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Canada's food & beverage processing magazine

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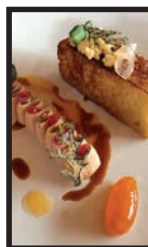
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A Taste of Honey

Consumers are turning to honey for flavour and health.

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Flavour inspiration

One of the things I look forward to the most at this time of the year is the many trend forecasts that appear to predict what will be fresh and exciting in the food world over the next 12 months.

The McCormick Flavor Forecast is always an interesting and informative read, often identifying traditional tastes with breakout potential. The 2018 report, “Taste Tomorrow’s Favorite Flavors,” points to the following “globally inspired” cuisines:

- » Handheld street food with a fusion of international flavours.
- » Regional African seasonings, marinades and sauces featuring rich taste combinations. ⁽¹⁾
- » Boldly flavoured Japanese snacks such as yakitori skewers usually served in Izakayas (gastropubs). ⁽²⁾
- » Beverages with bounce, featuring fruits, vegetables and ingredients like ginger, turmeric and cayenne pepper. ⁽³⁾
- » Hot pots of flavourful broth that can be customized with protein, vegetables, herbs and spices, and which are perfect for sharing.

On the processing side, Blendtek Ingredients’ “2018 Food Forecast: Trends & Ingredients to Watch,” looks at trends in product concepts and ingredients. These include:

- » Personalized nutrition for specific health conditions or age groups, through ingredients such as nutrient and protein premixes (including vegan protein).
- » New extrusion methods to produce

novel textures, allowing for “puffed, popped, dried and crisped” ingredients, especially ancient grains, in products like baked goods.

- » The use of adaptogens, herbs traditionally used in Ayurvedic and Chinese medicine. Ashwagandha (aka Indian ginseng) is one to watch.
- » Natural, simple sweeteners like honey and agave syrup, which will continue to replace refined sugar and artificial sweeteners.

Some of these emerging trends are already evident in Canada at food trucks and restaurants, at local producer markets, and in the niche products of entrepreneurial food businesses. As consumer interest grows, these flavours and ingredients will eventually make the leap to commercialization by larger companies.

If you’re considering exploring these trends to see how they align with your product offerings, just remember to remain authentic to your company brand. If it doesn’t fit, don’t force it. Incorporating trendy ingredients or flavours in your products also doesn’t excuse you from being innovative in the way you present them. Consumers can see through “me-too” products that are simply jumping on the bandwagon rather than forging their own path to success. ●

Carolyn

CCooper@foodincanada.com



1) Berbere spiced roasted veggies & pasta.



2) Sake, miso & ginger pork yakitori skewers.



3) Ginger, turmeric & beet sipping elixir.

Drink one beer and call me in the morning

Stalwart Brewing Co. of Carleton Place, Ont. had just launched its Dr. Feelgood IPA in area LCBO stores, when the company was notified that it was being removed from shelves due to public safety concerns. A statement from Stalwart Brewing explains that “the LCBO interpreted our beer to be labelled as medicine” since the label included the image of the Rod of Asclepius, a symbol associated with medicine and healing, and the letters R and X, Latin for “to take.” “We, of course, would never want to mislead anyone in thinking our smooth, tropical beer will cure them of anything except a responsible desire for a delicious, hoppy beverage,” says the statement. The company is creating a new label.



News > file



photo: Thinkstock

A new voice

More than 1,500 food and beverage processing companies from across Canada have come together to launch a new national organization called Food & Beverage Canada (F&BC).

The Ottawa-based organization plans to take the lead on issues such as ensuring smart regulations that serve the public interest, while maintaining a competitive environment; building a healthier, more sustainable and ethical food system; promoting innovation in food and beverage manufacturing processes and practices; creating global trade opportunities for products; protecting and informing consumers while enabling consumer choice; and providing skilled jobs and rewarding employment for Canadians.

The organization comprises seven regional food and beverage manufacturing associations from coast to coast, and leading industry members and stakeholders. The founding board of directors includes: co-chair Michael Burrows, CEO, Maple Lodge Farms; co-chair Daniel Vielfaure, managing director, Bonduelle Americas Long Life; vice-chair Sylvie Cloutier,

photo: CNW Group/Canopy Growth Corporation

CEO, Conseil de la transformation alimentaire du Québec; secretary Rosemary MacLellan, vice-president, Strategy & Industry Affairs, Gay Lea Foods; treasurer Joe Makowecki, president and CEO, Heritage Frozen Foods; and director at large Rory McAlpine, senior vice-president, Government and Industry Relations, Maple Leaf Foods.

A joint venture



Aerial view of Les Serres Vert Cannabis' greenhouse

Canopy Growth Corporation and Canopy Rivers Corporation of Smiths Falls, Ont. and Mirabel, Que.-based Les Serres Stéphane Bertrand Inc. have formed a new company called Les Serres Vert Cannabis Inc.

Les Serres Stéphane Bertrand currently

produces tomatoes and other vegetables in a 700,000-sq.-ft. modern greenhouse. The company will upgrade its greenhouse and retrofit it for cannabis production by April 2018, with the assistance of Canopy Growth. Les Serres Vert Cannabis expects to be ready to begin production by May 2018.

Under the terms of the agreement, Les Serres Vert Cannabis will lease the 700,000-sq.-ft. greenhouse from Stéphane Bertrand and will have the option to acquire the property. ↗



Redpath Sugar has introduced its first full cookbook, *The Redpath Canadian Bake Book*. The book includes 200 recipes showcasing and celebrating many distinct culinary traditions from Canada. It also offers suggestions for substituting ingredients; piping and decorating; and storing and freezing baked goods. And for those consumers who are still working on perfecting their baking skills, the company assures us that the book is designed to ensure stress-free and accurate baking every time.



Mushrooms for health



Researchers at Pennsylvania State University have found that mushrooms contain unusually high amounts of two antioxidants that some scientists suggest could help fight aging and bolster health.

Ergothioneine and glutathione are found in most species of mushrooms, say the researchers, but some, like porcini mushrooms, contain the highest amounts. Cooking doesn't seem to affect the antioxidants.

Nothing goes to waste

U.K.-based Ananas Anam Ltd. has created a new textile made from pineapple leaves called Piñatex. As the company explains on its website, "the pineapple leaves that form the basis of Piñatex are the byproduct of existing agriculture, so no additional land, water, fertilizer or pesticides are required to produce the raw material." The raw materials come from the Philippines, and production takes place in Spain. Piñatex, says the company, can be used in products that would otherwise be made of leather.



Fewer calories from non-alcoholic beverages

The Canadian Beverage Association (CBA) released the latest look at its Balance Calories Initiative (BCI) in a report prepared by the Conference Board of Canada called *Balance Calories Initiative: 2017 Tracking Report*.

The CBA, which represents Canada's non-alcoholic beverage industry, says that in the BCI program's first two years consumers reduced their calories from non-alcoholic beverages by 10.2 per cent. That means that since 2004 there has been an almost 30-per-cent reduction



in calories consumed from non-alcoholic beverages by Canadian consumers. The CBA says the reduction is due to reformulation, smaller portion sizes and more low-calorie or no-calorie options.

AirBnB for foodpreneurs



Two recent graduates of the Kellogg-Schulich Executive MBA program have launched The Revolving Kitchen, an AirBnB-like service that matches short-term commercial kitchen rental availability with aspiring chefs, food makers and other food entrepreneurs. The company says the service supports kitchen-seekers and offers an added revenue stream during off-business hours for commercial kitchen owners. For more information, visit www.therevolvingkitchen.ca

photos: Thinkstock

LAUGHING ALL THE WAY TO QUEBEC

Saint-Nicolas, Que.-based Fromagerie Bergeron and France-based Bel Group recently marked the 10th anniversary of their partnership. Bel Group owns the brand Laughing Cow, which is made by Fromagerie Bergeron for the Canadian market. The Laughing Cow was first imported to Canada from France in 1956, and in 2007 Bel Group transferred production to a local company in Canada.



(L-R) Roger Bergeron, general manager, Fromagerie Bergeron; Catherine Thomas, CEO, Bel Cheese Canada Inc.; Marc Picard, MNA for the riding of Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, Que.; Laurent Lessard, MNA for the riding of Lotbinière-Frontenac and minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; and Mario Bergeron, general manager, Maison d’Affinage Bergeron.

Federation launches new logo

The Federation of Québec Maple Syrup Producers (FPAQ) of Longueuil, Que. has unveiled a new logo and new taglines. The two taglines are "Érable du Québec" for the Quebec market, and "Maple from Canada" for promotional activities abroad.



Nathalie Langlois, FPAQ's director of Marketing, Innovation and Market Development, says the federation created the new logo and taglines "to reinforce our local positioning and expand our presence on international markets."



Ocean Spray acquires Atoka

Massachusetts-based Ocean Spray Cranberries Inc. has acquired Manseau, Que.-based Atoka Cranberries Inc. from The Bieler Group. Ocean Spray says the acquisition will expand its presence in the province of Quebec.

Atoka was founded in 1984 as a cranberry farming operation. In 1988, says the company, it began constructing a plant and over the years “launched its marketing, packaging and processing operations.” Today the company has five production lines, three freezer units and a state-of-the-art laboratory.

Ocean Spray says in addition to the Atoka brand and processing facility, it also intends to acquire The Bieler Group’s freezer and receiving facilities in the coming year. Ocean Spray adds that “The Bieler Group will retain its world-class cranberry growing operations and become a farmer-owner of the Ocean Spray Cooperative.”

Atoka’s 130 employees will become part of the Ocean Spray manufacturing network, which includes five food plants in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Washington, and Lanco, Chile, as well as four beverage facilities in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Texas and Nevada.

IN MEMORIAM

> Inniskillin Winery co-founder **Karl Kaiser** has passed away. Kaiser’s 1989 Inniskillin Vidal Icewine won the highest prize at the 1991 Vinexpo in Bordeaux, France, setting Canada’s reputation as an ice wine producer. Kaiser also helped create the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) and the Oenology and Viticulture (OEVI) undergraduate program in the 1990s at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont. He was the OEVI’s first instructor in 1998.

> **Bernard Chippin**, owner of Victory Meat Market in Fredericton, N.B., has passed away. Chippin and his brother Harry owned the market, and also founded the Chippin Brothers Abattoir.

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TWO PRAIRIE COMPANIES PARTNER UP

Avena Foods Limited of Regina, Sask. and Best Cooking Pulses Inc. of Portage La Prairie, Man. have merged. Avena Foods supplies certified gluten-free oats across North America and has a dedicated gluten-free facility. It has also created a Purity Protocol, which is an industry benchmark process based on “Start Clean, Stay Clean” principles. Best Cooking Pulses creates gluten-free tested pulse flours and pea hull fibres.



IN BRIEF



> Canmore, Alta.-based **Bow Valley BBQ** struck gold at the 2017 World Hot Sauce Awards. The company’s Blueberry Merlot Steak Sauce won the World Champion title

in the Steak Sauce category, while its Sweet Chili Corn Salsa took the World Champion title in the Specialty category. The company’s Parkway Premium Caesar Works scored second place in the Bloody Mary Mix category. Bow Valley BBQ is a Cohort II member of Arlene Dickinson’s District Ventures Accelerator, and received an investment from Dickinson’s venture capital firm District Ventures Capital.

