was supposed to have a HACCP program in place for the product(s) in question. Critical components of any HACCP plan are the prerequisite programs, part of which deal with their supplier's food safety program. Previously, all that a processor needed to do to show HACCP compliance was to have their suppliers complete an annual questionnaire about their food safety program. Rarely, if ever, did the processor audit their supplier's food safety programs if things went smoothly.

Now importers and food processors in the U.S., and soon in Canada, are required to validate and subsequently verify that companies supplying goods to them, whether imported or acquired domestically, have acceptable food safety programs. Included in these requirements is the need for the importer and food processor to test, with some regularity,

the ingredients and/or products to further verify compliance.

There is cloud-based technology to help processors and importers meet new food safety requirements. Systems like ReposiTrak (www.repositrak.com) go beyond just storing digital copies of documents and help to manage compliance with exception-based alerts for expired, missing or inaccurate records. ReposiTrak goes directly to the supplier for all the information you require, which could be the supplier's HACCP plans including their prerequisite program along with how the supplier has validated and verified the HACCP program. Once received, the ReposiTrak system confirms compliance by reading inside uploaded documents and compares contents vs. requirements to detect inaccuracies and/or misrepresentation. ReposiTrak also goes one step further and combines its web-based solution with an in-house team assigned to reach out to those suppliers to help correct persistent non-compliance issues. This is the only cloud-based food safety documentation program exclusively endorsed by the Food Marketing Institute (FMI).

The realities we face today are dramatically different from those we faced a decade ago. Dealing with the diversity of the changes will be challenging. Fortunately, adapting to change and succeeding through innovation is in our DNA. As 2016 draws to a close, I wish everyone a merry Christmas and good fortune in the New Year. 🍎

Dr. R.J. (Ron) Wasik PhD, MBA, CFS, is president of RJW Consulting Canada Ltd. Contact him at rwasik@rjwconsultingcanada.com



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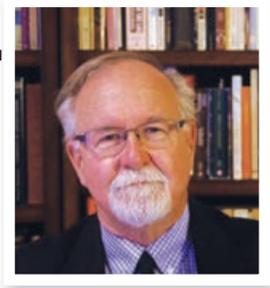
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Another victory for anti-science?

Mandatory labelling of GE food



The United States has just adopted another policy that has important implications for Canada. On July 29, 2016 President Obama signed Bill 764 requiring labelling on all foods to indicate whether or not the food contains GMO ingredients. The federal law will override individual state laws such as the one passed in Vermont, which is considered to be more onerous. Under the bill the U.S. Department of Agriculture has two years to draft implementing regulations. While Canada has had a voluntary labelling standard for some years, Canadian regulators have resisted calls for mandatory labelling. While some proponents argue mandatory labelling provides informed choice to consumers, others argue that mandatory labelling doesn't inform, it misleads the consumer by implying that GE foods are inferior or unsafe. After all, why else would government make labelling mandatory?

Of course, some have taken the position that the push to have mandatory labelling never had anything to do with safety. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, the U.S. National Academy of Science, the British Royal Society and, to quote the AAAS, "every other respected organization that has examined the evidence has come to the same conclusion: consuming foods containing ingredients derived from GM crops is no riskier than consuming the

same foods containing ingredients from crop plants modified by conventional plant improvement techniques." *Scientific American* now explicitly supports GMOs and opposes mandatory labelling as not being science or evidence-based. Even the EU recently concluded, based on more than 130 studies covering 25 years of research involving at least 500 independent research groups, that GE technologies "are not more risky than... conventional plant breeding technologies." This summer 107 Nobel laureates urged Greenpeace to end its opposition to GMOs saying that Greenpeace "deliberately went out of their way to scare people...to raise money for their cause."

There is an argument that advocates of mandatory labelling have never really wanted to inform or protect consumers. They want to use consumers to bring pressure on food companies to segregate and highlight GMOs and on legislators to bring in laws requiring mandatory labelling so that consumers would be scared into thinking that GE must be unsafe. Their real goal is to stigmatize GE food. Waging a war on science, a very small vocal minority of GE food safety deniers have outmanoeuvred a remarkably complacent food and biotech industry that seems to have forgotten that appeasement is rarely an effective policy.

This has important implications for Canada. Given the 6,000 truckloads of food crossing the Canada-U.S. border everyday, we will have little choice but

to follow the U.S. even though many argue the change is misguided, not good public policy, and it could be quite hurtful to Canadian farmers. In any event, Canada will have to engage directly with American regulators in the development of the regulations because there are many important outstanding issues: Will labelling be required if the GE material has been removed from the ingredient through processing (for example, beet sugar and soybean oil)? How will they treat food derived from some of the new gene-editing technologies? Will bar codes be sufficient?

There are still those who both question the science and sincerely want to ensure that consumers have a right to choose. To those who no longer question the science, this policy can undermine the extraordinary promise of GE and even the credibility of our science-based regulatory system. For them, the recent *Scientific American* editorial eloquently captures the serious longer-term danger: "...what it hurts most is the cause of science and reason. Our choices should be based on understanding tradeoffs and trusting the best possible science... If choices are instead driven by herd mentality, a pathological adherence to the Precautionary Principle and a reliance on false moral outrage, then we are not only harming the fate of real human beings around the world but are also impinging on open mindedness and critical thinking, an attitude that can only squelch rational inquiry." 🍎

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



Front-of-packaging nutrition labelling?

Health Canada (HC) is turning up the heat on healthy eating. In October the minister of Health invited comments on its Healthy Eating Strategy. This includes, among other things, revising Canada's Food Guide, reducing the amount of sodium, removing industrially produced trans fat, and restricting the advertising of "unhealthy" foods to children.

There has already been a reduction in trans fat through the current voluntary approach. The goal now is to complete the process of eliminating man-made trans fats, largely contributed by partially hydrogenated oils. In spring 2017 HC is expected to begin consultations to establish new sodium reduction targets. HC will also consult with stakeholders on restricting advertising of food to children. This effort will review the Senate Bill S-228 tabled in September. The Bill, which identifies children as persons under 13 years of age, proposes to restrict both advertising and labelling.

The Healthy Eating Strategy includes food labelling amendments related to nutrition and ingredient labelling. Final regulations are expected to be published in *Canada Gazette II* by the end of 2016. A five-year transition period to implement the new rules had been proposed. The proposed rules did not include requirements for mandatory front-of-packaging (FOP) nutrition information. That is, however, part of HC's current discussion on possible labelling amendments.

Current rules in the *Food and Drug Regulations* (FDR) prohibit representations that characterize the energy value

or amount of a nutrient in a food. The regulations further define what type of representations may be included in labelling or advertising of a food. One such provision permits manufacturers to include statements outside the nutrition facts table (NfT) regarding the content of energy or a nutrient if expressed in applicable units per serving of stated size. It is not uncommon to see the voluntary FOP icon declarations showing the amount of calories or nutrients, or where applicable a per cent daily value (DV). Such nutrition information, also known colloquially as nutrition keys, is currently provided for by the FDR, but is not mandatory.

Some food retailers in Canada have evolved their own nutrition programs, including Loblaws' Guiding Stars, which provides a rating based on a food's nutritional value. Australia and New Zealand have a voluntary FOP Health Star Rating system which incorporates a star rating along with nutrition keys. The Nordic Keyhole program, a simple iconic approach guiding consumers in making food choices, is used voluntarily in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. In contrast, Chile requires foods high in calories, saturated fat, refined sugars and sodium, to include FOP stop sign icons alerting consumers of the higher amounts of these nutrients. The conversation in Canada appears to be heading in the direction of mandating uniform and predictable FOP nutrition labelling in addition to the more traditional NfT that appears elsewhere on the label.

A blended approach might be more compatible with meeting individual



dietary needs. The use of positive or negative symbols alone seems to encourage the view that foods are healthy or unhealthy, rather than focusing on one's total diet. Other issues involve preparation and consumption. A potato as per Loblaws' Guiding Stars program, for example, scores the highest rating. Will the FOP information also require guidance on preparing potatoes without frying, or on the use of excessive amounts of sour cream and salt? In a mandatory FOP nutrition information regime, potatoes would likely not trigger any cautionary callouts related to saturated fat, sodium and sugars. A blended approach might help expose the good nutrient aspect of potatoes in a more tangible way for consumers. A system with just cautionary nutrition keys is relatively easy, as the food would either exceed threshold limits, or not. A system that incorporates calculations to quantify the "healthy" value of a food requires thinking to develop, and would add more complexity for manufacturers to implement.

Ultimately, HC needs a simple, easy to understand and implement FOP nutrition labelling program. It must be effective in helping consumers make better food choices in order to achieve a healthy, well-balanced diet. This will not be easy and this will not happen quickly. ♣

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

Great Catch

BY REBECCA HARRIS

Shellfish isn't for everyone. Even the co-founder of an oyster company, Sue Simcox, admits she wasn't always a fan of the salty mollusks. But when the Vancouver Island resident began adding different flavours to her husband Terry's smoked oysters, which he smoked in the couple's backyard, she became a convert.

Shellfish is riding a wave of popularity, as seafood brands appeal to consumers' desire for health, convenience and flavour





Nova Scotia Prime Lobster



photo: West Coast Smokin' Oysters

“We had all these smoked oysters in the fridge and I thought, ‘how am I going to learn to like these things, because obviously they’re not going anywhere,’” recalls Simcox, who runs West Coast Smokin’ Oysters in Campbell River, B.C. “So I started thinking, ‘people will eat anything if they like the flavour because they can eventually get used to the texture.’”

The couple’s hobby eventually grew into a commercial operation, with oysters sourced from the Fanny Bay Area and processed in Sooke, B.C. Today, West Coast Smokin’ Oysters sells six varieties of naturally smoked oysters: Salt and Pepper, Teriyaki, Thai Chili, Caribbean Sweet Heat, Stout Sensation and Jalapeno Pesto. The company is launching a new Sundried Pesto flavour later this year. The oysters are packaged in flat retort pouches to seal in the freshness, aroma and flavour.

Not only are bold, trendy flavours winning consumers over, people are also interested in oysters for their high iron, magnesium and omega content. On top of that, “there are a lot of people looking at the Paleo lifestyle, and oysters are one of the clean proteins they can eat,” says Simcox. “It makes people happy because they don’t have to just stick to chicken, beef and fish.”

It’s no wonder shellfish is riding a wave of popularity. Whether it’s oysters or mussels, scallops or shrimp, shellfish products tick all the boxes when it comes to what consumers are looking for in food — interesting flavours, convenient meal and snack options, and nutrition.

“Based on our research, one of the key things driving interest is the fact that consumers are constantly looking for healthy food choices,” says Ron Schindler, president of Toronto-based Clover Leaf Seafoods. “The nutrition benefits of our shellfish products are really outstanding. For example, Clover Leaf oysters and mussels are high in protein, very high in iron, low in saturated fat, free of trans fat, a good source omega-3s and are non-GMO and gluten-free, in BPA-free cans.”

Clover Leaf oyster products are the company’s most popular shellfish items, growing at 14 per cent with more than 50-per-cent share of market. Clover Leaf launched smoked oysters with spicy chili a couple of years ago and they now represent over 20 per cent of regular oysters sales, says Schindler. The oysters are naturally hardwood smoked and are packed with a chili in

“ Consumers often view wild-caught, sustainable seafood synonymously with things like healthy eating, organic and natural, and they are willing to pay a premium for it. ”

sunflower and chili oil. “They’re a great option for consumers to enjoy on their own, as appetizers or in recipes for entertaining,” says Schindler. “Many people eat oysters right out of the can, and interestingly, consumption is higher for men than women.”

Eating oysters straight from the can certainly makes for a convenient snack, but seafood companies are also meeting consumer demand for convenience-based meal solutions. Last year, Bedford, N.S.-based Clearwater Seafoods launched four new scallop and shrimp products as part of its value-added portfolio: Scallop Selects, Bacon Wrapped Scallop Selects, Shrimp with Scallops & Sauce, and Shrimp & Sauce.

“More consumers are choosing to make meals at home, yet they don’t want to sacrifice flavour, meal variety and most importantly, convenience,” says Diana Hanus, senior marketing manager at Clearwater Seafoods. “Value-added seafood products...provide an alternative protein option for time-crunched consumers looking for ready-meal variety in a more user-friendly format for consumers uneasy with preparing seafood at home.” ➔

Clearwater Seafoods' Nova Scotia Prime Lobster is another example of an easy-to-prepare shellfish product. Through a high-pressure extraction process, raw lobster meat is released from its shell and frozen, locking in the flavour. The product can be prepared in a variety of applications, without the hassle of cooking and shelling live lobster, says Hanus.

Domenic Porporo, owner of Toronto-based seafood importer/distributor Dom International, believes there's a misconception that seafood is difficult to prepare at home. "I think people in general are kind of scared of cooking seafood and they really don't know what to do," he says. "Mussels are actually one of the easier things — you just empty the bag, throw the mussels in a pot, add some vegetables and steam them."

Dom International sells a variety of fresh and frozen organic seafood including salmon, shrimp and New Zealand greenshell mussels. Porporo says that while salmon products are the company's biggest sellers, sales of mussels have tripled in the last year. "In general, we see demand increasing," he says. "Consumers



are looking more and more towards organic, and they see it as a better-quality product. I think the biggest trend is going towards organic and sustainable products."

Hanus also expects that demand for sustainably sourced seafood products will grow as consumers take more interest in the long-term sustainability of the food they eat. "The demand for wild, sustainably sourced shellfish consistently outweighs supply," she says. "Consumers often view wild-caught, sustainable seafood synonymously with things like healthy eating, organic and natural, and they are willing to pay a premium for it."

As part of its sustainability program, Clover Leaf Seafoods recently launched a new traceability program designed to provide consumers with a high level of transparency around the company's sourcing and production processes. With the "Trace my Catch" program, every Clover Leaf tuna and salmon product features a unique code that, when entered online at CloverLeaf.ca, provides detailed information on the product, including species, fishing method, ocean of catch, vessel name, fishing trip dates and the location of the processor. Trace My Catch collects information from more than 600 vessels in four oceans, and covers 80 per cent of Clover Leaf products, including cans, pouches and cups. Clover Leaf is adding its shellfish products to the program next year.

While Clover Leaf has always had product codes on the packaging, since it's required as part of government regulations, the information was not easily available to consumers. But the company decided to develop a user-friendly database because consumers "want to know where their food is coming from," says Schindler.

Simcox agrees that people increasingly want to know where their food comes from. When the entrepreneur meets prospective customers at food shows, she focuses on telling them the oysters are locally sourced and come from a sustainable oyster farm on the coast. "I know it used to be the 100-mile diet, but people are just trying to eat local and sustainable foods," says Simcox. "It's about learning to love what's in your local area and eating that." ●



A HEALTHY EDGE

While Mintel doesn't track shellfish sales in Canada, in the U.S., the fish and shellfish category grew moderately between 2009 and 2014, reaching \$16.7 billion. The category is expected to continue growing at this pace into 2019, reaching \$20.1 billion. The research firm reports that sales are largely driven by consumer perceptions that fish and shellfish are healthier than other meats. However, consumers surveyed by Mintel are most apt to cite taste as the number-one reason for eating fish and shellfish.



Sweetly sour superfruit

With its tart flavour and impressive nutritional content, sea buckthorn is a rising star in the superfruit world



The Ancient Greeks fed sea buckthorn to their horses to help promote weight gain and a shinier coat. In fact, the plant's generic Latin name *Hippophae* translates literally to "shiny horse." But sea buckthorn has come a long way since those "shiny horse" days, and today, more than 2,500 years later, it's joining the likes of baobab, açai and goji berries as a rising star in the increasingly popular world of superfruits.

What is sea buckthorn?

Sea buckthorn berries are tiny and yellow/orange in colour, with a very tart flavour. The berries grow on deciduous shrubs found in different parts of the world, "including Europe, China, Mongolia and even Canada," says Marni Wasserman, a Toronto-based culinary nutritionist.

Like most superfruits on the market today, sea buckthorn comes with an impressive list of nutritional benefits, including high amounts of fibre, protein, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals. "A big component of it is that it's really great for heart disease, diabetes, and because it contains omega-3 fatty acids, it's really good for the skin and really good for the bowels," says Wasserman. "And the biggest point about it is that its vitamin C content is 12 times more than

an orange," she adds, noting that this is something that's likely to strike a chord with many consumers as cold and flu season hits this winter.

How are people consuming it?

"Typically it's found in a lot of extracts or concentrates," says Wasserman. "It's rarely found in fresh form because it's very seasonal, so right now in Canada it's hard to get it fresh when it's not in season. But the odd time you can, and it can be enjoyed as a berry or a garnish, kind of like a gooseberry — we can put it on a plate as a beautiful garnish, or pop it into your cereal and use it like you would any kind of berry."

Juices and juice concentrates are one of the more popular ways to consume sea buckthorn. Texas-based nutrition company Genesis Today, for instance, recently introduced its Sea Buckthorn Juice as part of its new line of superfruit juices (along with Açai, Noni, Mangosteen and Goji juices). Wasserman says juices like this can even be incorporated into a variety of recipes: "It can be part of salad dressings, marinades, on cereal for breakfast, in smoothies of course, or just adding a splash into your water so your water's not so boring," she notes.

Interestingly, the food world isn't the only industry using sea buckthorn these days. "The beauty industry has given sea

buckthorn quite a bit of attention just because it's showing up in a lot of natural cosmetics, but it's better [in terms of health benefits] to consume it and ingest it orally," says Wasserman.

Canadian innovations

As sea buckthorn becomes better known, an increasing number of commercial products using the superfruit are being developed, a number of which are Canadian-made and use sea buckthorn grown in Canada.

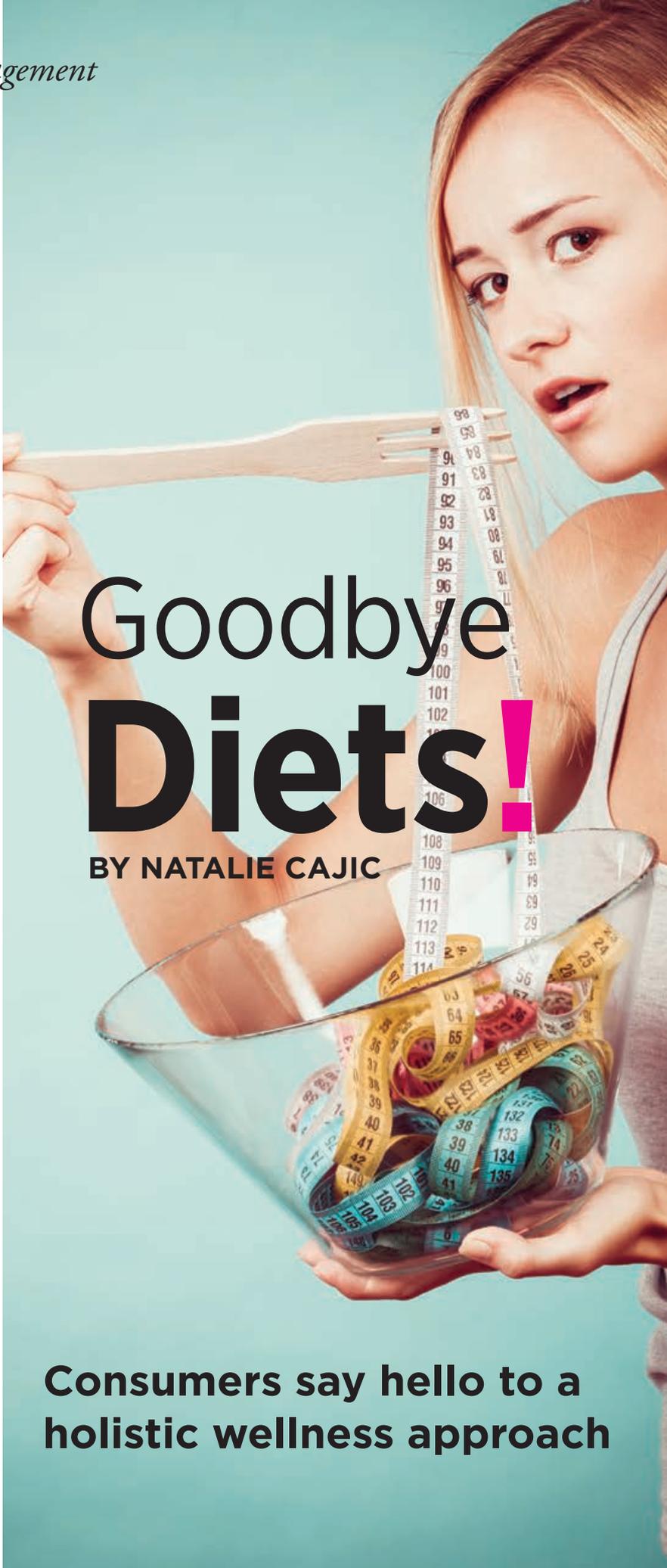
A Winnipeg-based company called Solberry uses Canadian-grown sea buckthorn to produce several food products, including Solberry Seabuckthorn Herbal Leaf Tea and Solberry Seabuckthorn Purée. And Kelowna, B.C.-based Okanagan Spirits Craft Distillery offers a Sea Buckthorn Liqueur, which uses sea buckthorn berries grown in B.C., and is described on the company website as "ideal for the liquid chef, the healthy imbiber and the curious."

Wasserman says she expects to see more development of consumer products using sea buckthorn as an ingredient in the near future. "We're so used to peach and blueberry and strawberry, which is great, but it's really nice to have [products that use] some of the more exotic fruits too, so we can gain those superfruit benefits," she says. ●

The market for weight management products has changed significantly in recent years. Sales of traditional “dieting” brands had been dropping points faster than the latest fad diet. Lean Cuisine by Nestlé S.A. hit a four-year low in 2013, while sales of Healthy Choice by ConAgra Foods Inc. and H.J. Heinz Co.’s Weight Watchers thinned 16 and 13 per cent respectively that year, according to a story on Bloomberg. The high interest in health and wellbeing has shifted consumer thinking about “dieting” and its narrow focus on calorie, carb or fat reduction. Instead, consumers are taking a more holistic approach to their food, looking at its broader defining characteristics and considering its health attributes. Food manufacturers of weight management products have adapted to consumers’ changing views of dieting and found new meaning and opportunity in the category.

Down with dieting

About 20 per cent of Canadians reported a height and weight ratio that classified them as obese, according to a Statistics Canada 2014 survey. Canadians are not unusual — the percentage of people worldwide considered overweight or obese has shot up 28 per cent in adults and 47 per cent in children over the past 30 years, according to the 2013 Global Burden of Disease Study, co-ordinated by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation in the U.S. However, the percentage of consumers saying they are on a diet has decreased. For example, research from the NPD Group found the percentage of women reporting they are on a diet has dropped 13 points over the past two decades.

A woman with blonde hair is looking towards the camera. She is holding a wooden fork in her right hand and a measuring tape in her left hand. In front of her is a clear glass bowl filled with several colorful measuring tapes (yellow, blue, pink, green). The background is a solid light blue color.