> Halifax, N.S.-based **Clearwater Seafoods** has welcomed the state-of-the-art factory ship **Anne Risley** into its fleet of clam vessels. The ship is a \$70-million investment to replace an existing 31-year-old clam vessel.



photo: Clearwater Seafoods

> Surrey, B.C.-based **Central City Brewers & Distillers** received more than \$73,000 in matching funding from the provincial government to help the company expand the local market for its craft beer and spirits.



> **DanoneWave Canada’s** 2018 Activia Challenge took place from Jan. 8 to Feb. 18. The Challenge encouraged women to adopt a healthy lifestyle in order to regain their balance post-holiday season. With the tagline “Because it Starts Inside,” the campaign included television spots in French and English, as well as radio content, social media presence and partnerships with leading social media influencers.

> This past holiday season **French’s** brand, which is part of **McCormick & Company**, worked with Food Banks Canada to help families in need. For every bottle of certain French’s products sold, the company donated one meal through Food Banks Canada up to 1.25 million meals. The products included French’s Mustard (400 mL), French’s Ketchup (750 mL) and French’s Caesar Mix in Original and Fully Loaded (1.89 L).



> Quebec-based **Fumoir Grizzly** and its partners **Université Laval** and **Merinov** have

completed development of the M35 bacteriocin and its application process. Called Bac M35, the natural bioingredient protects fish from growing *Listeria monocytogenes*. Fumoir Grizzly is one of Canada’s largest fish smokehouses and is a leading seller of salmon and smoked salmon in Quebec. Bac M35 is an alternative to chemical additives and salt, and is sourced from a bioingredient naturally present in marine environments.



> Fergus, Ont.-based **Lighthouse Lemonade** is now available in Sobeys stores across Ontario. In other news, company founder and CEO Jill Fisher was named as one of the winners of the inaugural 50 Over 50 Awards. The awards recognize older Canadians in business.



> **Robynne Anderson, Patty Jones** and **Jean Szkotnicki** were inducted into the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame during a ceremony last November. Only five women (out of more than 210 individuals) have been inducted into the hall since it was created in 1960.

Oops we goofed...

The story “Clawing our way to the top” in the November/December 2017 issue contained some errors. Gidney Fisheries Limited does not adhere to an ISO standard, but meets and exceeds CFIA guidelines. *Food in Canada* apologizes for any inconveniences these errors may have caused.

photos: Thinkstock

SUPPLIER NEWS

> Toronto-based **SKF** has named **Luff Industries**, a Canadian manufacturer of conveyor components, its first original equipment manufacturer in North America to achieve SKF Equipped status. The SKF Equipped program places strict quality standards on the design, manufacture and assembly of rotating equipment to achieve highest performance.



(L-R) Luff Industries' Steven Pace, CEO; Robert Fasoli, COO; and Matthew Fasoli, general manager; with Francois Cliché, national sales director, SKF.

> Kingsey Falls, Que.-based **Cascades Inc.** received a Food Innovation Award from the Food Processing Council of Quebec in the Packaging category. The company won for its northbox product, a new recyclable and insulated box.



> Toronto-based **VersaCold Logistics Services** opened Phase 1 of its Milton Distribution Centre in Milton, Ont. late last year. The company expanded as part of its growth strategy and because of an expanded partnership with Nestlé Canada.

> Mississauga, Ont.-based **Bamford Produce Co. Ltd.** has reserved the all-electric Class 8 Tesla Semis as part of its environmental sustainability vision to reduce its carbon footprint. Bamford is one of Canada's largest produce distribution companies.

> Florida-based **Ryder System Inc.** has opened a new Logistics Operating Centre in London, Ont. The 30,000-sq.-ft. facility has an office, cross-docking space, and parking for 286 trailers and 162 tractors.



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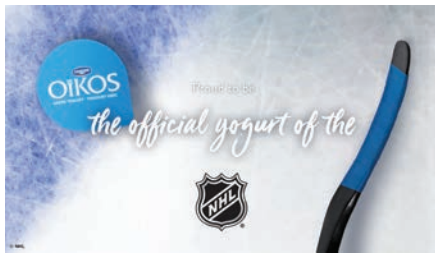
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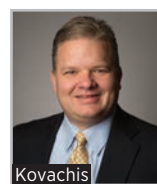


DanoneWave Canada announced that its OIKOS brand yogurt has sealed a three-year sponsorship of the NHL in Canada starting with the current 2017/2018 season. The company says it will highlight the NHL sponsorship through a marketing and retail strategy. This year the brand's

Snack to Win promotion will feature a grand prize trip to a 2018 Stanley Cup Final game. Consumers will see official Stanley Cup branding on OIKOS products and point-of-sales material during the Snack to Win promotional period.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

> **Peter Brown** is now director of International Sales for Germantown, Wis.-based First Choice Ingredients Inc.

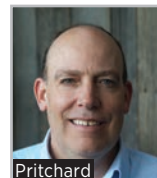


> Toronto-based Dealers Ingredients has named **Myriam Côté** manager of national accounts, and **Chris Kovachis** controller. In other news, the company has made the ghp (Global Health Pharma) list of top 10 companies that have made contributions to healthcare and pharma in 2017.

> Nuuvera Inc. has hired **Greg Taylor** as president of Nuuvera Canada. Taylor is co-founder of Toronto-based Steam Whistle Brewing. Nuuvera is a global cannabis company.

> **David Birch** is now CFO of Kitchener, Ont.-based Brick Brewing Co. Limited.

> Toronto's Tinley Beverage Company has appointed **David Berman** as its CFO. The company offers a line of cannabis-infused beverages.



> **Doug Pritchard** has joined Griffith Foods as its vice-president/general manager, Canada. Pritchard replaces **Jim Thorne**, who has been promoted to vice-president, Global Marketing & Strategy for Griffith Foods International Inc.

> Food Banks Canada has appointed **Chris Hatch** as its CEO.



> Nova Scotia-based High Liner Foods Incorporated announced that **Jeff**

O'Neill, president and COO of its Canadian operations, has left the company. High Liner says it plans to restructure the leadership and will not fill the position.

> Kirkwood Diamond Canada, which is owned by Diamond Estates Wine & Spirits, has appointed **Christopher Terrio** as president.

> **Jim Kirkwood** is now an official advisor to Ontario-based Noblegen Inc. The company is an advanced ingredients startup that produces proteins and oils for the healthy living industry.

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MARKET COMMENTARY: The TPP

After my previous commentary in which I criticized the government for its inaction on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), it is appropriate to now give praise for signing it, especially since the protectionists have already started to whine. TPP, particularly without the U.S., can be a great boon for much of Canada's agri-food sector. The agreement gives substantially improved access (lower tariffs) to Japan, Vietnam and Malaysia for a range of products such as beef, pork, canola and soy meal, and particularly soy and canola oil. Japan is one of the most protected markets in the world. Australia already has improved access for beef to Japan. That playing field will be levelled.

Canada lacks investment and productivity in food processing, in part because of our small and geographically disperse market. Improved access to large markets could provide the incentive to invest in efficient — including energy efficient — new plants and equipment. Now we need Canadian governments to work toward reducing costs like energy and regulation. The latter should be done by pursuing regulatory systems (for example, food safety) that are tough, but fast and efficient. 🍎

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: Strong Asian demand for grain and meat, as well as ongoing weather issues in South America, have been offset by USDA reports that keep finding more inventories, most recently on Jan. 12. Rising inventories come from upward adjustments in yields of the 2017 crop, and/or by downward adjustments in U.S. export expectations. The latter because the U.S. share of exports declined relative to Brazil and Argentina. Through mid-January the bearish news dragged down all grain and oilseed prices, aided by managed funds moving to record net short positions in grains and oilseeds. Going forward, export demand and the effect of South American weather will drive prices.

> Corn: March futures dropped through support at \$3.57 to a new low of \$3.45 after the USDA report. A recent dry weather rally in Argentina took it back to \$3.56. There will be more attempts to "kill the crop" but there's lots of it around and prices are still above USDA's \$3.20 forecast, which is long-term support. While the \$3.45 area is a good place to buy, resistance in the \$3.70 area suggests another alternative is to buy hand to mouth as long as the market is lower, and cover with \$3.70 calls (on May).

> Wheat: USDA suggested that winter wheat plantings were down from last year and were the second lowest planted area on record. Prices dropped initially with corn and soy, toward the \$4.10 support area on March.

But lower acres, extra cold weather in

the winter wheat areas of North America and Russia, and the declining U.S. dollar ran March back up to the current \$4.41. As with corn, we would buy hand to mouth but protect above strong resistance at \$4.80.

> Soy oil: Bean oil continued its slide from \$0.358 to \$0.321 before getting to \$0.328 currently. The slide is animated by both the soybean supply situation and growing palm oil supply. This market is also responding to the weak U.S. dollar. In our last issue we suggested holding \$0.36 Calls, but at this lower level and current chart technicals, we would buy or consider rolling down to \$0.34s.

> Sugar: Sugar prices are working their way lower, pushed by higher than expected production in major suppliers, especially India. The March contract fell from \$0.1495 to \$0.1304 on Jan. 24. Long-term support is at \$0.1245 and then at \$0.1005. There remains strong resistance at \$0.155. We continue to suggest covering against \$0.155, but we would buy hand to mouth below that level.

> Natural gas: March natural gas stopped at \$3.28 in November, dropped back to \$2.60 in December, then rallied back to the current \$3.20. Managed funds have a record long position in futures and options. Fundamentally, stocks are down somewhat after the large draw during January's cold snap. But production is extremely large. So, as usual the direction of price change will depend on the weather going forward. We continue to like buying hand to mouth, but protecting above \$3.40.

> Crude oil: Oil prices have gained back over

half of their losses from 2014-2016, with March at \$70.45, up \$7 from November. Better OPEC discipline on supply control, strong Asian demand, increasing demand from growing international trade, a weak U.S. dollar, and net long positions by managed funds are all contributing to the rally. The next significant area of resistance remains just over \$75. We have long suggested that buyers of oil cover above \$60. Nothing changes. Hold positions until there is clear topping action.

> Canadian dollar: The loonie rallied from \$0.775 to the current \$0.812 on the March contract since mid-December. Some of that is strength in the Canadian dollar, but some is weakness in the U.S. dollar. The loonie's strength comes from rising oil and metal prices, good employment data, and the Bank of Canada's interest rates hike. But the greenback's weakness is resulting from a huge budget deficit after the tax cut, U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin's tacit support of a weak currency, and small rate hikes by the Fed relative to other countries. Some suggest the U.S. is manipulating its currency exactly as Trump is accusing other countries of doing. Who knows what's next? The complexity and lack of systematic "supply and demand" information for currency is why we tend to just consider buying Canadian dollar Puts as insurance. We have recommended various strike prices in the past, but at this point, the best thing to say is find the Put that has a premium less than three per cent of its strike price on the September contract.





Enhancing food safety with blockchain technology

Ron Wasik



by now most everyone has heard the term “blockchain” and likely read something about the electronic currency or cryptocurrency Bitcoin that blockchain technology has enabled. Articles have started appearing online, in newspapers and in agri-food magazines claiming that blockchain technology could solve a multiplicity of problems in the agri-food industry, ranging from accelerating payment for goods and services to streamlining the supply chain, reducing waste and improving food traceability.

What is blockchain technology?