Goodbye Diets!

BY NATALIE CAJIC

Consumers say hello to a holistic wellness approach



Motivational shift

In a 2016 webinar on weight management, organized by FoodNavigator-USA, Rhonda Richardson of Nestlé S.A. says consumers are looking at their food differently and as a result, eating differently. “We’ve seen a shift from looking at the Nutrition Facts panel to being motivated by other types of nutrition, health and wellness claims,” says the nutrition communication manager.

“Our consumers are telling us they want foods that are produced responsibly or include specific ingredients or produced free from artificial colours, flavours and preservatives,” says Richardson.

Key findings in the *Nielsen Global Health & Wellness Survey* concur. The 2014 survey polled more than 30,000 consumers in 60 countries, including North America. It asked consumers about their body image, what steps they were taking and how health attributes in food drove their purchasing decisions. The report, released in January 2015, cited the top three most important drivers to these consumers were foods with “all-natural ingredients” and those without genetically modified organisms (GMOs); an absence of artificial colours and flavours; and foods made from fruits and vegetables.

In addition, the trend of shorter ingredient lists with recognizable ingredients continues to hold influence. Food industry consultant Carol Culhane of International Food Focus Ltd. says it is a trend that has been around a while and one she sees increasing. Indeed, when most “dieting” brands were experiencing steep declines, Kashi’s frozen meals by Kellogg made of “wholesome plant-powered ingredients” saw a 12.8-per-cent sales increase in the fourth quarter of 2012, according to FoodNavigator-USA.

Fat phobia fading

Embracing a holistic approach to food, consumers have eased up on discriminating against certain nutrients. Take fat, for instance. Nathalie Savoie, assistant director of Nutrition for the Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC), says while fat in dairy continues to be viewed as an “undesirable nutrient in dairy,” their data shows it is less of a concern. In fact, recent tracking data from DFC in early 2015 indicated fat as a concern in the diet was the lowest in 10 years, from 72 per cent of participants in 2010 to 52 per cent in 2015. “The increase of Canadian retail sales of butter, ➔



RECENT TRACKING DATA FROM DFC IN EARLY 2015 INDICATED FAT AS A CONCERN IN THE DIET WAS THE LOWEST IN 10 YEARS, FROM 72 PER CENT OF PARTICIPANTS IN 2010 TO 52 PER CENT IN 2015.



whole milk, cream and cheese is probably linked to both elements, that is, that fat is not feared as it used to be and that consumers are interested in foods that are less processed,” says Savoie.

Prime for product innovation

Food manufacturers have an opportunity to revitalize the weight management category. New product formats that incorporate fruits and vegetables, fibre and protein appeal to those seeking a healthy lifestyle. As well, according to the *Nielsen Global Health & Wellness Survey*, manufacturers would do well to

HEALTHY EATING STRATEGY

Health Canada announced in October 2016 that it is looking to improve the food environment in Canada through a new approach to healthy eating. Part of the strategy includes revamping Canada’s food guide to better reflect the latest scientific evidence on diet and health. For more on the Healthy Eating Strategy visit: www.healthy Canadians.gc.ca/healthy-canada-vision-canada-en-sante/healthy-eating-strategy-strategie-pour-saine-alimentation-eng.php

“The market for weight management products has changed as consumers seek a healthy lifestyle, rather than one of deprivation.”

provide more education on health and wellness claims that are backed up with scientific support using package labelling or in-store signage or displays. Manufacturers need to help consumers cut through the clutter.

Brands that have adapted and thrived in this new reality include Lean Cuisine. In a complete reboot, Nestlé USA took the diet brand and revitalized the product and packaging. Last year, the company introduced various recipes that feature no GMO ingredients, no preservatives, organic ingredients, whole grains, vegetables, and high protein. An example from the new Lean Cuisine Marketplace line includes Ricotta Cheese & Spinach Ravioli that is not only high in protein, but meatless, organic and contains no preservatives.

In addition, Nestlé USA launched a social media campaign in January aimed at changing the perception of Lean Cuisine as a diet brand to a health and wellness brand. The #WeighThis campaign consisted of an emotional online video that got to the heart of the issue: a person’s life and accomplishments were far more important than a number on the scale. According to 360i, the digital agency that created the video, the #WeighThis campaign was “an integral part of Lean Cuisine’s holistic turnaround in product and strategy and contributed to the brand seeing its first sales increase in nearly six years.”

The market for weight management products has changed as consumers seek a healthy lifestyle, rather than one of deprivation. Brands that position themselves as helping with wellness goals, yet deliver taste and convenience, are seeing a turnaround in the category. ●



The down-low on low-cal cranberry juice

The trend for “low-carb, low-cal, low-fat” continues to raise the roof in the North American food and beverage market. For some health-conscious consumers, fruit juices are a convenient solution for acquiring the recommended daily dose of vitamins without the timely tasks of peeling, slicing and squeezing. However, with its typically high sugar content, fruit juice is frequently deemed a no-no among nutritional experts. The solution for some juice lovers lies in making the switch to low-calorie or sugar-reduced options of their favourite fruity beverages.

One example is low-calorie cranberry juice. In addition to fulfilling the RDI for vitamin C, this darling among juices carries some of the highest levels of polyphenols, which support our body’s natural defences. In fact, recent studies show that low-calorie cranberry juice may help lower the risk of chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes and stroke. We took a closer look at four brands of low-calorie cranberry juice to see if they all take the high road on taste.

The juicers

We recruited 50 females between the ages of 25 and 54 from the Greater Toronto Area who were past month users of low-calorie cranberry juice. The test included two samples of national brands and two private-label brands. All brands claimed calories between 30 and 40 per

250 mL, although sugar content ranged from two to 11 g of sugar per cup. Each participant received 100 mL of each sample. They were first asked to evaluate the appearance and aroma, followed by a series of liking and “just about right” questions on specific sensory attributes.

High & mighty

Only one of the four brands of juice achieved results which exceeded the norms of the category. This high achiever boasted top-box purchase intent of 42 per cent and a mean score of 7.4 on overall liking — both above the respective hurdles of 25 per cent and seven in this category. All aspects of the flavour profile, including the cranberry flavour, sweetness and naturalness of the taste, scored significantly better than the other three juice brands. Qualitatively, many described this winner as refreshing, delicious, and very natural tasting. This juice also had a darker, redder colour, making it more visually appealing than the other brands and likely providing an extra boost to perceptions of the flavour. However, with the highest sugar and sodium declarations in our brand array, some health-conscious consumers may take a pass on this nutritional label in favour of less tasty, lower-sugar options.

Low-hanging fruit juice

The other three contenders woefully tied for last, with no significant differences on the key performance measures of overall liking and purchase intent. One brand was particularly poorly received, with only 10 per cent of our participants having any serious intention to buy it. This juice formulation had a particularly tart



flavour profile, with barely any resemblance to cranberry flavour. It was watery and bland, with over a third of our tasters giving it a poor quality rating. Another mentionable stand-out in this array took the prize for the sweetest profile —

a quality that generally worked against it. With more than 48 per cent of our testers rating this juice as “too sweet for them,” the sweetness delivery system for this brand should be reconsidered or at the very least dialled down significantly.

The lowdown

Low-calorie cranberry juice has been reaping the benefits of some positive health and nutritional endorsements, and a brand that can also stand apart on taste in this category is ripe for the picking. But over two-thirds of our participating juice drinkers do not claim to hold any strict brand loyalty in this category, choosing instead to buy brands that are on sale.

Mounting concerns over added sugars are creating big opportunities for beverage innovation. The ability to develop tasty low-calorie, reduced-sugar beverages has come a long way, and as product development resources continue to be poured into the betterment of better-for-you options, expect improvements. But as you sink your investments into product innovation, be sure to check in with your consumers, or run the risk of being left high and dry. 🍷

For questions about this research, or how you can leverage consumer taste buds in your business, contact Dan Scholes at info@contracttesting.com or (905) 456-0783.

Beyond our BORDERS

Where in the world is all our exported food and drink going?

BY JONATHAN HILTZ

The great Robin Williams once said that Canada is “a big empty loft above a really great party.” Although the late comedian was doing his brilliant act at the time, his observation is not that far off the mark.

Canada is the world’s second largest landmass and yet there are only 36 million people living within its borders. When it comes to food and beverage products, one only needs to do the math to realize that the great white north depends heavily on exports.

According to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), the food and beverage processing industry is the second largest manufacturing sector in Canada, with shipments worth \$105.5 billion in 2014. That accounts for 17 per cent of the country’s total manufacturing shipments and for two per cent of the GDP. So where is all this food and drink going?

First and foremost, Canada’s biggest trading partner is the United States. AAFC says that in 2014, the U.S. accounted for a whopping 71 per cent of all food and beverage products sent out of Canada. But now that it’s 2016, has our relationship with the Americans evolved at all?

“I would say yes, in the sense that it’s grown,” says Sonia Vieira, a senior advisor for Export Development Canada (EDC). “The Canadian food processing industry has made a lot of efforts to increase exports and the U.S. has always been our major trading partner.” Vieira adds that for anyone in the Canadian food and beverage industry looking to expand using exports, the U.S. is the most logical step forward, but





Exporting your way to successful growth

BY MITCHELL OSAK

Canadian food manufacturers can no longer sit on the fence when it comes to global expansion. Slow domestic growth, a demanding retail channel and product commoditization have elevated exporting to one of the best ways to maintain growth. Even so, a global expansion strategy like this is not for the unprepared or cavalier. How can food manufacturers prudently tap into new international markets without incurring undue risk?

Consider two complementary strategies: 1) choosing the right export market and channel; 2) conducting the research when it comes to trade agreements.

Look beyond the U.S.

While the U.S. is an attractive market, it doesn't have to be the default for export-minded firms. Although the language, customs and proximity are appealing, there are still significant costs and risks. Leaders want to consider rapidly growing emerging markets instead. Take India, for example. The country has a population of over 1.2 billion people with a middle class approaching 267 million. It is quickly urbanizing and acquiring the trappings of a modern, Western-oriented consumer market.

Canadian food producers can win in India. Many are world-

class manufacturers with deep knowledge of Indian consumer tastes (through serving them in Canada) and the ability to leverage the connections of a large Indo-Canadian community. Canada and India also share some important market similarities including: a common business language and legal framework, direct transportation links, and access to common professional services firms, such as Grant Thornton LLP.

India can be a challenging market though. As with other countries, import duties, taxes, transportation costs and a different business culture can complicate market entry and lead to innumerable delays. Furthermore, a new Made in India government campaign is encouraging firms to produce locally, potentially challenging foreign manufacturers. Nonetheless, performing due diligence, working with good local partners and having realistic expectations can help mitigate risk.

Winning in India

Pundits like professor Vijay Govindarajan and consultant Gunjan Bagla suggest that firms can prudently exploit growth opportunities by leveraging the country's dynamic supply chain and by entering the market through online channels.

Manufacturing locally can help mitigate import and shipping costs, minimize hassle and appeal to a larger customer base —



“Canadian exporters should not ignore the possibilities in India’s booming e-commerce trade. Approximately 130 million people will make an online purchase by 2016.”

and satisfy made in India requirements. Where speed and low investment is paramount, there is a network of third-party contract manufacturers which can produce consumer goods for the local market.

Canadian exporters should not ignore the possibilities in India’s booming e-commerce trade. Approximately 130 million people will make an online purchase by 2016, up 76 per cent from 2015, and this growth is expected to continue for the next five years. Leading Western food sellers are already online. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has made India a top growth priority and he projects that the country will be Amazon’s second largest global market by 2025. Importantly, pursuing these strategies doesn’t require the deep pockets of a multinational, but rather it requires being creative, agile and patient, and having a learning mindset.

“For companies entering new markets, particularly emerging ones, it’s a given that you won’t be doing business in the same way you’re used to in Canada,” says Jim Menzies, National Leader, Food and Beverage, Grant Thornton LLP. “You’ll want to understand the cultural and business practice differences and nuances that you’re going to encounter, in order to give yourself a fighting chance of success. Being open-minded and flexible are critical to making a go of it.”

Pay attention to trade agreements

When exporting, most companies focus their energies on marketing adroitly, delivering value and operating efficiently. Less attention, however, is paid to the role of trade agreements. Trade deals are shaping markets and profits more than ever, and need to be strategically considered. This means thoroughly understanding the relevant laws and regulations, plus having a legal and political strategy to deal with them.

Consider the pending Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) covering trade between Canada and 11 Pacific-based signatories (though not India). For its signatories, the TPP goes far beyond the basic rules established by the World Trade Organization (WTO). Specifically, the TPP adds a variety of nontariff barriers, including technical regulations and health and safety standards. These types of barriers must be considered because they tend to be less transparent and more subjectively applied than tariffs. More worryingly, while tariffs are a tax on trade, nontariff barriers often result in a ban on trade.

The TPP also goes beyond the WTO into areas such as competition policy, intellectual property, investor rights and regulatory compliance. Since the application of the rules varies by industry and country, Canadian firms must garner specific advice on what is required to enter particular markets and mitigate possible risks.

“Today, companies doing business internationally face unprecedented scrutiny from tax administrations, and now competition bureaus, with respect to how they’ve structured their tax affairs to maximize the benefits of accessing foreign markets,” says Brad Rolph, National Leader, Transfer Pricing Practice, Grant Thornton LLP. “Bottom line: you need to be proactive and informed.”

Capturing the opportunities

Despite a complex and sometimes intimidating global marketplace, Canadian food manufacturers can significantly grow their business through exporting. When ready, be sure to choose the right market, leverage your existing assets, and most of all, be well informed from a consumer and risk perspective. 🍎

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Packaging is the villain again (sigh)

There is no doubt that some goods are over-packaged and that more can be done to reduce the amount of paper, glass, metal and plastic packaging that ends up in consumers' homes. But blaming packaging all the time is only part of the story. To put it bluntly, we in the so-called developed world eat, drink and buy far too much stuff.

Consumption is the real issue, not the packaging that delivers it. As consumers, however, we find it difficult to limit what we purchase. It's so much easier to point the finger at the packaging that's left behind.

For example, a recent anonymous letter to the editor of *Solid Waste & Recycling* magazine outlines the increase in convenience packaging of produce (plastic bags for peppers, a bundle of herbs in a plastic case, fresh grapes in a plastic bag with grab-and-go handles). The writer complains that the increased packaging waste from this new convenient shopping trend means higher costs for municipalities dealing with it down the line. A reasonable argument. It's when the letter writer rather loosely broadens the attack to packaging in general that we get concerned. "Our waste streams are clogged with unnecessary packaging at every turn," they write, "and most of it is neither recyclable nor compostable."

Now hang on a minute there! If you are talking about convenience packaging

of fresh produce then you might have a point, although we suspect there will be debate over exactly what "necessary" means.

But when you broaden the issue to all packaging, you are lumping all packaging together in the same boat. Setting aside the argument over what might be deemed necessary or unnecessary, packaging is definitely not "clogging" our waste streams "at every turn." In the



most comprehensive national survey of packaging ever done in Canada, *National Packaging Protocol 2000 Final Report*, packaging represented only 13 per cent of total solid waste. Significant, but not exactly "clogging."

This survey was conducted by Statistics Canada for the Canadian Council of Ministers for the Environment (CCME). It covered 31 industry sectors of the economy and 32 different packaging material types using surveys as well as information derived from Statistics Canada's international trade merchandise data and a national study of residential recycling.

What did it find? It found that more than 70 per cent of all the packaging consumed in Canada was being reused or recycled. "Industry" was responsible for

91 per cent of this: all of the packaging reuse (mainly wooden pallets and glass bottles) and 74 per cent of all the recycling (principally corrugated boxes).

While this survey is now admittedly more than 20 years old, there are no obvious reasons why packaging's relative disposal rate would be much different today. Wooden pallets and glass bottles remain the predominant reusables and corrugated boxes the predominant recyclables. What has changed is a shift away from heavier glass to lighter plastics and an increase in residential recycling efforts. Some people or organizations (including the Ontario Ministry of Environment) claim a higher percentage for packaging disposal, but that's because they change the denominator, they use a much narrower definition of solid waste.

It's the claim that "most of it is neither recyclable nor compostable" that really gets us going though. Again, if the writer is talking about specific convenience packaging for produce, they might have a case. But by far most packaging used in Canada is able to be recycled (recyclable). Corrugated boxes and boxboard cartons, for example, are not only mostly 100 per cent recycled content in the first place, they are also almost 100 per cent recyclable (96 per cent and 94 per cent respectively). And a fair chunk of today's packaging, mostly paper-based, is compostable.

Whether it is actually being recycled and composted is another question entirely, and an argument for better and more current national data. ●

John Mullinder is the executive director of PPEC, the Paper and Paperboard Packaging Environmental Council. Contact him at ppec@ppec-paper.com



Nurturing growth critical to success in China

It's a big world out there. For companies in the food and beverage sector that want to grow, expanding outside traditional markets can be daunting. The challenge only increases when different cultures, languages and regulatory regimes stand in the way. Yet for companies willing to think outside Canada's borders, a number of countries offer unparalleled opportunities. Chief among these prospects is China.

Why China? Why now?

After a relatively cool period, the trade relationship between Canada and China is warming up. In September, the two countries announced they were entering exploratory talks related to a potential free trade agreement. Such a move highlights the possible synergies between the two countries and the value each places on working together. While any free trade agreement may be well down the road, the sentiment is that both governments are solidly supporting efforts to work together, especially in key industries like food production and manufacturing.

Big demand for Canadian products

Canadian products are highly sought after in China. From oil seeds and wheat, to dairy, beef and seafood, to consumer ready packaged foods, Canadian products are seen to be safe and produced to a very high quality standard. Over the past

several months alone, a number of agreements between Canadian companies and Chinese companies and investors have been announced. For example, COWS Inc., an ice cream company based in PEI, partnered with China based Yintai Group to open a number of COWS stores in the group's high-end shopping malls. Other recent deals involved the Canada Beef International Institute, Clearwater Seafoods, Whistler Water and Ocean Choice.

Four keys to unlocking China's potential

There's no straightforward path when it comes to taking advantage of China's thirst for Canadian food products. But if you're willing to put in the work, the market offers boundless potential. As a starting point, consider the following four factors that can help you succeed in the Chinese market or successfully bring on a Chinese investor or partner.

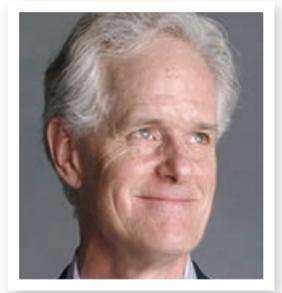
- » **Develop a strategy:** To succeed, it's important to map out the goals for your company or product – such as quickly scaling up, finding a distribution partner or opening new manufacturing facilities or retail outlets – and then stress test these plans. In addition to identifying objectives and opportunities, realistically assess any challenges and risks and identify risk mitigation techniques so you can avoid major pitfalls as you move forward.
- » **Have an open mind:** Being open to different ways of doing business is an important foundation. As you begin to investigate opportunities, be open to new ideas, partnerships and lessons learned from others. Recognize that what has worked for you in the past may not work for you now. The more

open you are to finding the right approach, the more likely you will be to achieve your objectives.

- » **Identify the right team:** People matter. Regardless of how you're entering the Chinese market or what sort of Chinese investor or partner you may be looking for, make sure your team has the right combination of internal and external experts. This means striking the right balance of experience, authority and accountability within your internal deal team, all while engaging the right specialists in key areas (including legal, tax, accounting, human resources and IT) for diligence, negotiating, closing and integration.
- » **Take a long-term outlook:** Being successful in China takes time – time to create a strategy, develop relationships or partnerships and nurture growth. Recognizing the time it will take can help you manage expectations. While you may not achieve success overnight, you will be putting in place everything you need to achieve long-term success.

China is a large, complex and nuanced market and Chinese investors continue to look towards Canada, so it's important for Canadian food and beverage companies to have the right mindset to take advantage of China's potential. 🍎

Ken Su is a PwC Canada partner who recently spent 13 years in China helping multinationals invest in China, and Chinese clients invest cross border. He is now based in Vancouver and is the National Operations & Deals Leader for PwC's China Business Network. He can be reached at ken.su@ca.pwc.com. For more information please visit www.pwc.com/ca/china



9 reasons why innovations fail

There have been numerous articles and reports written about innovations that succeed; however, few that report on why innovations fail. Below are nine of the reasons innovations fail. It is a good reality checklist to have at your side as you and your team consider developing new products or services. This list is from a 2014 whitepaper “The Six Disciplines of Innovation” by Dr. Phil Hendrix, director, immr (whitepaper sponsored by THINK Interactive).

1. Overestimate unmet customer needs

The intensity of customers’ needs determines in part how likely they are to adopt an innovation. Those with more intense needs are more likely to adopt and vice versa. Generalizing from personal experience or projecting from early adopters, teams often overestimate needs, market size and likelihood of success.

2. Customers content with status quo

In response to researchers’ questions, customers will often express dissatisfaction with existing products. When an innovation is introduced, however, the status quo may turn out to be adequate, and as a result customers will be unlikely to switch.

3. Customers resistant to change

Innovations are new-to-customers and sometimes new-to-market. Due to the newness, many customers may be reluctant to adopt them because of skepticism about claimed performance, perceived risk and persistence of habits.

4. Key feature(s) missing

The success of an innovation can hinge on getting a key feature right. Failing to include or deliver on a key feature can eviscerate demand. Likewise, adding features that are not valued can increase the complexity, causing “cognitive overhead” and even “feature fatigue” among customers.



5. Value proposition lacking

A value proposition informs and persuades customers why they would be better off adopting an innovation vs. alternatives, including the status quo. If the value proposition fails to provide a compelling case based on benefits, competitive advantages and other criteria, the innovation is doomed.

6. Barriers impede adoption

Barriers that slow adoption include (i) lock-in and contracts with an existing product or service supplier; (ii) perceived risk; (iii) compatibility with complementary products; and (iv) cost of learning, installing and using.

7. Not “materially better”

Innovations are often new and untried solutions. With physical or digital products, despite proclamations of “new and improved,” customers may not notice or regard the difference between the innovation and status quo as materially better.

8. Competing solution(s) outmatch

When considering adopting, customers compare an innovation to the status quo and to competing alternatives. Given the rapid pace of innovation, particularly in mobile and digital, competitors can quickly match or leapfrog an innovation.

9. Customer acquisition costly

Especially for innovations that are new-to-customers or new-to-market, the resources required to attract and acquire customers (for example, for marketing, sales, onboarding and related activities) can be substantial and easily underestimated. Successful innovations are also boosted by favourable word-of-mouth and referrals, which fuel customer interest and adoption. As customers advocate, the cost of customer acquisition drops. Few innovations achieve these “network effects” but when they do the impact is significant.

Copies of the full report can be downloaded at: immr.org/6-disciplines-of-innovation.pdf. The whitepaper also describes the following six disciplines of innovation: DISCOVER (uncover needs, generate solutions, substantiate); DESIGN (design, prototype, iterate); VALIDATE (research); BUILD (develop, test); PILOT (launch, optimize); and SCALE.