One easy-to-understand definition of blockchain technology comes from Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, dean, Faculty of Management, Dalhousie University, in an article published in the *Globe and Mail* on Dec. 12, 2017. In “How blockchain could revolutionize the food industry,” Charlebois states “...blockchain technology is a way of storing and sharing information across a network of users in an open virtual space.” This said, it helps to have a basic understanding of how it all works to help one decide if this technology really has potential to improve food traceability and deliver on other claims, now or in the future.

The blockchain can be either an unstructured or structured network of computers (“nodes” in techno-speak) linked together in an “open/public” network for anyone on the internet to see. Or it can be linked together in a “structured/controlled/private” network accessible only to invited or approved users. Users

can be identified either anonymously or openly, and each has a “key” or password to access their account. In an open arrangement, communications or transactions can occur between two individuals and/or firms (P2P) in the network without going through a central server in a format that is called “an open ledger” or “distributed ledger.” Every ledger entry is time stamped and encrypted, making it secure. A group of these transactions is called a “block.” In Bitcoin, blocks are added and updated every 10 minutes. The major blockchain technology providers are today’s major software companies — including Microsoft, Oracle and IBM among others — and each provides their own brand of blockchain technology.

Benefits to agri-food

Blockchain technology offers several advantages for the agri-food industry:

1. Traceability — Every detail in the life cycle of a product can be provided in an open blockchain, making the entire supply chain for a product traceable by anyone with a computer in just seconds compared to the hours, days and weeks it takes the CFIA to do the same today. Walmart and IBM are currently collaborating on two blockchain trials to verify the effectiveness of blockchain technology.

2. Full disclosure — With the possible exception of producers, food processors will be extremely reluctant to fully disclose every detail about the products they produce for a variety of reasons. Just as GFSI programs have evolved to accommodate different interests, I am

confident that retailers, processors and producers can develop protocols that they will be comfortable using and that will still provide effective, full supply chain traceability.

3. Payment — Although promoters of cryptocurrencies will tell you that it is a safe and efficient way to conduct business, many cryptocurrency providers and users have been hacked, and in some cases have lost millions.

4. Streamlining the supply chain — Blockchain connects the seller directly to the buyer (P2P), thereby eliminating intermediaries which, in theory, should streamline the supply chain and reduce cost. I believe the impact of the blockchain will be limited in this case because economies-of-scale or volume buying will keep distributors competitive.

5. Waste reduction — Walmart claims that blockchain technology will help the company better track expiration dates on products and thus reduce waste in its stores. I think a bigger win will be to reduce the amount of product sometimes needlessly destroyed in recalls.

Blockchain and cryptocurrency are technologies that are rapidly evolving. Oversight in many cases is limited, although some will argue this point. Proceed with extreme caution when applying blockchain and cryptocurrency technology to your business. 🍎

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Advancing food law and policy research

Ron Doering

One of my reasons for starting this column 16 years ago (can it really be 16 years?), was to have food law be more widely recognized as a distinct, important and growing body of law in its own right.

While we've seen some progress over the years, we still have a long way to go. We still don't have a comprehensive text on Canadian food law. No provincial law society recognizes it as a distinct area of law practice. Unlike many countries, we still don't have a regular reporting service. Most law schools don't teach it.

So I was happy last year to highlight in this column the inaugural Canadian Food Law and Policy Conference, sponsored by the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University. The second annual Conference in November 2017, hosted by the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa, had a large attendance and an impressive range of presentations from both academics and practitioners. That conference also saw the awarding of the first Gowling WLG — Joel Taller Prize for Emerging Voices in Food Law to McGill law student Vanita Sachdeva. The prize is awarded in memory of my former partner Joel Taller, who passed away last May. Joel was a true pioneer in the area of food law, highly respected by both industry and government for his deep legal expertise and sound judgement. A founding member of the Gowling WLG Food and Beverage Group, he practised in our Ottawa office for 34 years representing many leading food, beverage and natural health product companies.



Vanita Sachdeva's paper on "Legal Barriers in the Adoption of Waste-derived Fertilizers" is the kind of innovative analysis that the Taller prize is intended to encourage. Sachdeva demonstrates that there is a looming shortage of rock phosphates, the current primary source for today's commercial fertilizers, and that the most sustainable response to this crisis is a transition to the use of human and animal waste. While the federal *Fertilizer Act and Regulations* allows "products made from sewage," its scope is too limited, and a serious transition to greater use of biosolids is fundamentally undermined by the multiplicity of conflicting provincial and municipal regulations. She demonstrates that the vast differences in standards regarding biosolids application have no scientific basis: as in so many policy areas, our inability to overcome regulatory fragmentation is the major barrier to innovation. Sachdeva concludes that without legal changes, "the use of biosolids will remain uncommon and hidden...the phosphorous crisis that the world faces will have to be dealt with in another way if our waste cannot be recycled back into our ecosystem." Sachdeva has done an excellent job of integrating science, law and policy to reveal the policy barriers to the greater use of waste-derived fertilizers for crop production.

Scientific progress must be the main driver for the innovation we so desperately need if we are going to feed the growing world population in a sustainable way. It is not widely enough understood that the promise of this innovation cannot be fully realized if our sclerotic regulatory systems can't keep up. For example, analytical chemistry has created havoc for food and agriculture regulatory systems. Many adulteration standards that provide for zero tolerance came from a time when we could only detect parts per million. Now that we can readily detect parts per trillion, zero keeps getting smaller and smaller and yet, even if we have no evidence of harm to health at that minute level, in the absence of regulatory change we still take regulatory enforcement. In recent years many of our largest food recalls were for technical non-compliance that posed no human health hazard. We need research and analysis in food law and policy to keep up with rapid advances in food science. With a background in both science and law, Joel understood this better than most. He would be pleased to see Sachdeva's research recognized.

The third annual Canadian Food Law and Policy Conference will be held Sept 26 and 27, 2018 at the University of Laval. 🍓

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



Prescribing food labelling rules

Gary Gnirss



Our discussion on food labelling modernization often uses the terms “prescriptive” and “prescribed” to describe the evolution in how regulations govern food. Not only are there more labelling requirements today than a few decades ago, but the expectations of how information is to be stated and presented on a food label is also more detailed.

The new ingredient labelling rules under the *Food and Drug Regulations* (FDR) are a great contemporary example of “prescription.” It’s no longer sufficient to simply present a list of ingredients distinctly on a label. The ingredient list must now be presented in black or equivalent to a black type, on a uniform white or neutral background with no more than a five-per-cent tint in colour. It must be clearly differentiated by using a surrounding border, shading or lines above, below and to the sides. The list must be in a sans-serif font, and it should feature the heading “Ingredients” in bold. The use of upper and lowercase letters, along with punctuation in commas or bullet separators, are dictated by the FDR. So too are the letter heights, use of condensed type and line spacing, which can depend on the nutrition facts table (NFt) format used.

These are the “prescriptive” rules that define how information is to be presented. There are even more rules that govern how ingredients are named, what ingredients must be declared, and those that are exempt from declaration. Add in allergen, gluten, sulphite and precautionary labelling, and even more rules apply.

Health Canada and the CFIA will be

rolling out more food labelling modernization initiatives over the next year or so. Among these is front-of-package nutrition information, which focuses on high amounts of saturated fat, sodium and sugar. Such labelling will not be pretty, nor will it be without prescription. The CFIA’s modernization focus is on enhanced prominence of mandatory information, including the common name. Currently, a common name must appear on the principal display panel in a type height no less than 1.6 mm, and must be clear and discernible. New rules might consider a type height related to the minimum required for the numerical portion on the net content declaration, or perhaps in a type reasonably related to the largest on the main panel.

Existing rules on highlighting ingredients present in a food, or the presence of natural or artificial flavours, are focused on prepackaged consumer foods which include an image on the label of ingredients like meat, fruit or vegetables when the food actually contains a related artificial flavour. In the latter case, and depending on the placement of the pictorial representation, the name of the food or the image must be shown to be artificially flavoured. CFIA’s modernization might consider rules similar to those in the U.S., whereby the flavour and the name of the food are identified as being flavoured or artificially flavoured, when a primary recognizable flavour is highlighted by words or pictures.

In the future, the requirements for presenting label information will be even more “prescribed.” Much of Canada’s food labelling modernization will coincide

with the end of the five-year transition period (Dec. 14, 2021) granted for the new ingredient and nutrition labelling rules. The scope of federal food labelling modernization will involve the FDR, as well as the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations* (SFCR), which are anticipated to come into being this year. The speed at which regulations in Canada are created and amended is measured by years, so it may be almost a year by the time proposed regulations are in place.

The CFIA will also introduce new amendments to the *Agriculture and Agri-Food Administrative Monetary Penalties Regulations* (AAAMPR), which were published in October 2017. Administrative monetary penalties, or AMPs, can be issued by the agency for labelling deficiencies under the SFCR recognized in the AAAMPR. AMPs are kind of like traffic tickets — they will cost you money for foods that are not labelled in the “prescribed” manner. Selling a prepackaged food with a label that doesn’t bear the “prescribed” information is considered “very serious.” Selling a consumer prepackaged food with an added flavouring ingredient that is not included on the label in the prescribed manner is considered “minor.” Under AMPs, minor violations will cost about \$500, whereas very serious violations will cost between \$1,500 and \$10,000. The term “prescription” will soon start to flex its muscle and demand respect. 🍎

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The New
“Baked Goods”

Canada's new marijuana legislation could open up big opportunities for makers of edibles

— By Rebecca Harris —



photo: The Green Market

Come next year, some heady new treats will be legally available to Canadians: cannabis-infused edibles. While recreational marijuana is set to be legal as of July 2018, edibles were initially prohibited. Last November Bill C-45, or the *Cannabis Act*, was amended to include “edibles containing cannabis” and “cannabis concentrates,” set to become legal in July 2019.

Though regulations around marketing, sales and distribution are still being worked out, edibles could be a big growth opportunity for food processors and cannabis companies. A report by Mackie Research Capital Corp. forecast the Canadian marijuana market (dried marijuana and extracts) to reach \$2.8 billion in 2018, assuming full legalization. And if U.S. figures are a harbinger for Canada, edibles could be a sizable part of the market.

In Colorado, Washington and Oregon, where marijuana is legal, edibles are the third most popular cannabis product, capturing 12 per cent (US\$269.8 million) of the US\$2.33 billion cannabis market in 2016, according to BDS Analytics. Marijuana flower leads with 58 per cent of the market, followed by concentrates at 20 per cent. In Colorado, candy is the most popular edible (46 per cent market share), followed by chocolates (21 per cent) and infused foods such as baked goods (nine per cent).

In Canada, consumers seem eager to indulge in edibles. A September 2017 study from Dalhousie University in Halifax found that 46 per cent of Canadians would try cannabis-infused food products if they became available on the market. The top types of cannabis-infused products they would consider buying are bakery products such as brownies and muffins (46 per cent), any ready-to-eat products including candy (27 per cent), oil (24 per cent) and spices (18 per cent).

“In our study, 68 per cent of Canadians said they are in favour of legalized cannabis, and of the 68 per cent, 93 per cent are willing to try edibles. That’s

a lot of people,” says Sylvain Charlebois, dean of the Faculty of Management and professor in Distribution and Policy at Dalhousie University. “Allowing edibles was actually a good call. They’re already readily available [illegally], so if they remained unregulated in a marketplace where cannabis is legalized, I think it would have created some major problems. Now, they can be regulated properly around packaging, dosages, sales and distribution.”