Hope this helps with your future innovation projects! ●

Peter Henderson is a director on the board of the Agri-food Management Institute (AMI). He is also founder and managing director of Ideovation, a Toronto-based growth strategy services company. Contact him at phenderson@ideovation.com

PETFOOD in CANADA

A supplement of Food in Canada magazine

HOLISTIC AT HEART

Mississauga, Ont.'s
Holistic Blend PG. 51

A long and healthy life



The senior pet food market
is growing in Canada PG. 48

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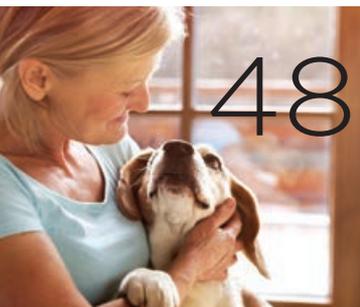
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Happy Holidays from Food in Canada!



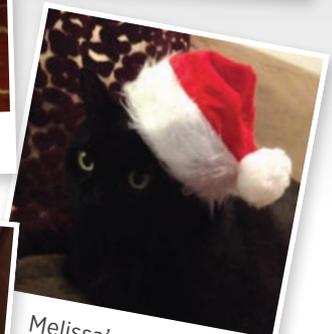
Carolyn's dog Freya



Daniela's dogs Capone & Pacino



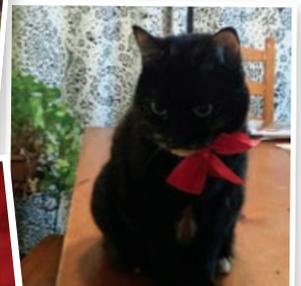
Carolyn's cat Sailor



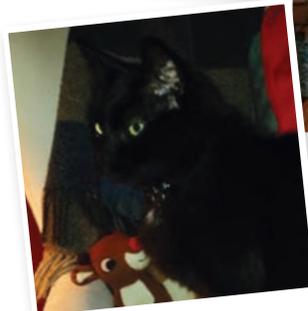
Melissa's cat Hibou



Carol's hamster Cledge



Carolyn's cat Josie



Carolyn's cat Ripley



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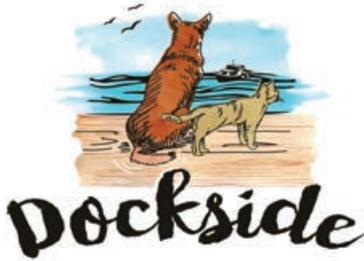
Now that's expensive cat food!

At more than \$300 per 4.5-lb. bag, Green Pantry's British Banquet cat food has been dubbed the "world's most expensive cat food." Containing Arenkha caviar, line-caught Scottish salmon, hand-caught Norfolk lobster, Devon crab, organic asparagus, saffron, carrots and quinoa, this UK-made pet food is aimed at those wealthy cat owners for whom money is no object.



Barks & bites

Pet food industry news



Dockside pet food made with "rescued" ingredients

A new Canadian pet food company is striving to tackle the food waste crisis and raise the bar on sustainability with its innovative business model.

Early in November, Mississauga, Ont.-based Dane Creek Capital Corp. announced the creation of Dockside Pet Products and Services Inc., a Nova Scotia-based company that aims to deliver high-quality dog and cat food using rescued fresh food and sustainable ingredients.

Working directly with farmers and fisheries, Dockside will use fresh seafood, vegetables, and fruits that don't make it to retail market and would otherwise go to waste for cosmetic or other reasons (reasons that don't negatively affect their nutritional value) in its products. Nearly all ingredients will be locally sourced from Nova Scotia.

Dockside will also be one of the first pet food companies in North America to use crickets in their recipes as a sustainable alternative to traditional proteins. Other ingredients featured in the Dockside pet food line will include capelin fish, cauliflower, wild blueberries and lobster shell.

The ingredients will be purchased directly from farmers, fishermen and fish processors — but with the unique caveat that they would otherwise have gone to waste. For example, Dockside products will use whole male capelin, which is often wasted because the females are preferred for their roe. Meanwhile, the cauliflower they use will be purchased from the large proportion of each crop typically deemed "unacceptable" for human consumption because the size or colour of the florets doesn't meet the retail world's cosmetic standards. Similarly, they'll be using misshapen or undersized blueberries, and lobster shell as a by-product of processing fresh caught lobster.

"Sustainability is the key to our future and how we provide for the animals in our homes is part of that," says Mark Warren, the creator behind Dockside. "Our mission through Dockside is to give pet owners sustainable pet food options without sacrificing quality nutrition and we're doing that by thinking outside the box with cricket protein and tackling the food waste crisis, specifically targeting fresh food wasted at source."

Cats naturally want to be healthy

A Mars Petcare study recently revealed that while flavour is the most important factor at first, domestic cats learn over time to choose their food based on nutrition rather than flavour. The study, published in *Royal Society Open Science*, shows that ↗

PRODUCTS

Healthy digestion



Hyperbiotics has released PRO-Pets formula, which is specifically designed to support digestive and immune health for dogs and cats. PRO-Pets is an ultra-tiny probiotic tablet with a beef flavour that helps balance the gut bacteria in cats and dogs alike, promoting optimal body weight, reducing temporary inflammation associated with exercise, lowering stress levels, and helping pets get the most from their food and supplements. www.hyperbiotics.com

Pet packaging perfection

Butler Automatic's SP1 Series Automatic Film Splicer is ideally suited to pet food packaging applications. The SP1 Automatic Film Splicer increases efficiency in packaging operations by eliminating the packaging line downtime caused by manual film roll changes. With a simple mechanical design and high-quality manufacture, the SP1 promises long-term, trouble-free performance. The device senses the diameter of the expiring roll of film and automatically splices the end of each expiring roll onto the new roll. It is capable of running at speeds of up to 600 ft. per minute (FPM). In addition to the standard SP1 automatic splicer, Butler offers the SP1 RB, designed for full wash-down capability. www.butlerautomatic.com



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over time cats naturally figure out the fat and protein content in their food, and then regulate their intake to reach a target ratio of these nutrients.

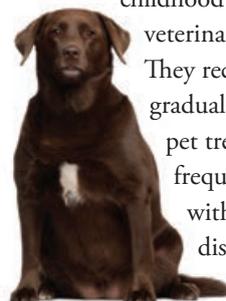
Scientists at WALTHAM Centre of Pet Nutrition (the global scientific research centre for Mars Petcare) and the University of Sydney, Australia offered cats different foods with various ratios of fat and protein flavoured with fish, rabbit or orange. When first offered the foods,

the cats showed preferences based on flavour, but over time they seemed to have learned about the nutrient composition and began to select foods in order to reach a target ratio of protein and fat — regardless of the flavour.

“This research has enabled Mars Petcare to understand more about developing foods for cats with both appealing flavours and the appropriate nutrient composition that ensures cats continue to eat foods in the long term,” says Adrian Hewson-Hughes from the WALTHAM Centre for Pet Nutrition at Mars Petcare, and lead author of the study.

of Nutrition reports that more than half of the pets in the U.S. and the EU are overweight or obese. According to the report, using food to train and treat pets is causing a variety of diseases, hampering pets’ quality of life, and even dramatically decreasing their lifespans.

The doctors who authored the article, titled “Similarities Between Obesity in Pets and Children,” are Robert A. Pretlow, an American pediatrician specializing in childhood obesity, and R.J. Corbee, a veterinarian from the Netherlands. They recommend that pet parents gradually withdraw addictive pet treats and overly large or frequent meals from their pets, with an ideal goal being two distinct meals a day with no snacks in between.



Pet obesity sounding alarms

A recent article in the *British Journal*

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IN BRIEF



> Chilliwack, B.C.-based **Petcurean** has rolled out its new GATHER line to pet specialty stores in the U.S. and Canada. GATHER is a new pet food line crafted from certified organic, non-GMO and sustainably produced ingredients.

> A federal judge in the U.S. has struck down a class action suit claiming **Nestlé Purina’s** Beneful dog food killed or sickened thousands of dogs. U.S. District Judge Edward Chen granted summary judgement to Nestlé Purina Pet Care Company, pointing to a lack of evidence to prove the dog food, and not other factors, caused the pets to get sick.

> **Buddy’s Kitchen**, a Canadian manufacturer of fresh food and snacks for dogs and cats based in Aurora, Ont., has ranked No. 35 in the STARTUP 50, a ranking of Canada’s top new growth companies by *Canadian Business* and *PROFIT*. Buddy’s Kitchen recorded a two-year revenue growth of 245 per cent to make the 2016 list.

> **Dane Creek Capital Corp.** has acquired a 48-per-cent interest in **Midgard Insect Farm Inc.**, a cricket producer based in Windsor, N.S. Midgard’s crickets are a featured ingredient in the company’s new Dockside brand of planet friendly pet treats, meal mixers, and meal toppers for dogs and cats created using ingredients from rescued fresh food and sustainable sources.





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A long and healthy life

|||||

The senior pet food market is growing in Canada

—BY TREENA HEIN—

The availability of premium foods, along with improved veterinary care, is the most significant factor in greatly extending the lives of cats and dogs over the last three decades, says Serge Boutet, agronomist with consulting and research firm SBNutrinnov in Rosemere, Que. Cats can now be expected to live at least an average 15 to 17 years, says Boutet, with small-to-medium dogs living 14 to 17 years and large breeds 12 to 13 years.

In June 2016, global consulting firm Euromonitor International stated in its report on Canadian dog food trends that an emphasis on premiumization and wellness continues to gain market traction. Petcurean of Chilliwack, B.C. has seen this first hand. Demand continues to rise for its senior dog and cat food, which the firm has offered almost from day

one in 1999. Petcurean currently sells NOW FRESH Grain Free recipes for senior cats, small and large dogs, as well as a senior dog recipe in its GO! FIT + FREE line.

Edmonton-based Champion Petfoods has also seen demand for its ACANA senior formulation (produced for almost 20 years) and its ORIJEN senior formula (on the market for 10 years) increase “dramatically” over the last decade, says chief brand officer Peter Muhlenfeld. Both products have seen double-digit growth every year in the past 10 years.

Corey Nutrition Company of Fredericton, N.B. is another Canadian pet food maker that has experienced increased demand for its senior dog and cat products. Corey introduced its ProSeries Senior dog and cat foods with its other ProSeries products in 2001. “These were once two of our smallest volume line extensions but as demand has grown, these have become essential parts of our brand line,” notes brand manager Kendra Girouard.

Today’s senior pet foods address the same health issues in aging cats and dogs that face aging human beings — risks related to being overweight, as well as deteriorating joints and sub-optimal immune, digestive and brain function.



“Excess body fat can take years off a pet’s life,” notes Petcurean’s senior nutritionist Dr. Jennifer Adolphe. She points to estimates of 22 to 44 per cent of pets being substantially heavier than their ideal body weight. Boutet puts it a bit higher, at 45 to 55 per cent of dogs and 25 per cent of cats having a weight problem. But Muhlenfeld goes further, stating that more than 50 per cent of dogs and cats in Canada are overweight, with this number

and new ORIJEN Fit & Trim foods will enter the Canadian market in January 2017.” These formulas contain lower GI carbs from peas, lentils, pumpkin and squash.

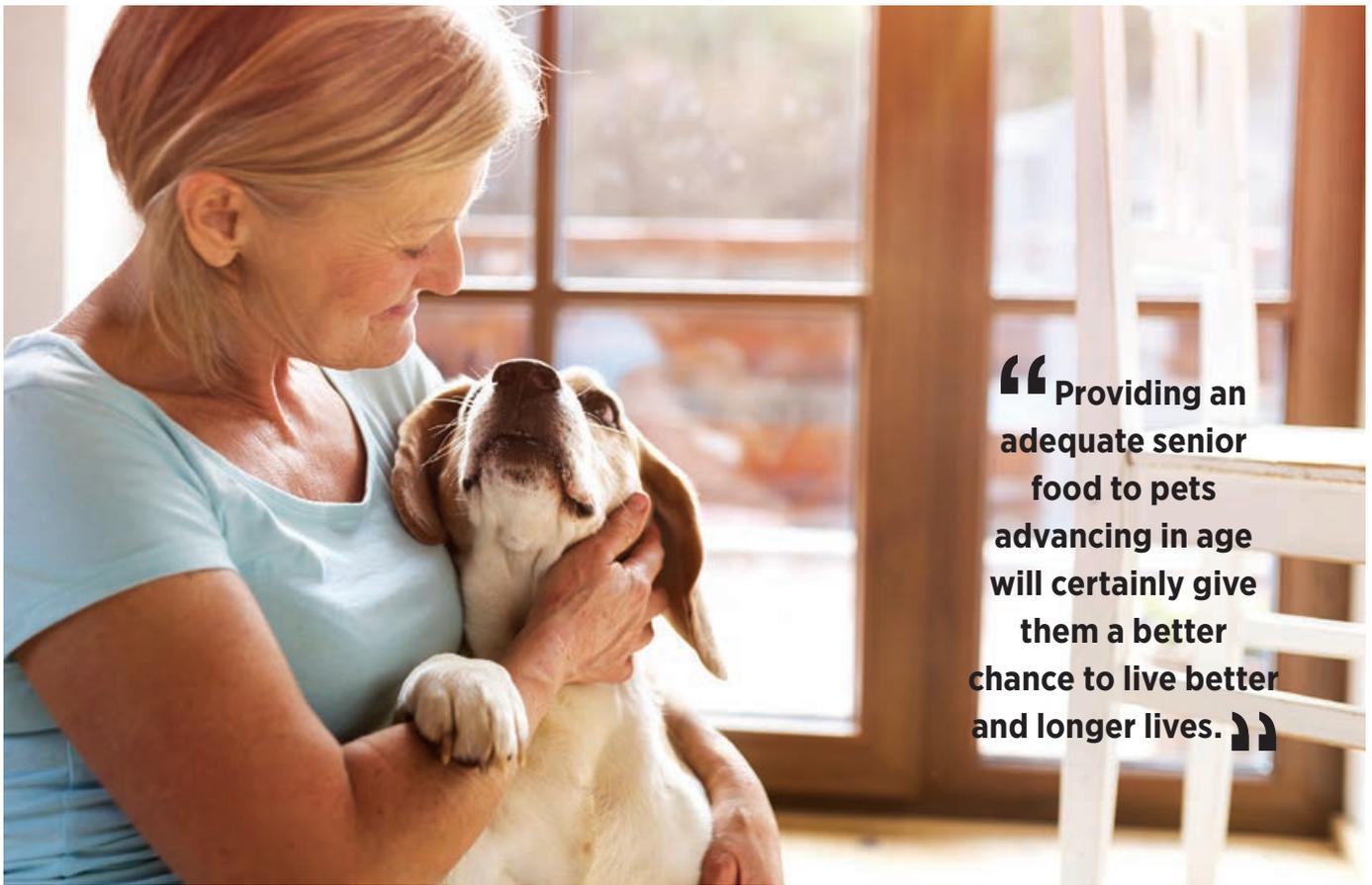
Boutet also points to fibre as a way to reduce the caloric content of pet food, and to maintain intestinal stability and regularity. Adolphe at Petcurean agrees that senior pets needing to shed a few pounds should have foods high in fibre. In Petcurean’s NOW FRESH Grain Free Senior Cat recipe, the fibre comes from a wide range of fruits and vegetables (from carrots to cranberries and grapefruit) with carbs from sources such as pumpkin and lentils, and fats from flaxseed and coconut oil. Boutet points to amino acid L-carnitine as an ingredient that promotes optimal use of fats by the body, therefore contributing to the maintenance of a healthy body weight. “It is also associated with good heart health,” he notes.

Inflammation and breakdown of joints is common among older animals, so adding ingredients that support joint health in senior food formulations is a no-brainer. In Petcurean’s GO! FIT + FREE Grain Free Senior Dog formula for example, these include omega-3 and -6 fatty acids (from coconut and canola), glucosamine, chondroitin and New Zealand green mussels. ↪

considerably larger among seniors.

As we all well know, there are many human health risks associated with obesity, and these risks are similar for our cats and dogs. They include diabetes, heart disease and increased blood pressure (all of which can shorten lifespan), loss of vitality, and reduced skin/coat quality. Boutet points to the presence of lots of carbohydrates with high glycemic index (GI) as a bad thing, and Muhlenfeld agrees. “The biggest challenge for us is educating pet lovers and pet specialty retailers about carbohydrates in dog and cat foods, even more so for senior animals,” Muhlenfeld explains. “We find that pet owners are often unaware of the amount of carbohydrate in their pet’s food.”

Many adult dog foods, he says, often contain high GI carbs such as tapioca, rice or potato at levels topping 50 per cent. High GI carbs elevate blood sugar quickly, increasing the risk of Type 2 diabetes and heart disease (in addition to possibly several other serious issues). Digesting high GI carbs also sends signals to the brain to eat more of them, which compounds weight gain. “Our Senior and Light formulas contain increased protein and decreased carbs,” Muhlenfeld notes. “Our enhanced ORIJEN Senior



“ Providing an adequate senior food to pets advancing in age will certainly give them a better chance to live better and longer lives. ”

Boutet adds that lutein, vitamins E and C and many other bioactive molecules in fruits and vegetables are also a good idea to include in senior pet food, as they may help maintain a strong immune system. Taurine is another popular ingredient, boosting heart, eye and brain function. Yet one more is chelated minerals (zinc, iron, copper and manganese proteinates) which help improve amino acid assimilation. Among other senior pet foods, Petcurean NOW FRESH and GO! FIT + FREE senior dog foods contain taurine and

proteinates, along with yucca schidigera extract, ginger and turmeric, which Boutet says may help digestion (along with paprika, thyme and oregano).

The NOW FRESH senior formula, like the other senior formulas on the market today, also includes various functional natural ingredients with a wide variety of purported benefits, from dried rosemary, green tea extract and peppermint, to rosehips, zedoary, dandelion, chamomile, marigold extract, cardamom and cloves. Champion ACANA Senior Dog contains turmeric, turnip greens, milk thistle, burdock root, lavender, marshmallow root and many others. Champion ORIJEN Senior Dog formula has everything from licorice root, angelica root and fenugreek to sweet fennel and summer savoury. If all this weren't enough, prebiotics such as chicory root extract and probiotics are also commonly added to today's senior formulas, to boost both digestive and overall health.

All these premium anti-aging ingredients in Canadian senior pet food formulas are making them more and more popular, and the growing demand may mean that additional companies will come up with their own. Going forward, public education may also play a factor in making senior foods sales even higher. “Pet parents usually do not tend to switch their pet food to senior-formulated diets because they do not want to think their four-legged friends are getting older,” Boutet concludes. “This is wrong, as providing an adequate senior food to pets advancing in age will certainly give them a better chance to live better and longer lives than if they stay on regular adult formulas.” 🐾



Since 1993, Mississauga, Ont.-based Holistic Blend has created pet food and nutritional supplements that boost pets' overall wellness

Holistic at heart

BY CAROL NESHEVICH

Debbie Pelczynski was a single mom and a waitress when she first got the idea to start up her pet nutrition company, Mississauga, Ont.-based Holistic Blend, back in 1993. Her kids were entering their teen years and beginning to think about their future career paths, and that inspired her to start rethinking her own career path. "I'm not saying that waitressing is a bad thing, because I loved it, and I'm not putting that down at all," she says, "but I just wanted to do something different to inspire my kids and say it doesn't matter where you come from, whether you finish school or you don't — you can pretty much do whatever you want to do, whatever is in your head."

As someone who had been passionate about dogs her entire life, she knew she wanted to do something related to animals. "I would listen to my customers having conversations about their animals, their dogs

and cats, all the time — saying they're sick, or they're dying. And I started to do quite a bit of research," says Pelczynski. Her research led her to learn about certain pet food ingredients that were causing detrimental health effects in animals, and she became determined to create her own health line for dogs and cats.

"I just wanted to do something that was in my heart, and was going to contribute to the lives of the pets long term," she says. "So I did that: I sought out manufacturers, I gave them my ideas as to what I wanted in terms of ingredients, what I didn't want, what I wanted the supplements to do, what I didn't want them to do, and they would formulate it for me."

Although she initially wanted her main product line to be nutritional supplements for pets, Pelczynski quickly realized that, at that time, there wasn't a big enough market for pet supplements to create a viable business. "The problem back then was that nobody wanted to look at supplements; they didn't understand supplements," she says. The entrepreneur decided that in order to make her nutritional supplements successful, she would also need to launch a healthy pet food line at the same time. "So I had to come out with a food, but I had to be able to go to sleep at night knowing that it was a clean food," she explains. ↪



Pelczynski's first food product on the market was a Lamb & Rice formulation for dogs, which continues to be her number-one seller today. "It's a unique formulation, specific for animals with sensitive stomachs or allergies — so it's a clean protein, a low protein, and a low fat," she says. Made with free range New Zealand lamb, this product is naturally preserved and features chelated minerals, whole grains, fruits, antioxidants and herbs, with a balance of omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids.

While Lamb & Rice is the top seller in dog food, Pelczynski says Holistic Blend's best-selling cat food is the Chicken & Salmon, and the company's top three supplements (in terms of sales) are the Seagreens Powder, Glucosamine

and the Herbal Calmer. "All our supplements are human grade so you can take them yourselves, because they're made in a human-grade facility, as are all of our treats as well," she says, noting that her general business philosophy is, "If I can't eat it, why should your pet?" Her line of dog treats includes Cinnamon Hearts, Pumpkin Spice Hearts and Peanut Butter Hearts (all heart-shaped biscuits for dogs). Cat treats include Freeze Dried Cod Filets, Freeze Dried Salmon Filets and Freeze Dried Chicken Liver. Between all of the food formulas, treats, alternative aids and supplements for both cats and dogs, Holistic Blend offers more than 30 different products.

Interestingly, Holistic Blend has a strong customer base in Asia. "Our biggest market is Asia, and we're in most Asian countries," says Pelczynski. "We have some new countries that we are just starting with, and the U.S. and Canada, of course." Available across Canada, Holistic Blend can be found primarily in health food stores and pet stores. "We have distributors in the health category, we have distributors in the pet category, and we have some grocery market that we do in the organic section," she says.

Pelczynski's company is still relatively small — "I don't use investors or partner with anyone," she explains — and she's happy to keep it that way at the moment. "You don't want to grow too quickly. I wouldn't want to short my existing customers," she says. "I'm comfortable with [my current size]. I'm happy and grateful."

That said, new product development is constantly in the works. "We're always expanding the product line, because people love the brand. People are always looking for something new," she says. "This year we're launching six new flavours in the treats — the heart treats, the biscuits for dogs. And we also launched some grain-free treats for dogs and cats as well. We launched a couple of new supplements this year too, we brought out our Raw Coconut Oil, and the L-Lysine & Cranberry for cats. There's always going to be something new." 🐾

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sur le Québec

NOUVELLES



Olymel investit 11 M\$ à son usine pour agrandissement et modernisation

L'entreprise québécoise de porc et de volaille Olymel investit 11 millions de dollars dans l'agrandissement et la modernisation de son établissement de surtransformation de viande de porc situé à St-Henri-de-Lévis sur la Rive-Sud de Québec.