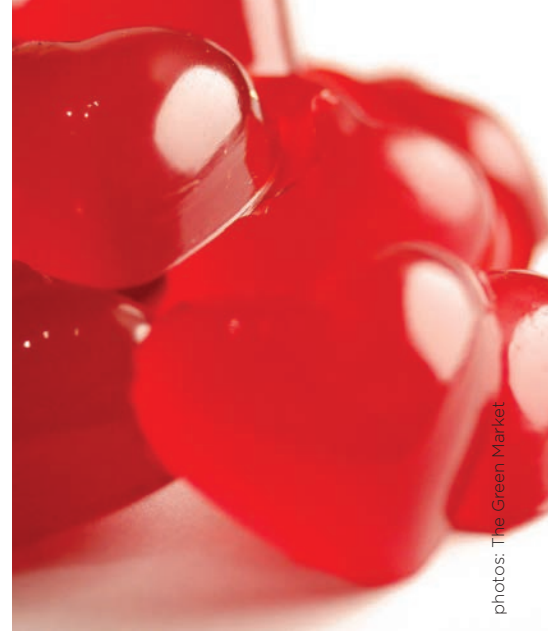
In advance of the legislation, companies are looking to capitalize on Canada’s new green rush. 48North Cannabis Co. is the parent company of DelShen Therapeutics, a licensed producer of medical cannabis. The company plans to expand into edibles. “What we want to be is a consumer packaged goods company,” says Alison Gordon, CEO of 48North. “We grow cannabis as part of our license. But we really are looking to turn that cannabis into products that consumers want, including edibles and drinkables, as the regulation allows.”

To do so, Gordon says 48North is meeting with food and beverage companies to explore partnership or joint venture opportunities. For food processors, a partnership with a cannabis producer could be a chance to get in on the edibles market early. The only license that currently exists for producing and selling cannabis is the *Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations* (ACMPR) license for medical marijuana. It is expected that the government will issue licenses for producers for the recreational market at a later date.

“The licensed producers, those of us who fall under the ACMPR program, will likely get a first crack ➔



SIXTY-EIGHT PER CENT OF CANADIANS SAID THEY ARE IN FAVOUR OF LEGALIZED CANNABIS



photos: The Green Market

at [making edibles],” says Gordon. “We can sell cannabis, we understand cannabis and we understand infusion...So, as I meet with these companies that have decades of experience in distribution, manufacturing, formulation, I say, ‘Why don’t we bring our knowledge together and create those products?’”

In the new world of legal weed, edibles producers already in operation may have the opportunity to become legitimate food brands. “The small guys really have a chance to go big...and in the year ahead, a lot of underground edibles brands will be focused on becoming legal,” says Lisa Campbell. Campbell and Sarah Gillies co-founded Toronto’s Green Market, a pop-up event featuring craft cannabis food and beverage products.

“A lot of [our vendors] are mom-and-pop edibles companies that have had to expand out of their home kitchens into commercial spaces, due to demand,” says Campbell. “And people are paying a lot of money to get nice branding done as well. So while it started as a very grassroots thing, the potential for them to scale is enormous.”

Though details on the sale and distribution of edibles are fuzzy, regulations for recreational marijuana are up to the provinces. In Ontario, the government-run LCBO will also run recreational marijuana shops, and its support of local wine and beer producers bodes well for edibles entrepreneurs. “If craft producers are able to sell directly to government, that will help the LCBO meet its mandate of supporting craft and local brands,” says Campbell. “The supply gap is a serious issue, and if we create a supply chain that’s too complicated and is in favour of giant corporations, then it’s kind of a counterintuitive message.”

Denver-based Dixie Brands makes a range of cannabis-infused products such as chocolates, fruit tarts,

gummies and elixirs. Some products contain THC, the compound responsible for the psychoactive effects of cannabis, while others contain cannabidiol (CBD), a non-psychoactive compound. CBD is said to be helpful for a variety of health conditions, including anxiety and chronic pain.

“CBD is generally associated with health and wellness and has really become a white-hot segment of the edibles space,” says Tripp Keber, who was CEO of Dixie Brands at the time of this interview but has since handed the reins to his business partner and Dixie co-founder Chuck Smith. “There’s no coincidence that historically, seven of the top 10 SKUs in Dixie’s offering contain CBD,” says Keber. “I think what you’re going to see is a massive inroad of product manufacturers like Dixie that will be bringing more CBD products into the market.”

While not all edibles will take consumers on a buzzy adventure, marijuana still has a stigma to shake. “[Food processors] don’t want to compromise their brand equity. So, depending on the company, of course, they will see this opportunity very differently,” says Charlebois. “For example, I don’t think Loblaw would want to actually sell cannabis-infused food products using the President’s Choice label yet. But it may be coming at some point.”

And while many marijuana proponents see cannabis as a health and wellness product, that’s not the case with most Canadians. In the Dalhousie survey, nearly 53 per cent of respondents disagreed that marijuana is a healthy ingredient for their diets. “The benefits of eating cannabis-infused food products aren’t really clear,” says Charlebois. “Is it really recreational? Is it just for fun? That needs to be defined, because in the whole area of functional foods the focus has been health. If it’s not healthy, then why would you eat it in the first place?”

For companies looking at the edibles space seriously, Charlebois says: “You have to understand why people would buy [edibles] in the first place, other than being curious and buying it once or twice.”



photo: Thinkstock



Super Sorghum

Deanna Rosolen

You can be forgiven if you're not familiar with sorghum. It's an ancient grain, but before 1991 we couldn't grow it in Canada. Om Dangi, president, CEO and senior breeder at Ottawa-based Agricultural Environment Renewal Canada, says the varieties out there had to be adapted to our climate, which his organization has worked on for the last 25 years. Today, thanks to Dangi's work, we can grow a handful of varieties in Canada, but it hasn't taken our agriculture industry by storm — yet.

What is it?

The earliest known record of sorghum comes from an archeological dig in the Nabta Playa region, near the border between Egypt and Sudan, and dates back to 8,000 BCE, says the Texas-based United Sorghum Checkoff Program. The website says from there “sorghum spread throughout Africa, and along the way, adapted to a wide range of environments from the highlands of Ethiopia to the semi-arid Sahel.” Sorghum eventually spread to Southeast Asia, China and Australia, and came to the U.S. in the middle 1700s with slave traders, says Biosorghum.org, which is the website for the Africa Biofortified Sorghum Project (ABS).

So while sorghum is a newer grain to Canada, in Africa it has huge financial and social potential for growers and consumers. Biosorghum.org adds that it's “the only viable food grain for many of the world's most food insecure people.” For this reason, one of the goals of ABS is to create a sorghum that “contains increased levels of essential nutrients, especially lysine, vitamin A, iron and zinc.” The project chose sorghum be-



cause the crop is drought resistant and can withstand periods of water-logging. Africa produces about one-third of the world's sorghum, about 20 million tonnes per year, says the website.

Why is it good for us?

Sorghum's most popular attributes are that it's naturally gluten-free and is packed with nutrients. Doug Bice, Market Development director at the Texas-based United Sorghum Checkoff Program, says “whole grain sorghum is an excellent source of fibre, phosphorous and vitamin B6. It's also a good source of protein, magnesium, niacin, iron, potassium and selenium.” Beyond the important nutrients it offers, “sorghum also has a low-to mid-level glycemic index,” which is ideal for consumers who have diabetes or who are at risk of developing it, says Bice.

Jane Dummer, the Pod to Plate consultant and president of Kitchener, Ont.-based Jane Dummer Consulting, wrote in an article on The Huffington Post (“Sorghum: The New Must-have Gluten-free Ancient Grain,” May 17, 2015) that sorghum is also high in antioxidants, including anthocyanin. The antioxidants, she says, “assist in combating oxidative stress and promote immune health.”

How is it consumed?

In Africa sorghum is processed into semi-leavened bread, couscous, dumplings and fermented and non-fermented porridges, says Biosorghum.org. It's also been found to be an alternative to barley in beer brewing. In the Southern U.S., says The Huffington Post (“What is Sorghum? And Why is the South So Obsessed with it?” by Julie Thomson, Dec. 6, 2017), it was a “staple sweetener...and often went by the name of sorghum molasses.”

Bice says sorghum is a versatile ingredient, which can be added to dishes and baked goods, whether they're savoury, sweet or somewhere in between. “Sorghum allows for extensive culinary creativity and one-of-a-kind flavour profiles,” he says. “Sorghum can be used as a grain in a soup or salad. Popped sorghum can be eaten as a snack or as a garnish on a dessert. Sorghum flour can be used to make sweet cakes or naturally gluten-free bread.”

Dummer says sorghum is being used in chain restaurants in the U.S. in gluten-free pizza crust (Papa John's Pizza) and in gluten-free buns (Chick-fil-A). She adds that it's definitely being used in blends in “flatbreads, crackers, pancakes, waffles and more baked goods and breads.” Consumers can cook it as a pilaf or use it in risottos. Sorghum can also be popped or crisped, she says, and since texture is one of the trends for 2018 we may see it in more granolas, for example. “In Canada it's still in its infancy,” says Dummer, “but I think we'll hear more about it. It hasn't been recognized for the value it has to human consumption.” ●



A Taste of Honey

Consumers are turning to the sweet stuff for flavour and health

BY VALERIE WARD

Honey's future looks golden. According to international business reports, the global market for honey could reach 2.4 million tonnes by 2022 as increasingly health-conscious consumers reduce their sugar intake and seek out natural alternatives to artificial

sweeteners. At the same time, there is growing interest in mono-floral honeys, such as Manuka, made from the nectar of specific plants and purported to contain anti-cancer and other medicinal properties.

Canada is well-positioned to take advantage of the growth in consumer interest. In its 2016 report on honey products,



Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada notes that national honey production had reached an all-time high of 43,227 tonnes — up 11.4 per cent over 2014 — due to improvements in hive health, an uptick in urban and hobby beekeeping, and the rising popularity of crop pollination services. Retail sales of honey products rose by a compound annual growth rate of 4.7 per cent from 2011 to 2015, with projected growth of 3.7 per cent for 2016 to 2020. New product launches tend to feature raw and organic honey, along with domestic specialty varieties such as Longan and wildflower. Canadian honey is also in demand abroad, with more than 40 per cent of annual production exported to other countries, mainly the U.S. and Japan.

“We’re seeing an overall shift among Canadians, away from granulated white sugars toward the use of more natural sweeteners like honey,” says Andrew Foust, general manager at McCormick, parent company of Billy Bee. He points to a 2016 Mintel study showing that women under 45 and mothers of children younger than 18 at home use more honey than other sugars in cooking and baking. “This may reflect young consumers’ preference for more natural, less processed foods. So while we produce our all-natural honey for the wider Canadian market, we’ve recently been focusing on young families with children under 18, millennials and health-conscious consumers.” To respond to the needs of these consumers, Billy Bee introduced an organic honey in 2017, as well as a raw honey (raw honey is perceived by some as healthier) that has not undergone the pasteurization process many honey products do to slow granulation and eliminate fermentation risk.

Smaller businesses are also capitalizing on honey’s reviving appeal. Based in Saskatoon, Tu-Bees is a 10-year-old venture specializing in squeezable tubes of all-natural creamed honey made from southern Saskatchewan alfalfa, canola and clover, with added natural flavours such as Saskatoon berry, cinnamon, coconut and maple. According to marketing and sales rep Gaye Sheppard, it was her then 12-year-old daughter Nikki who first suggested the product idea when she noticed her mother fighting to squeeze the last spoonful of honey out of a plastic container. Why hadn’t anyone ever put honey in tubes like toothpaste tubes, she asked, “so you can just squish it out?”

The soft laminate tubes Sheppard chose are compact, shatter-proof and portable so they can be carried in a purse or bag, and kids can take them to school to squeeze honey onto a sandwich. Also available in tub and jar formats, Tu-Bees honey is sold online, and at Federated Co-operatives and specialty stores in Western Canada. Sheppard says demand for her product is part of the trend — driven by youth — to choose more local, natural, gluten-free food.

Toronto’s Medrar Holding Company sells premium Sidr honey, gathered exclusively from the nectar of Sidr trees that grow wild in the mountainous Hadramout region of the Wadi Do’an Valley in Yemen. Praised in the Koran, Sidr honey is known for its distinctive buttery taste, its thickness and its reputed health benefits, including its efficacy — supported by several research studies — as an antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and analgesic. Harvested only twice a year, and transported thousands of miles out of war-torn Yemen, it’s also known as the world’s most expensive honey, ➔



CANADIAN HONEY
IS ALSO IN DEMAND
ABROAD, WITH
MORE THAN **40 PER**
CENT OF ANNUAL
PRODUCTION
EXPORTED TO OTHER
COUNTRIES, MAINLY
THE U.S. AND JAPAN.



photo: MariaShumova



with prices ranging from \$70 for 250 g to \$320 for one kilogram, says Medrar director Husam Al-Raimi. While the expense makes it impractical to use in processed products, small quantities can be added to coffee and tea or ingested for medicinal purposes. So far, demand for Sidr honey in Canada has come mostly from consumers of Middle Eastern or Asian origin who know its reputation and are willing to pay, Al-Raimi notes. But the goal is to move beyond online orders and secure a foothold in specialty grocery stores.

Not surprisingly, fraud can be a problem with premium honeys. There have been instances of cheaper or adulterated products being sold under the Sidr name, but since no certification process has yet been developed, companies like Medrar must rely on the relationships they build with their suppliers. There's also widespread fraud with Manuka, a sought-after honey from the Manuka tree in New Zealand that boasts culinary and health attributes. David Noll of import firm Pacific Resources International says that numerous brands have capitalized on Manuka's popularity by offering lower-price knock-offs and making "authenticity claims on their labels that fall well short of New Zealand's strict industry guidelines." He recommends that consumers only buy products that have gone through rigorous testing in independent labs certified by the Unique Manuka Factor Honey Association.

But problems aren't limited to exotic monoflorals, says Kevin Nixon, chair of the Canadian Honey Council. For example, Canada lacks the equipment used in the EU to test the authenticity of different honeys. In addition, the lightness and mildness of Canadian honey makes it ideal for blending, prompting some packers to cut it with cheaper imports. These honeys are still labelled as Canada No. 1 White because, having been bottled here, they meet the current rules for labelling a food as a product of Canada. "Producers want Canadian honey more clearly identified and consumers want to support Canadian," Nixon notes,



We're seeing an overall shift among Canadians, away from granulated white sugars toward the use of more natural sweeteners like honey.

adding that changes to honey labelling and grading systems are under consideration as part of revisions to the *Safe Food for Canadians Act*.

Processors which use honey to make items like snack bars may be tempted to buy cheaper varieties from Southeast Asia, "but they don't have the safety, traceability and biosecurity programs we do here," he says. These safeguards include the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's biosecurity standard, and a voluntary traceability program known as CBISQT (Canadian Bee Industry Safety Quality Traceability) developed by the industry with federal funding to guide safe practices for honey production and on-farm processing.



Periodic struggles with diseases such as varroa mite continue to be a challenge for the honey industry, as do winter losses and the changes in habitat resulting from the disappearance of weeds, shelter belts and hedgerows that provide more abundant pollen for bees. However, Nixon points out that industry stakeholders are putting solutions in place, increasing awareness of the role of bees in pollinating food crops, and promoting a return to pollinator-friendly habitats.

Overall, honey continues to have a positive image with consumers. As people rediscover the uses and benefits of the sweetener, the industry has an excellent opportunity to raise its profile. "There's lots of talk about antioxidants in some of the monoflorals, but all honey has some of those properties," notes Nixon. "Canada makes some of the best honey in the world — we can have confidence in a great, healthy product." ●



Taking a crack at snack crackers

Daniel Scholes



Snack foods are one of the fastest-growing categories in the packaged food sector. In recent years we've seen an explosion of bold flavour combinations, new artisan-style brands, and nutritionally focused niche lines such as gluten free and organic. Snacking options today are practically endless, but one key segment taking up a growing amount of this space is snack crackers.

The earliest predecessor of the cracker as we know it today was hardtack — a thick, rock-solid biscuit made of flour and water that originated as a solution for long voyages, providing armies and explorers with sustenance that could last for years. It also paved the way for the modern-day cracker. In the early 1800s, the cracker made great strides in its evolution thanks to retired sea captain Josiah Bent of Milton, Mass., who started making a much thinner and tactilely appealing version of hardtack. Before long, these tastier and less “tooth-cracking” versions of the hard bread began appearing in highbrow social circles alongside cheese as a last dinner course.

Today, Bent would be awestruck by the proliferation of this simple staple, and how we fill our pantries with boxes of crackers to suit each and every occasion and taste preference in the household. We recently cracked into a few boxes of vegetable snack crackers to find out whether all brands are equally all they've cracked up to be. We asked 50 females from the Greater Toronto Area to taste four brands of vegetable snack crackers including samples of both national and private-label brands. All were small-

format crackers of various shapes, with similar nutritional declarations, and with price points ranging from \$1.75 to \$2.49 per box.

Cracker jacks

Results of our taste test were split down the middle, with two winning brands and two underdogs. Our victors achieved all performance hurdles for salty snacks, with strong results on overall liking, and very impressive top box purchase intent — 40 per cent of participants claimed they would definitely buy these two tasty wafers.

Diagnostically, both winning brands stood apart as having the top scores for overall flavour, and significantly better vegetable flavour than their counterparts. On this key driving attribute, our top brand garnered an impressive top three box liking (on a nine-point scale) of 76 per cent, as compared to 46 per cent for the weakest performer. The strength of the vegetable flavour was right on the mark for this cracker — an indication that the manufacturer likely went the extra mile towards putting the “vegetable” into their vegetable cracker.

Although the winning brands had excellent textural profiles, with just the right amount of crispness, all four brands delivered well on thickness and crispness. The overall appearance and size of the crackers had little bearing on key performance ratings. The two less appealing cracker brands both performed below norms for the category, posting mean overall liking scores below seven out of nine, and weak purchase interest, with more than 30 per cent of our testers

claiming they probably or definitely would not buy them. The main issue was flavour. One brand simply did not meet the flavour expectations of a vegetable cracker, while the other overcompensated in this area, with a very strong vegetable flavouring that was called out by close to 40 per cent of our testers.

Decisions in the snack food aisle are often made quickly, and price is certainly a big driver of brand choice. Nearly two-thirds of our consumers said they are not loyal to any specific brand of vegetable cracker, and will often choose a brand that's on sale. They also claim to buy different brands in order to try new flavours and unique offerings. Thanks in part to huge advancements in flavour technologies, consumers are becoming spoiled with flavour options, something which has raised the bar on flavour expectations.

Nowadays, consumers have access to endless options of sizes, textures and flavours to suit every unique cracker occasion. The category has expanded, and crackers aren't what they used to be — they've been repurposed from the bland vessel for toppings, dips or spreads and the cracker itself is now the star of the party. Our results suggest that some brands have cracked the code on flavour, while others have fallen through the cracks. Flavour renovation could be the answer to help these brands get cracking. 🍪

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



Starting rocket ships to **growth**

Peter Henderson

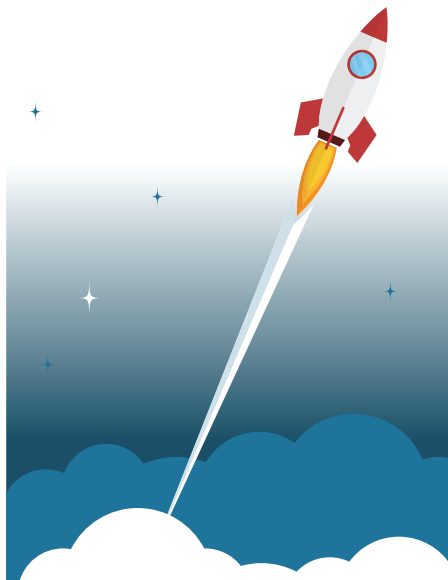
Thinking unconventionally about your product lines, categories and approach, can yield stratospheric growth.

There have been some incredible examples in recent years in which new food processing businesses have been propelled into the stratosphere, due to “unconventional thinking” in what many would view as mature overcrowded categories. Chobani, RXBAR, Vega and possibly Earth to Kids (Chickapea Pasta) are a few rocket ships that come to mind.

Perhaps the most startling rocket ship of late is the Chicago Bar Company, makers of the whole food protein food RXBAR. The company has grown from zero sales in 2012 to US\$130 million, with more than 100 employees, and 105 million bars sold in 125,000 locations in 2017. Somehow it succeeded in breaking through in the crowded health-protein bar space. Their secret was that the owners started by selling directly to CrossFit gyms. On their journey they developed minimalistic packaging, which simply states on the front: “RXBAR, 12 g Protein Bar, 3 Egg Whites, 6 Almonds, 4 Cashews, 4 Dates, No B.S.,” followed by the name of the flavour. Okay, perhaps it helps to be a bit cheeky as well.

The Chicago Bar Company was sold last year to the Kellogg Company for US\$600 million. Go figure! The company made a point of ensuring the process was as seamless and simple as possible, for its wholesale buyers and consumers.

So what does it take to build a rocket ship? Rocket ships are driven



It takes many small nuances to tap into huge growth opportunities.

by entrepreneurial ambition, yet they’re grounded with realism, positioning and connection to society and the environment.

In some instances, explosive growth of rocket ships has been far more about positioning and being first in, than incremental or breakthrough innovation. They tap into non-traditional uses or channels to growth, because they are not locked into the way they have always done things. They are not limited by their internal production capabilities or desire to utilize excess capacity on existing lines. They are not handicapped, and can be creative as they are starting fresh.

Success may also be attributable to the fact that new companies that are

perceived as “small” are viewed as more trustworthy than larger businesses. One of the secrets to developing rocket ships is to start as an independent. Naturally savvy food entrepreneurs can steer a rocket ship better than established and/or public companies, which require proof of performance before investing in a hunch, or investing in nimble piloting.

Rocket ship entrepreneurs indoctrinate an iterative and unconventional pathway to growth. They can rapidly dig deep, conceptualize, follow hunches, pilot, listen to consumers and change course, developing outstanding packaging, products and a fresh look that ticks all the boxes (remember that consumers want and expect everything). They can take minor innovations and purposefully position their products and brand to bring “Aha!” moments to consumers.

It takes many small nuances to tap into huge growth opportunities. Sometimes consumers don’t know they need something until it is put in front of them in such a way that it makes complete sense. That way they feel they have discovered something new, and they feel better about themselves. Ultimately, these consumers value the ride, and share their experience.