Cet investissement vise à doter cette usine de nouveaux équipements qui permettront d'accroître l'efficacité, ainsi que le volume de production, faisant passer ce dernier de 40 à près de 60 millions de kilos annuellement.

Cet établissement fabrique, entre autres, des saucisses fumées et des émulsions comme les saucissons de Bologne, le pepperoni, le salami, des pains de poulet et des jambons fumés. Les travaux d'agrandissement et de réaménagement comprennent l'ajout de fumoirs, de refroidisseurs et d'équipements de fabrication et d'emballage permettant d'augmenter la production de produits fumés comme les jambons. Au terme des travaux, 3 000 pi² seront ajoutés au bâtiment existant, portant la superficie totale de cette usine à 170,000 pi².

“Olymel poursuit ses investissements dans la modernisation et le développement des activités de ses établissements de transformation afin de toujours mieux répondre aux besoins de ses clients et des marchés,” a fait valoir ➔

BIENS DE CONSOMMATION

➤ Les amateurs de chocolat qui recherchent quelque chose de spécial pour cette saison des Fêtes apprécieront la nouvelle boîte **Chocolatier** de **Ganong**, la plus ancienne compagnie chocolatière du Canada. La boîte Chocolatier est composée d'un assortiment unique de 13 chocolats noirs, au lait et blancs. Parmi leurs saveurs sophistiquées, notons fondant au caramel d'amande, crème au caramel écossais, liqueur de cerise, fruité au chocolat fraise, gaufrette croustillante aux noisettes, caramel de pacane, caramel au sel de mer et tourbillon de chocolat blanc/canneberges. Ces chocolats de qualité supérieure sont offerts exclusivement chez Shoppers Drug Mart et certaines succursales Loblaws à travers le Canada. Ils se vendent au prix de détail suggéré de 10 \$ pour une boîte de 190 g. www.ganong.com



➤ **McCain** propose aux Canadiens une nouvelle façon saine de grignoter avec sa gamme de produits **McCain Marché**. Fabriquées à partir d'ingrédients nutritifs et de haute qualité, les collations McCain Marché sont chaudes, délicieuses et soutenantes. Toutes les collations McCain

Marché sont cuites au four, jamais frites, sans saveurs artificielles ni colorants, et sont offertes dans une variété de saveurs pour satisfaire plus de goûts et de fringales que jamais. Les nouvelles variétés incluent les pochettes Moisson — composées d'ingrédients nutritifs enveloppés dans une pochette au levain savoureuse au romarin — à saveurs de poulet rôti, de poulet Alfredo et d'un mélange de trois fromages et épinards. Des bouchées Protéines, renfermant de 14 à 23 g de protéines par portion, sont également offertes en saveurs poulet au fromage parmesan, bœuf jamaïcain et saucisse émietée italienne.

www.mccain.ca/fr/marche-snacks

➤ **Happy Planet** lance trois nouvelles soupes naturelles: la soupe coréenne aigre-piquante, inspirée par la popularité croissante de la cuisine coréenne; la soupe de style pâté au poulet; et la soupe aux tomates et fromage grillé — nouvelles venues dans la gamme de produits frais **Soupes de chez nous**. Les Soupes de chez nous de Happy Planet évoquent



l'essence de la cuisine canadienne réconfortante. La soupe de style pâté au poulet s'avère onctueuse et riche en légumes et en pommes de terre, et elle regorge de poulet biologique de la meilleure qualité provenant de fermes situées dans la région de Kawartha Lakes en Ontario. La soupe aux tomates et fromage grillé marie le goût des tomates fraîches au goût surprenant d'un sandwich au fromage grillé fait maison. La soupe coréenne aigre-piquante de Happy Planet contient un riche bouillon avec kimchi et légumes, parfumé au gojuchang et aux épices. La nouvelle soupe coréenne aigre-piquante est également offerte en format individuel prêt à emporter. www.happyplanet.com

le président-directeur général d'Olymel, Réjean Nadeau. "Cet investissement de 11 M\$ à St-Henri-de-Lévis s'inscrit dans notre volonté de demeurer chef de file de notre secteur au Québec et au Canada, et de renforcer nos capacités concurrentielles. Pour atteindre ses objectifs de croissance, Olymel a ainsi investi plus de 250 M\$ depuis 2015, tant dans son secteur du porc que dans celui de la volaille."

L'usine d'Olymel à St-Henri-de-Lévis compte actuellement 530 employés, et ces changements devraient permettre de créer plus de 30 emplois.

Des étudiants de McGill gagnent à nouveau à l'IFT

Cet été, des étudiants au programme de sciences alimentaires de l'Université McGill de Montréal ont impressionné le monde de l'alimentation pour une deuxième année consécutive avec leurs produits gagnants lors des compétitions annuelles de développement de nouveaux produits tenues pendant l'événement Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) 2016 à Chicago.

Deux équipes de McGill, les créateurs du végétiburger Rephyll



Professeure Salwa Karboune (au centre) avec les élèves qui ont créé le ragoût Fitamin: (de g. à d.) Mingduo Mu, Jun Xin Ong, Anne Frazer-McKee, Tamao Tsutsumi, Sonia Périllat-Amédée et Emily Mason.



Professeure Karboune (au centre) avec les élèves qui ont créé le hamburger Rephyll: (de g. à d.) Adam Maxwell, Qui Yi (Zoe) Sun, Caroline Lafleur, Rasha Dogmoch, Anna Cavaliere et Patrick Liu (absent de la photo: Christopher Zhang, membre de l'équipe).

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et du ragoût Fitamin Multimeal, ont décroché la première place dans leur catégorie respective.

Rephyll a remporté dans la catégorie Développement de nouveaux produits. Ce hamburger sans viande est une réplique végétale du burger traditionnel, qui reproduit les propriétés organoleptiques du boeuf en ce qui a trait à la saveur et à la texture, tout en fournissant 65 pour cent de l'apport quotidien recommandé en légumes dans une seule portion. Fabriqué avec des champignons shiitakes, des protéines végétales texturées et des ingrédients à base de légumes secs, ce hamburger a été conçu pour les flexitariens qui recherchent le goût du boeuf sans devoir manger de viande.

Pour sa part, le Fitamin Multimeal a décroché la première place dans la catégorie Développement de solutions pour les pays en émergence. Inspiré par les saveurs du Saltah, un mets traditionnel yéménite, le Fitamin est un ragoût passe-partout conçu pour offrir des nutriments comme le calcium aux femmes enceintes du Yémen, où la carence en calcium pendant la grossesse constitue la principale cause de mortalité maternelle, et conduit au rachitisme nutritionnel chez les enfants. Composé de lentilles, de thon, de lait écrémé en poudre, de tahini, de carottes et de tomates, ainsi que de poudre d'œuf pour ajouter du calcium, ce ragoût polyvalent peut être mélangé avec de la farine et transformé en pita ou mangé sur du riz ou des pommes de terre.

Les deux produits ont été développés dans le cadre du cours

de développement de produits alimentaires enseigné par Salwa Karboune, professeure agrégée de sciences alimentaires à la faculté des Sciences de l'agriculture et de l'environnement du campus Macdonald de l'Université McGill.

C'est la deuxième année consécutive que l'établissement d'enseignement remporte des prix. En 2015, McGill est devenue la première université canadienne à remporter une compétition à l'IFT, et la première université à y remporter deux compétitions la même année.

Corby fait l'acquisition de la gamme de spiritueux de Domaine Pinnacle



Corby Spiritueux et vins Ltée de Toronto a conclu une entente visant l'acquisition de l'offre de spiritueux de Domaine Pinnacle inc., un producteur de spiritueux et de cidre québécois. Le prix d'achat s'élève à 12 M\$.

La transaction touche le portefeuille de spiritueux de Domaine Pinnacle, incluant le gin canadien haut de gamme Ungava, le rhum épicé Chic Choc et une gamme de liqueurs à base de produits de l'érable, dont Coureur des Bois et Cabot Trail, ainsi que les stocks de spiritueux et les actifs de production connexes.

Fondée en 2000 par Charles Crawford et Susan Reid à Cowansville, Domaine Pinnacle est devenue une cidrerie (des actifs que Corby n'achète pas dans cette transaction) et elle a étendu ses activités pour s'orienter vers la distillation et la production de spiritueux artisanaux. Aujourd'hui, ses produits sont offerts à l'échelle du Canada ainsi que dans plus de 50 pays du monde entier.

Sous réserve de la conclusion de la transaction, le portefeuille de marques et les

divers actifs acquis par Corby seront désormais gérés sous la bannière Les Spiritueux Ungava Ltée, une nouvelle filiale en propriété exclusive qui a été incorporée pour procéder à cette acquisition. Les Spiritueux Ungava maintiendra ses opérations dans ses installations actuelles à Cowansville, et Charles Crawford se joindra à l'équipe de Corby à titre de président des Spiritueux Ungava.



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Esthel Racine

photos: Aliments Racine

Aliments Racine de Montréal propose une nouvelle avenue en matière de hamburgers végétariens

PAR MARK CARDWELL

Les événements prennent rarement la tournure que les gens avaient planifiée, et ils aboutissent parfois sur des avenues insoupçonnées.

Prenons l'exemple de l'entrepreneure en alimentation, Esthel Racine de Montréal. En tant qu'étudiante à l'École supérieure de ballet du Québec, elle a grandi en rêvant d'une carrière de ballerine professionnelle. "C'était le centre de ma vie," explique-t-elle. "J'ai travaillé très dur pendant longtemps pour réaliser ce rêve."

Des blessures sont toutefois venues assombrir ses espoirs. Mme Racine a notamment souffert de deux hernies discales, une blessure courante pour une ballerine de grande taille. "Dans le monde du ballet, vous ne parlez pas de vos blessures. J'ai donc continué à danser," précise-t-elle.



Il y a quatre ans, alors que Mme Racine avait 21 ans, la douleur devint si intense qu'elle fut forcée d'abandonner la danse. "Ce fut la journée la plus pénible de ma vie," se souvient-elle. "Je n'avais aucune idée quoi faire d'autre. Je n'avais pas de plan B."

S'il y avait une autre chose que Mme Racine connaissait pourtant bien en tant que danseuse, c'était la nutrition. Toujours prête à trouver et à préparer des aliments qui lui en donnaient plus pour son argent en matière de nutrition et de bien-être personnel, cet intérêt a atteint un autre niveau quand elle est devenue végétarienne à 22 ans. "Je n'ai jamais été une grande amatrice de viande de toute façon, et j'étais conscience de tous les impacts environnementaux négatifs causés par la production de la viande; ce fut donc une décision facile à prendre pour moi," commente Mme Racine.

Également préoccupée par les quantités élevées de sodium dans les aliments

végétariens transformés, dont la plupart tournent invariablement autour du soja et du gluten, Mme Racine a commencé à faire des expériences avec différents types d'aliments. "Je voulais améliorer ma diversité de protéines avec des aliments faciles à préparer et constitués d'une autre source de protéines que le soja et le gluten," fait-elle valoir. "Je ne voulais pas manger du soja tous les jours."

Occupant un emploi au service à la clientèle dans un hôtel du centre-ville de Montréal, Mme Racine a commencé par concocter ses propres recettes à base de haricots, contenant des légumes secs et des légumineuses. "J'achète ces produits séchés, je les fais tremper pendant la nuit et je les rince deux fois avant de les faire cuire, afin de réduire les gaz intestinaux qu'ils ont tendance à générer," décrit-elle. Elle ajoute ensuite des fines herbes et des épices, et en fait des galettes de hamburger sans viande et des boulettes qu'elle surnomme "boulets."