May there be many more rocket ships! Be well, grow well! 🍎

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

RESEARCH CHEFS IN CANADA



News > file



New space for food startups

Last November Kitchen24 – a state-of-the-art, multi-use culinary incubator – officially opened its doors in Toronto to chefs, caterers and food entrepreneurs. The incubator has commercial-grade kitchens (including a kosher space) that include premium appliances, pizza ovens, deep fryers, griddle countertops, blenders, cooling racks and food processors. The 28,000-sq.-ft. facility also includes office spaces, a photography studio, a cooking studio and an event space.

Kitchen24 offers a membership program that provides members with 24/7 access, a work station, storage, use of event space, mentoring programs and business support. The space can also be rented out for a one-time event.

ShelterBox Canada

Late last year ShelterBox Canada held its second annual campaign to raise funds to help families around the world who have lost their homes in natural disasters. Last year's event, the Shine for ShelterBox candlelit dinner, was held in Toronto at the Luxe Appliance Studio. The show raised more than \$10,000. Celebrity chef Devan Rajkumar hosted the event, which featured food by chef Dev and The Food Dudes, chef Romain Avril of Lavelle and chef Nikko Jacino of Luxe Appliance Studio. More than \$22,000 was raised from Shine dinners across the country.



Romain Avril, executive chef at Lavelle (far left), and his assistants.

photo: ShelterBox

RETAIL INSPIRATIONS

Grocery Innovations Canada, which took place last October in Toronto, released its top most innovative new products from the show. They are:

- KEFIR+ Overnight Oats (A&M Gourmet Foods Inc.)
- Ready-To-Eat Fresh Fruits & Vegetables (Nature Knows Inc.)
- EGGbakes (Burnbrae Farms Ltd.)
- Cold Brew Coffee (Point Blank Cold Brew)
- Sundried Tomato & Basil (Fauxmagerie Zengarry)
- NAGI Makaroons (NAGI)
- Royal Truffle Mills Twins (SeussFinest)
- Organic Manuka Honey Drops (Tree of Life Canada)
- PrOATein Premium Nutritional Bar (PrOATein)
- Wild Keta Bacon Style Salmon (Simply West Coast)

IN BRIEF



Cotoros

> **Nespresso** held its inaugural **Café Gourmand Competition** in November at George Brown College's Hospitality and Tourism Campus.

The winning pastry chef was **Ana Cotoros**, who won a \$5,000 scholarship and the opportunity to have her pastries served with Nespresso coffees in restaurants across the city in 2018. Cotoros' winning entry was Coffee Bliss, a layered coffee dessert composed of coffee-milk chocolate cremeux and crunchy almond crumble, coffee-white chocolate mousse, Espresso Decaffeinato granita and crispy cocoa nibs nougatine; and Griotte Mist, a griotte-chocolate dessert of joconde biscuit feuilletine insert, griotte-kirsch jelly, dark chocolate mousse and chocolate mirror glaze, decorated with a chocolate triangle and an Amarena cherry.

> **Benjamin Mauroy-Langlais** has been named **Canada's Best Young Chef**. Mauroy-Langlais competed against nine other semi-finalists from



Mauroy-Langlais

across Canada and won with his dish of smoked eel and celeriac. He will go on to compete against 20 young chefs for the S.Pellegrino Young Chef 2018 title in Milan this June.

> Last October 92 restaurants in 19 Canadian cities joined together to donate proceeds from dinner service to **Community Food Centres Canada**, which supports community food programs. All diners had to do was visit the website www.restaurantsforchange.ca to find a participating restaurant near them and make a reservation.



By John Placko



Trevor Ritchie's dish, Rougié Foie Gras, icewine, pan perdu and wild berries, at the Campagnolo fundraiser brunch.

Bocuse d'Or Canada



In just a few months from now Canada's candidate for the Bocuse d'Or Competition will be competing to earn the right to be on the world stage in Lyon in January 2019.

The Canadian Culinary Federation (CCF) is pleased to announce that Trevor Ritchie, chef technologist at George Brown College, won the Canadian Bocuse d'Or National Selection Competition in April 2016 against some of the most talented chefs in the country.

Ritchie now has his sights set on competing in Mexico on April 12 and 13 in the Americas Regional Bocuse d'Or qualifier. From there, five of the 12 countries competing will go on to the grand finale in Lyon, France in 2019.

Canada has a long history of competing successfully on the culinary stage, and this continued success has created a depth of knowledge and experience that is now passed onto Ritchie. There is also a team of visionary and talented chefs, mentors and sponsors who will support Ritchie on his drive to the podium in Mexico and Lyon. Under the management, leadership and vision of CCF president Simon Smotkowicz, Thomas Delannoy of Rougié Foie Gras, the advisory committee and some high-profile brand sponsors, the Canadian team is working to establish a solid foundation to help bring together all the necessary components to ensure success.

The core team includes coach Jean-Pierre Challet (The Fifth), chef advisor John Higgins (George Brown College/Chopped Canada), and past Bocuse d'Or participants like James Olberg (2017) and myself (1989). There's also fabulous support from the likes of Mark McEwan (McEwan Group), Jason Bangerter (Langdon Hall), Dan Craig (Ritz), Brandon Olsen (La Banane) and Marc Lépine (Atelier). Many other supporters can be found on the Bocuse d'Or Canada website www.bocusedorcanada.ca



Atelier fundraising dinner, hosted by chef Marc Lépine.

“Le Bocuse d’Or is the most prestigious and the most difficult global cooking competition,” explains Jean-Pierre Challet, team coach. “No Canadian chef has ever brought home the gold and we only made the top five twice since 1987, not because of a lack of talent in the mastery of French cuisine but because of a lack of continuity. We feel strongly that we will make the top three in Mexico, and that the team will get a chance to demonstrate the best Canada has to offer, not only in talent but with a myriad of Canadian flavours and products.”

Founded by legendary French chef Paul Bocuse (who passed away last month at the age of 91), the Bocuse d’Or competition is the world’s most prestigious culinary competition. Held every two years in Lyon since 1987, the competition will be held at SIRHA, a professional trade show dedicated to foodservice and gastronomy. Ritchie is no stranger to fierce competition, having been a Chopped Canada champion, having represented Canada and placed first in the Hans Beuschkens Culinary Challenge, and having placed second in the world at the Angliss Culinary Cup. He was also the Bocuse d’Or Canada coach for the 2017 finals, and has worked in some of Canada’s best kitchens, including Langdon Hall, Queen’s Landing, La Société and Campagnolo.

The criteria for Mexico will require Ritchie, along with commis chef Jenna Reich, to produce dishes within five-and-a-half hours. The competition requires nine plated portions for each mandatory item of salmon and suckling pig, plus garnishes for both platters. And you can be sure they will be injecting unique aspects of Canadian cuisine in the dishes. Competitors will be judged by the tasting jury on presentation, taste, and originality/creativity, as well as by the kitchen jury for technique and waste optimization.

Platters for the food to be presented on in Mexico are being created by a team lead by visionary designer Luigi Ferrara, dean of the Centre for Arts, Design & Information Technology at George Brown College in Toronto, and director of the internationally acclaimed Institute without Boundaries. Ferrara is assisted by Sean Sina Zarabi in the design and construction of the platters.

I’m pleased to be part of this incredible team as event co-ordinator and chef advisor. Having participated in the competition representing Australia,

I’m familiar with what it takes to compete at this level. There have already been a number of events to raise much needed funds for the road to Lyon, including at Campagnolo restaurant in Toronto, Apricot Tree in Mississauga, Ont., and Atelier in Ottawa. Please visit Bocuse d’Or Canada’s Facebook and Instagram accounts for upcoming fundraising events, including coming events at Cafe Belong and Cirillo’s Culinary Academy.

Bocuse d’Or Canada is part of the Canadian Culinary Federation (CCF), the national association which represents chefs across Canada. We are grateful to the sponsors — Rougié, Cacao Barry, Acadian Sturgeon and Caviar Inc., George Brown College, Powder for Texture, The Chef’s Hat Catering Company, F. Dick knives — who have signed up thus far, and look forward to including new sponsors in the Bocuse d’Or challenge for 2018/2019. The cost of competing on the world stage is staggering, so donations are welcome. For more information, visit www.bocusedorcanada.ca 🍀



Trevor Ritchie’s winning dishes at the Bocuse d’Or Canadian National Competition were (top) sturgeon plate with wild Canadian caviar (sponsored by Acadian sturgeon and caviar); and (bottom) moulard duck and foie gras plate (sponsored by Rougié).



Rebranding Energy Spheres

Birgit Blain

brands evolve over time, sometimes changing the messaging and packaging several times to “get it right.” This is expensive, time consuming and disrupts the business. It also confuses loyal customers who cannot find the old package on the shelf. Established brands should be cautious not to diminish positive brand equity.

The frequency of changes can be reduced through co-ordinated efforts of a cross-functional team with expertise in project management, strategic planning, marketing, quality assurance, regulatory labelling, French translation, copywriting and packaging graphic design. All those pieces of the puzzle must fit together. Following a systematic process will minimize rework and errors, save money and improve speed to market.

I asked our clients Carolyn and Russ, co-owners of Grass Roots Kitchen and the Energy Spheres brand, about their experience working with us on rebranding.

Q: What did you learn from the process of developing the brand strategy for Energy Spheres?

A: “We really didn’t understand what [a brand strategy] was and how important it is...Committing to the development of a solid brand strategy was well worth the time and effort. It’s made it easier for us to make decisions pertaining to anything brand-related because we have a template to work from. Working through the brand strategy helped us to zero in on our point of difference.”



Q: Rebranding requires informed decision making. What was the hardest decision for you?

A: “Prioritizing where to invest our money. All aspects of branding are so important, but as a young company we had a tight budget to work within. Investing for the long term was our priority so we invested a lot into our packaging. We listened to feedback from our customers and it was important to us to incorporate those features into our new packaging.”

Q: It’s impossible to please everyone. What compromises did you have to make?

A: “We soon realized that our packaging wish list that we started with was not financially feasible. We had to reconsider other packaging formats that worked within our budget. We spent quite a bit of time researching alternative options, and had to make a compromise between function and price.”

Q: What feedback did you receive from retailers and consumers on your new branding?

A: “Retailers are very excited and supportive of our rebranding and

they anticipated and made room on the shelf for our new shelf-stable product. Consumers are looking at the image on the packaging...They really understood what we were trying to convey — healthy, energy, positive, happy image. It puts a smile on their faces. [Rebranding] brought the name Energy Spheres to the forefront instead of Grass Roots Kitchen.”

Q: What opportunities have opened up for you as a result of rebranding?

A: “We solved so many problems we had had with our old package, [problems] that we knew were barriers to get into the markets we wanted to get into. Now that we have an easier way to deliver the product, transport it and have a good shelf life, it opens doors to getting the product into a wider market.”

To see project results, visit <http://bbandassoc.com/case-study-energy-spheres-rebranding/> 🍎

As packaged food specialists, Birgit Blain and her team transform food into retail-ready products. Birgit’s experience includes 17 years with Loblaw Brands and President’s Choice. Contact her at Birgit@BBandAssoc.com or learn more at www.BBandAssoc.com

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Fi Europe & Ni 2017

The Fi Europe & Ni 2017 (food ingredients and natural ingredients) trade show and conference took place last year from Nov. 28 to 30 in Frankfurt, Germany. Fi Europe brings together food and beverage suppliers, and research and development, production and marketing specialists. Ni is the co-located event for natural and organic ingredients. *Food in Canada* was there and came back with a variety of innovative solutions. Fi Europe & Ni happens again in 2019 in Paris, France from Dec. 3 to 5.

Peanut products

Nutrin SA is a peanut growing and processing company that offers organic peanuts, and peanuts in HPS, blanched, dry roasted, oil-roasted, chopped, paste, and powder form. The company also produces roasted peanut oil, roasted peanut extract, and crude peanut oil. www.new.nutrin.com



Ingredients on trend

Kreglinger Specialties offers solutions that address trends and demands such as sugar, fat and calorie reduction; fibre enrichment; natural and organic; clean label; and health and nutrition. The company provides solutions for bakery, beverages, convenience foods, confectionery, dairy, meat, poultry and fish, snacks, sports and animal nutrition. www.kreglinger.com

Mustard seed powders

Mustard Millers of Canada Inc. produces Oriental Mustard Powder with a hot flavour profile, making it suitable for wasabi or hot condiment mustard; Yellow Mustard Powder, with useful properties such as water-holding and emulsification; and Deactivated Yellow Mustard Powder, which has no hot or spicy flavour and can be used as a thickening agent. www.mustardmillers.ca



Nutritious pea ingredients

AM Nutrition Ingredients is a global supplier of pea products for use in food, animal feed, pet food and technical applications. The company's products include AMN Pea Protein Concentrate, AMN Pea Starch Concentrate, AMN Pea Flour Concentrate, AMN Pea Hull Fiber, Peatex (extruded pea flour), Startex (extruded pea starch), and Protex (texturized pea protein). www.am-nutrition.com



Raw materials

Nutra Food Ingredients LLC offers U.S. Department of Agriculture- and E.U.-certified organic inulin, erythritol, stevia, pea and organic rice. The company also features branded ingredients such as NutraCollagen, a beef protein isolate; NutraVprotein such as pea, soy and rice; NutraFiber from inulin, IMO, pea fibre, FOS, and polydextrose; and NutraGelatin from fish, pork and bovine sources. www.nutrafoodingredients.com

All about carrageenans

Lauta Carrageenans provides carrageenans such as Kappa Semi-Refined, Kappa Refined and Iota Semi-Refined, which can be used as stabilizers, thickeners and gelling agents in meat, dairy, jellies, ice cream, bakery and pet food. Carrageenans are a vegetarian and vegan alternative to gelatin in some applications. www.carrageenans.com



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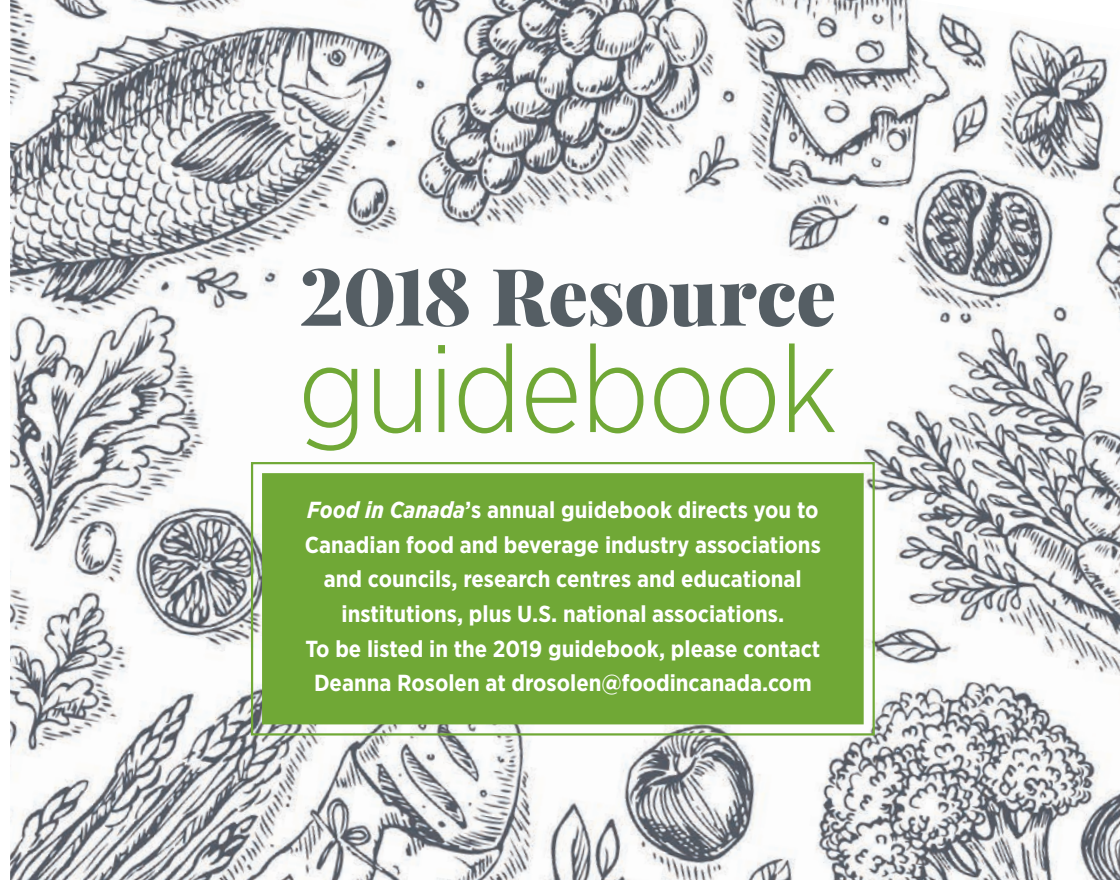
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www.conseiltaq.com/association/aeeq



2018 Resource guidebook

Food in Canada's annual guidebook directs you to Canadian food and beverage industry associations and councils, research centres and educational institutions, plus U.S. national associations.

To be listed in the 2019 guidebook, please contact Deanna Rosolen at drosolen@foodincanada.com

Association of Seafood Producers

T: (709) 726-3730

www.seafoodproducers.org

Baking Association of Canada/ Association canadienne de la boulangerie

TF: (888) 674-2253

T: (905) 405-0288

www.baking.ca

B.C. Food Processors Association

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www.bcfpa.ca

B.C. Grapegrowers' Association

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www.grapegrowers.bc.ca

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B.C. Wine Grape Council

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www.beercanada.com

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www.cme-mec.ca

Canadian Meat Council/Conseil des viandes du Canada
T: (613) 729-3911
www.cmc-cvc.com

Canadian National Millers Association
T: (613) 238-2293
www.canadianmillers.ca

Canadian Organic Growers/Cultivons Biologique Canada
TF: (888) 375-7383
T: (613) 216-0741
www.cog.ca

Canadian Plastics Industry Association/Association canadienne de l'industrie des plastiques
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www.plastics.ca

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www.cpc-ccp.com

Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council/Conseil canadien des transformateurs d'oeufs et de volailles
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Canadian Produce Marketing Association/Association canadienne de la distribution de fruits et légumes
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TF: (866) 834-4378
T: (204) 982-2100
www.canolacouncil.org

Central Ontario Cheesemaker Association
T: (519) 287-3933
www.cocma.ca

Centre de recherche industrielle du Québec (CRIQ)
TF: (800) 667-2386
T: (418) 659-1550
www.criq.qc.ca

Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia
T: (250) 260-4429
www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca

Chicken Farmers of Canada
T: (613) 241-2800
www.chicken.ca

Coffee Association of Canada/Café association du Canada
T: (416) 510-8032
www.coffeeassoc.com

Council of Food Processing & Consumer Products/Conseil de la transformation agroalimentaire et des produits de consommation
T: (450) 349-1521
www.conseilfaq.com

CSA Group (Canadian Standards Association)
TF: (800) 463-6727
T: (416) 747-4000
www.csagroup.org

Dairy Farmers of Canada/Les producteurs laitiers du Canada
T: (613) 236-9997
www.dairyfarmers.ca

Dietitians of Canada/Les diététistes du Canada
T: (416) 596-0857
www.dietitians.ca

Egg Farmers of Canada/Les Producteurs d'oeufs du Canada
T: (613) 238-2514
www.eggfarmers.ca

Export Development Canada/Exportation et développement Canada
TF: (800) 229-0575
www.edc.ca

Fisheries Council of Canada/Conseil Canadien des Pêches
T: (613) 727-7450
www.fisheriescouncil.ca

Fisheries and Oceans Canada/Pêches et Océans Canada
T: (613) 993-0999
www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Food Allergy Canada
TF: (866) 785-5660
T: (416) 785-5666
www.foodallergycanada.ca

Food & Beverage Atlantic/Aliments et Boissons Atlantique
T: (506) 857-4255
www.atlanticfood.ca

Food and Beverage Ontario
T: (519) 826-3741
www.foodandbeverageontario.ca

Food & Consumer Products of Canada
T: (416) 510-8024
www.fcpc.ca

Food Banks Canada/Banques alimentaires Canada
TF: (877) 535-0958
T: (905) 602-5234
www.foodbankscanada.ca



Food Industry Association of Canada (Golden Pencil Awards)
c/o Bill Sheine, secretary/treasurer

T: (416) 229-0210
E: sheine@rogers.com
www.goldenpencilaward.com

Food Processors of Canada

T: (613) 722-1000
www.foodprocessorsofcanada.ca

Further Poultry Processors Association of Canada

www.fppac.ca

Grain Growers of Canada/ Les producteurs de grains du Canada

T: (613) 233-9954
www.ggc-pgc.ca

Innovation P.E.I.

TF: (800) 563-3734
T: (902) 368-6300
www.innovationpei.com

ISSA Canada (formerly Canadian Sanitation Supply Association)

TF: (866) 684-8273 T: (905) 665-8001
www.issa-canada.com

Manitoba Canola Growers Association

T: (204) 982-2122
www.mcgacanola.org

Manitoba Food Processors Association

T: (204) 982-6372
www.mfpa.mb.ca

Manitoba Pulse & Soybean Growers

TF: (866) 226-9442
T: (204) 745-6488
www.manitobapulse.ca

Master Brewers' Association of Canada

c/o Master Brewers Association of the Americas
http://www.mbaa.com/districts/Pages/default.aspx

National Farm Animal Care Council/Conseil national pour les soins aux animaux d'élevage

www.nfacc.ca

National Research Council Canada

TF: (877) 672-2672
T: (613) 993-9101
www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca

Natural Health and Non-prescription Health Products Directorate

TF: (866) 225-0709
T: (613) 957-2991
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/nhpd

Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association

T: (709) 754-2854
www.naia.ca

Nova Scotia Seafood Alliance (formerly Nova Scotia Fish Packers Association)

T: (902) 742-6168
www.novascotiaseafoodalliance.ca

Ontario Food Protection Association

T: (647) 573-4940
www.ofpa.on.ca

Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association

T: (519) 763-6160
www.ofvga.org

The Ontario Greenhouse Alliance

T: (905) 945-6791
www.theontariogreenhousealliance.com

Ontario Independent Meat Processors

T: (519) 763-4558
www.oimp.ca

Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers

T: (519) 681-1875
www.opvg.org

PAC, Packaging Consortium

T: (416) 646-4640
Que. office: (514) 990-0134
www.pac.ca

The Paper & Paperboard Packaging Environmental Council (PPEC)