Selon Mme Racine, les invités du souper ravirent ses hamburgers végétariens. Lorsque ses blessures au dos refirent surface, la forçant à faire une pause au travail, elle décida de travailler à son compte en 2015 et de développer des produits alimentaires uniques pour le marché végétalien en pleine croissance. "J'avais confiance en moi et mes idées, dit-elle, j'ai donc décidé de foncer."

Avec environ 50,000 \$ de soutien financier de sa famille et de ses amis, Mme Racine loua un espace dans une cuisine commerciale au centre-ville de Montréal. En quelques mois, elle développa son premier produit commercial: un hamburger végétarien au paprika fumé et aux pacanes caramélisées fait de haricots blancs et de quinoa. "Je l'ai fait déguster à plusieurs mangeurs de viande, et ils ont tous été agréablement surpris," raconte Mme Racine. "Ce qui est bien aussi, c'est que vous pouvez le faire chauffer au four, sur le barbecue ou dans une poêle, ou le manger froid comme il est déjà cuit."

Mme Racine a commencé par vendre ce produit à sa famille, ses amis et camarades de classe au cours Lancement d'une entreprise où elle était inscrite, offert par la SAJE, une école accompagnatrice d'entrepreneurs de Montréal. Ses hamburgers ont notamment valu à Mme Racine d'obtenir une ➔

bourse de développement commercial d'une année de la SAJE, d'une valeur de près de 20,000 \$. "C'était tout un coup de pouce pour moi et mon entreprise," se rappelle-t-elle.

Mme Racine a également recueilli 120 pour cent (ou 7,200 \$) de l'objectif de 6,000 \$ qu'elle s'était fixé cet été-là dans le cadre d'une campagne de financement de masse sur Ulule.ca. Au cours de la campagne, Mme Racine a tenu des séances de dégustation de son hamburger lors de cours de yoga au parc Laurier de Montréal et en collaboration avec une association végétarienne. Elle a également créé une page Facebook qui a généré beaucoup de commentaires positifs. "La plupart des gens disent qu'ils en aiment le goût et la texture, note-t-elle. Nous n'avons pas reçu de commentaires négatifs, même si certaines personnes ont dit préférer les burgers à la viande aux végés burgers."

“ Je n'aurais rien pu imaginer de tout cela il y a quelques années. Mais maintenant, je peux voir où ça s'en va, et je vais y arriver si je continue à travailler fort. ”

Mme Racine souligne que son marché cible ne se limite pas aux végétariens ou aux végétaliens, qui représentent environ 4 pour cent de la population. "Mes produits s'adressent aux gens soucieux de leur santé ou qui veulent simplement réduire la quantité de viande qu'ils consomment ou qu'ils servent à leurs enfants," expose-t-elle.

Au mois d'août, les hamburgers de Mme Racine ont été mis en vente au grand public pour la première fois chez Loco, une nouvelle épicerie sans déchets et sans emballage qui a pignon sur rue au centre-ville de Montréal. Mme Racine déclare que la demande a été si forte que Loco mobilise tous les hamburgers que son nouveau partenaire d'affaires, Alejandro Escamilla et elle fabriquent dans leur cuisine, 12 heures par jour. Heureusement, cette cuisine est équipée d'un four Rational qui aide à maintenir l'humidité du produit tout en permettant de conserver la texture croquante recherchée.

"C'est dur pour mon dos, mentionne Mme Racine, "mais ça semble faire moins mal quand tu te surpasse pour ta propre entreprise."

Mme Racine envisage actuellement de procéder à une mise à niveau de son équipement de cuisine en vue de décupler sa capacité de production. Elle finalise également la conception d'un deuxième burger végétarien — celui-ci à base de pois chiches, à saveur de patate douce et d'épices marocaines — et travaille à l'élaboration d'un falafel fait de petits pois.

Une fois la production mise à niveau et les nouveaux produits implantés, Mme Racine espère pouvoir fournir davantage de magasins d'alimentation du centre-ville qui ont exprimé l'intérêt de distribuer ses produits. "Je vois cela comme le début d'une entreprise vraiment prospère," se réjouit celle qui a tenu un kiosque au festival végane de Montréal qui a eu lieu au début novembre. "Je n'aurais rien pu imaginer de tout cela il y a quelques années. Mais maintenant, je peux voir où ça s'en va, et je vais y arriver si je continue à travailler fort." ●



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Nous vous remercions tous du fond du cœur.

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IBIE 2016

The International Baking Industry Exposition (IBIE) took place in Las Vegas from Oct. 8 to 11. With more than 1,000 leading manufacturers and suppliers in attendance, the IBIE exposition floor was packed with opportunities to preview the latest technologies, track industry trends, and uncover new products from suppliers such as the ones below.

Clean & simple

The demand for clean labels, transparency and traceability is high these days, and the bakery industry is no exception to this trend. Kerry can help simplify your bakery formulas and cut out artificial ingredients, while still maintaining taste, texture and authenticity, with the support of its product portfolio, tools and product-development experts. www.kerry.com



Keep it moving

Eriez manufactures a full line of magnetic separators and metal detectors for the food industry. Eriez' vibratory feeders and conveyors, as well as bin vibrators, help keep those products moving on the processing line. www.eriez.com

Baking ingredients galore

As an ingredient supplier manufacturing and distributing a wide range of raw materials to the food industry, Caldic has expertise in baking ingredients and has strategically located facilities across North America. Caldic products highlighted at the IBIE show included: Egg Replacement Systems; Low and No Sodium Baking Powders; Mould Inhibitors; Release Agents; Dough Conditioners, Softeners and Enzyme Systems; Bakery Concentrates; and Gluten Replacement Systems. www.caldic.com

Fibre boost

ADM/Matsutani showcased Fibersol, a premier line of soluble dietary fibre ingredients, at IBIE. Whether formulators are seeking ways to reduce sugar and calories, meet clean label goals, or boost fibre content, Fibersol has a solution. The Fibersol portfolio of soluble dietary ingredients includes Fibersol-2, Fibersol-LQ, Fibersol-AG, as well as the recently introduced Fibersol-2L, a liquid form of Fibersol-2. www.fibersol.com



Full baking range

Grain Millers offers conventional, organic and gluten-free oat products including natural oat fibres. The company's multiple milling locations throughout North America also process certified non-GMO corn, flax, wheat, barley, rye, triticale, ancient grains (quinoa and chia) along with custom blending to meet a full range of baking requirements. www.grainmillers.com



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SupplySide West 2016

Featuring over 1,400 exhibiting companies offering more than 10,000 ingredients and services, SupplySide West took place Oct. 4 to 8 in Las Vegas. The exhibit floor at this year's show was an exciting place for food and beverage manufacturers to find ideas for an upcoming improvement or new innovation.

Beverage innovation

Bell Flavors & Fragrances offers a variety of flavours for innovative beverage applications. Bell's flavourists work closely with beverage manufacturing customers to create the perfect flavours for their unique beverage application. The company's

beverage application team is consistently developing leading flavour prototypes to continuously push customers' endless imaginations. Beverage Flavour applications include alcohol, carbonated, dry mix, mixers and nutraceuticals. www.bellff.com

Gelatin expertise

Specializing in the production of bovine, porcine and fish gelatins, as well as collagen peptides for use in a variety of applications including food, nutritional and cosmeceutical, Nitta Gelatin utilizes its technical expertise and almost a century of know-how to provide customers with innovative ideas, excellent technical service, and consistent high-quality products. www.nitta-gelatin.com

Colour solutions

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Meeting flavour expectations

Flavorchem, an SQF Level 3 organization, specializes in flavour and colour creation and matching for all segments of the food, beverage and nutraceutical industries. Partnering closely with their customers throughout the entire process, Flavorchem's talented team of flavour scientists and application professionals deliver the results customers demand by tailoring every project to meet their expectations. www.flavorchem.com

Probiotic power

The DuPont Danisco portfolio includes the HOWARU brand of probiotic preformulated blends and single strains, with products available as culture concentrates, standardized blends or in consumer-ready finished formats. HOWARU proprietary blends from DuPont (HOWARU Protect, HOWARU Restore and HOWARU Balance) have all been scientifically formulated to provide condition-specific benefits supported by targeted clinical research. www.danisco.com



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Carol Neshevich



Erica and Drew Gilmour in their Almonte, Ont. workshop.

Hummingbird Chocolate Maker Almonte, Ont.

When Drew and Erica Gilmour first embarked on their chocolate-making venture four years ago, they weren't exactly sure where it would lead them. They thought it might just end up being a hobby. "But unfortunately, our first batch came out incredibly good. If it had turned out bad, we might have just moved on to the next thing," laughs Drew Gilmour.

Jokes aside, it's been very fortunate for Canadian chocolate lovers that the Gilmours' first batch did turn out to be good — so delicious, in fact, that it led them to launch their company, Hummingbird Chocolate Maker, in Almonte, Ont. in 2012. Gilmour is quick to point out that they're not just chocolatiers (meaning someone who makes chocolate creations using commercially produced chocolate). Hummingbird is an artisanal "bean-to-bar" chocolate maker, which means they make their chocolate completely from scratch using cacao beans sourced from places like the Dominican



Emmy Ayer tempering chocolate, pouring into chocolate moulds

Republic, Vietnam, Haiti and Guatemala.

"When we first started out, there were only maybe three others in Canada and maybe a dozen in the States that were doing this," he explains. "Now there are 20 to 30 in Canada, and something like 150 or so in the States, and that's only in four years." Gilmour sees this rapid growth in bean-to-bar chocolate making as part of society's increasing desire to eat "pure" foods. "In our chocolate, we have cacao beans, cane sugar, and a touch of cacao butter, which is essentially cacao beans anyways. It's a pure product," he says. "It connects back not just to the artisan who made it, but also the farmer who cultivates it."

The Gilmours pride themselves on their close connection with the farmers who supply their beans, making sure they're treated fairly and respectfully. In fact, before moving back to Canada and starting Hummingbird, they had both spent considerable time working in Afghanistan, which is where they first met. "Throughout our careers, we had always been involved with helping farmers in developing countries," he says, noting that Erica even spent a couple of years working exclusively with Afghan widow farmers. "She really liked those connections with the farmers, as did I," he says. "She also had a severe addiction to chocolate," he adds with a chuckle, noting that these two things together made Hummingbird the perfect endeavour for them.

Sales got an enormous boost this sum-

mer when the company received the top honour at the Academy of Chocolate Awards ceremony held in London, England. Beating chocolate entries from all over the world, the company's Hispaniola bar (made with organic cacao beans from the Dominican Republic) received the 2016 Golden Bean Award. This was the first time a Canadian company had won.

In addition to the media coverage from winning the award, Gilmour thinks social media is playing a major role in spreading the word about his company, and about artisanal bean-to-bar chocolate in general. "People are realizing Canada makes the best chocolate in the world now," he adds. "I think Canadians are passionate about chocolate, and we're at the forefront of this trend." 🍫

Q&A



Q: What do you think makes your chocolate so good?

A: "We really do whatever it takes to make it the best we can possibly make it. We won't cut corners. So we really sweat out every single step; there are 10 steps and every one is more important than the last one. If one step doesn't work, we just have to start all over again."

Q: Are people willing to pay a bit more for your product?

A: "We try to communicate that the chocolate we make has this connection to the farmer, this connection with the craft...and once they understand all of that they appreciate that yes, it's expensive, but the quality makes it worthwhile."



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