T: (905) 458-0087
www.ppec-paper.com

Pasta Canada

T: (613) 235-4010
www.pastacanada.com

Poultry Industry Council

T: (519) 837-0284
www.poultryindustrycouncil.ca

Producteurs de Grains du Québec

T: (450) 679-0540
www.pgq.ca

Provision Coalition

T: (519) 822-2042
www.provisioncoalition.com

Restaurants Canada

TF: (800) 387-5649
T: (416) 923-8416
www.restaurantscanada.org

Retail Council of Canada/ Conseil canadien du commerce de détail

TF: (888) 373-8245
T: (416) 467-3777
www.retailcouncil.org

Saskatchewan Food Processors Association

info@sfpa.ca
www.sfpa.sk.ca

Soy Canada

T: (613) 233-0500
www.soycanada.ca

Spirits Canada

T: (416) 626-0100
www.spiritscanada.ca

Standards Council of Canada/ Conseil canadien des normes

T: (613) 238-3222
www.scc.ca

Supply Chain Management Association

TF: (888) 799-0877
T: (416) 977-7111
www.scma.com

Taste of Nova Scotia

TF: (800) 281-5507
T: (902) 492-9291
www.tasteofnovascotia.com

Tea and Herbal Association of Canada/Association du Thé et des Tisanes du Canada

T: (416) 510-8647, ext. 2
www.tea.ca

Turkey Farmers of Canada/ Les éleveurs de dindon du Canada

T: (905) 812-3140
www.canadianturkey.ca

Union des producteurs agricoles du Québec

T: (450) 679-0530
www.upa.qc.ca

Vintners Quality Alliance of Ontario

T: (416) 367-2002
www.vqoantario.ca

Wine Country Ontario

T: (905) 562-8070, ext. 221
www.winecountryontario.ca

Women in Food Industry Management

admin@wfim.ca
www.wfim.ca

Workplace Safety & Prevention Services

TF: (877) 494-9777
T: (905) 614-1400
www.wsps.ca

World Potato Congress

T: (902) 368-8885
www.potatocongress.org

RESEARCH CENTRES

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Research Centres
<http://bit.ly/XrAVze>

Atlantic Poultry Research Institute
 T: (902) 893-6657
<http://www.dal.ca/sites/apri.html>

Bio|Food|Tech – Prince Edward Island Food Technology Centre
 TF: (877) 368-5548
 T: (902) 368-5548
www.gov.pe.ca/ftc

Canadian International Grains Institute
 T: (204) 983-5344
www.cigi.ca

Cintech Agroalimentaire
 T: (450) 771-4393
www.cintech.ca

College of Agriculture and Bioresources University of Saskatchewan
 T: (306) 966-4056
www.agbio.usask.ca

Food Development Centre Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
 TF: (800) 870-1044
 T: (204) 239-3150
<http://bit.ly/1ABm44T>

Food Innovation & Research Studio (FIRST) George Brown College
 T: (416) 415 5000, ext. 6400
www.georgebrown.ca/first

Food Processing Development Centre Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
 T: (780) 986-4793
www.agric.gov.ab.ca/fpdc

Human Nutraceutical Research Unit, Department of Human Health & Nutritional Sciences University of Guelph
 T: (519) 824-4120, ext. 53749
www.uoguelph.ca/hhns/human-nutraceutical-research-unit-hnru

Merinov – Quebec Fisheries and Aquaculture Innovation Centre/Centre d'innovation de l'aquaculture et des pêches du Québec
 TF: (844) 368-6371
 T: (418) 368-6371
www.merinov.ca

Morden Research Station Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
 T: (204) 822-7556
<http://bit.ly/1zJ2CVq>

NSF International
 T: (519) 821-1246
www.nsfcanada.ca

Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada/Centre d'agriculture biologique du Canada Dalhousie University
 T: (902) 893-7256
www.dal.ca/faculty/agriculture/oacc/en-home.html

POS Bio-Sciences John and Charlotte Cross Bio-Sciences Centre
 TF: (800) 230-2751
 T: (306) 978-2800
www.pos.ca

Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc.
 T: (306) 933-7555
www.foodcentre.sk.ca

EDUCATIONAL CONTACTS

Acadia University School of Nutrition and Dietetics
 T: (902) 585-1366
<http://nutrition.acadiau.ca/>

British Columbia Institute of Technology, School of Health Sciences Food Technology Department
 TF: (866) 434-1610
 T: (604) 434-5734
<http://www.bcit.ca/study/programs/500adipt>

Canadian Nutrition Society/Société canadienne de nutrition
 TF: (888) 414-7188
www.cns-scn.ca

Council of Canadian University Food Science Administrators c/o Muriel Subirade, director, Department of Food Science Faculty of Agriculture & Food Sciences, Université Laval
 E: Muriel.subirade@fsaa.ulaval.ca

Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture
 T: (902) 893-6600
www.dal.ca/faculty/agriculture.html

Durham College
 Chemical Laboratory Technology - Pharmaceutical and Food Science
 T: (905) 721-3000
<http://bit.ly/10Pai8c>

George Brown College Hospitality and Culinary Arts and Chef School
 TF: (800) 265-2002
 T: (416) 415-2000
www.georgebrown.ca/hospitality-culinary-arts/

Holland College Culinary Institute of Canada
 TF: (800) 446-5265
 T: (902) 629-4217
<http://www.hollandcollege.com/culinary-institute-of-canada/>

Langara College Department of Nutrition & Food Service Management
 T: (604) 323-5511
www.langara.bc.ca/departments/nutrition/

McGill University – Macdonald Campus Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
 T: (514) 398-7773

www.mcgill.ca/macdonald
School of Human Nutrition
www.mcgill.ca/nutrition/

Memorial University of Newfoundland Fisheries and Marine Institute
 TF: (800) 563-5799
 T: (709) 778-0200
www.mi.mun.ca

SAIT Polytechnic – Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
 TF: (877) 284-7248
 T: (403) 284-7248
www.sait.ca

University of Alberta Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences Department of Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science
 T: (780) 492-3239
www.afns.ualberta.ca

University of British Columbia Faculty of Land and Food Systems
 T: (604) 822-1219
www.landfood.ubc.ca

University of Guelph Centre for Open Learning and Educational Support
 T: (519) 767-5000
www.open.uoguelph.ca

University of Guelph Department of Food Science
 T: (519) 824-4120
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/food-science>

Université Laval Microprogramme en Alimentation et Nutrition
 TF: (877) 785-2825
 T: (418) 656-2131
www.ulaval.ca/les-etudes-programmes/repertoire/details/microprogramme-en-alimentation-et-nutrition.html

University of Manitoba Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences Food and Human Nutritional Sciences
 T: (204) 474-6411
www.umanitoba.ca/afs/dept/fhns/



University of Prince Edward Island Applied Human Sciences

T: (902) 566-6482
<http://www.upei.ca/science/applied-human-sciences>

University of Saskatchewan College of Agriculture and Bioresources

T: (306) 966-4056
www.agbio.usask.ca

University of Toronto Department of Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry, Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering

T: (416) 978-2011
www.chem-eng.utoronto.ca

U.S. NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Frozen Food Institute

T: (703) 821-0770
www.affi.com

Bakery Equipment Manufacturers & Allieds

T: (913) 338-1300
www.bema.org

Flavor and Extract Manufacturers Association

T: (202) 293-5800
www.femaflavor.org

The Food Institute

T: (201) 791-5570
www.foodinstitute.com

Food Marketing Institute

T: (202) 452-8444
www.fmi.org

Food Processing Suppliers Association

T: (703) 761-2600
www.fpsa.org

Grocery Manufacturers Association

T: (202) 639-5900
www.gmaonline.org

Institute of Food Technologists

TF: (800) 438-3663
T: (312) 782-8424
www.ift.org

International Warehouse Logistics Association

T: (847) 813-4699
www.iwla.com

National Dairy Council

www.nationaldairyCouncil.org

North American Meat Institute

(202) 587-4200
www.meatinstitute.org

Organic Trade Association

U.S.: (202) 403-8520
Canada: (613) 482-1717
www.ota.com

Paperboard Packaging Council

T: (413) 686-9191
www.ppcnet.org

Soyfoods Association of North America

T: (202) 659-3520
www.soyfoods.org

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

T: (888) 463-6332
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Shelby Taylor, owner of Earth to Kids Inc., and her family.

Earth to Kids Inc. Collingwood, Ont.

Deanna Rosolen

Shelby Taylor didn't have a background in food processing when she first entered the industry, but she did run a health food store. With her knowledge of nutrition, and from speaking with her customers, Taylor had almost a bird's eye view of what was missing in the healthy food market.

It was that knowledge that sparked what eventually became Collingwood, Ont.-based Earth to Kids Inc. The company is probably better known by its breakout brand Chickapea Pasta, an organic, gluten-free, chickpea and lentil flours pasta.

Kim Masin, the company's Marketing manager, says that by talking to her customers, Taylor — a new mom herself at the time — heard a "consistent need for something that was familiar and good for you — not just better for you." So in 2014 she started thinking about what kids would be most likely to eat, especially picky eaters, and what moms would want to see.

That's how she came up with pasta, which was the easy part. Masin says Taylor and her mother, Julie Hilson, worked together in a rented commercial kitchen in Barrie, Ont. trying out recipe after recipe. They used an old pasta extruder



machine to make samples. The challenge, says Masin, was creating "a pasta that only used chickpea and lentil flours, no fillers or other ingredients." To help Taylor, her mom also took over duties at the health food store while Taylor worked on booking meetings and pitching the product.

The next challenge the company faced was finding a manufacturer and co-packer who could make the pasta the way they wanted it. This is why the pasta is manufactured in the U.S. Masin says they could not find a manufacturer anywhere in Canada that could "make the pasta without adding anything to it." This requires a specialized pasta extruder machine. The organic flours, however, are about 90 per cent sourced in Canada.

Along the way, Taylor also entered and pitched her company to several contests and programs for entrepreneurs. It's how she found business mentorship and funding. In 2015, Taylor launched a Kickstarter online campaign and raised more than \$25,000. Earth to Kids was also accepted into District Ventures, an accelerator for packaged goods companies based in Calgary. Taylor completed the program and afterwards successfully pitched her company to investors, receiving funding from District Ventures Capital.

The company launched the pasta in July 2016 and then into the U.S. in February 2017. Today, Chickapea Pasta is in 2,000 stores across North America. The team of seven in Collingwood oversees an operation that includes a warehouse in Cambridge, Ont., 25 warehouses in the U.S. and brokers across both countries. Chickapea Pasta is available in penne, fusilli and shells,

as well as Organic Chickapea Lentil Mac & Cheese and Organic Chickapea Lentil Spirals & Cheese. This year the company is launching a Vegan Mac and long noodles. And after meeting the stringent criteria required, the company is launching its products into the school lunch program in the U.S. 🍓

Q&A



Q: What are the company's future plans?

A: "We have many product ideas that will always have a pasta base. We may expand into the U.K. and Australia; those are longer-term goals. We work with restaurants and larger volumes. We're also looking at healthcare facilities, retirement homes — those are big opportunities for us because the product is so valuable to some of these institutions. Seniors, for example, may not want to eat meat protein because it's just too hard to chew. Chickapea Pasta has 23 g of protein per serving. Diabetics can eat the pasta and their blood sugar won't spike."

Q: What else makes the company unique?

A: "We're very close to our B Corp status (B Corp status is issued by B Lab, a non-profit corporation. B Corps are for-profit companies that meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency). Those values are part of our foundation. It's about volunteering and giving back."



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