

TODAY'S GROCER

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THE NATION'S MOST HIGHLY HONORED FOOD TRADE PUBLICATION

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SABMiller and Molson Coors Sign Joint Venture Agreement



GRAHAM MACKAY

SABMiller plc (SAB.L) and Molson Coors Brewing Company announced on December 21 that they have signed the definitive transaction agreement for the combination of the U.S. and Puerto Rico operations of their respective subsidiaries, Miller and Coors, into Miller-Coors LLC, the joint venture that they announced on October 9, 2007.

Graham Mackay, Chief Executive of SABMiller, said, "Today's announcement is an important step forward towards completing the MillerCoors joint venture, a combination that will ultimately allow us to better meet the needs of distributors, retailers and consumers in the U.S. marketplace by providing greater choice, product availability and increased innovation."

Leo Kiely, Chief Executive of Molson Coors, said, "This combination of our two highly complementary U.S. businesses creates a stronger brewer and allows us to better compete. We look forward to closing the

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Coke Forecasts Solid 2008

Coca-Cola Enterprises has raised its 2007 financial guidance, with comparable earnings per diluted share now expected to reach a range of \$1.36 to \$1.39. In addition, CCE outlined expectations for 2008 that include solid volume growth in North America and Europe and earnings per diluted share performance in line with the long-term objective of high single-digit growth.

"In 2007, we have made significant progress in our effort to create an organization that will consistently deliver improving performance even as we face the demands of an evolving marketplace," said John F. Brock, president and chief executive officer. "In a year characterized by significant cost increases, we have maintained a sharp focus on our key operating objectives and achieved important success in strengthening our brand portfolio, improving our effectiveness and efficiency, and creating a winning and inclusive culture."

"For example, the addition of glacial brands adds tremendous depth to our North American portfolio and our Customer Centered Excellence initiative is driving both improved effectiveness and improved customer

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Growing Business

Retailers and consumers get cookin' with Herbs

\$2.79

89¢

69¢

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CHARLIE COINER
President
Rock Garden Herbs

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Tom E. Smith Learning Center

FOOD LION CEO, JANUARY 1986 - APRIL 1999



■ Tom Smith and his wife, Martha, pictured at the dedication ceremony.

Food Lion Unveils the Tom E. Smith Learning Center

Food Lion LLC unveiled the new Tom E. Smith Learning Center at its Harrison Road facility on November 13. The new center is named in honor of the former Food Lion CEO. The hour-long event featured four guest speakers, a gift presentation and was followed by a small reception.

The family of Tom Smith, including his wife Martha, was on hand for the dedication of the Learning Center. Also in attendance for the event was current Food Lion LLC President and CEO Rick Anicetti, Salisbury Mayor Susan Kluttz, friends of Smith and Food Lion executives. Other Food Lion associates were encouraged to stop by after the dedication and offer well-wishes.

The group was welcomed by Food Lion Senior Vice President

Darrell Johnson and addressed by former Salisbury Mayor Margaret Kluttz; Clarissa Robinson, on behalf of her husband, Tom Robinson, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Harveys; Carol Herndon, Food Lion LLC's executive vice president of accounting and analysis and chief accounting officer; and finally Anicetti. Each speaker shared personal memories of Smith and extolled the former CEO's dedication, passion and genuine love for the Food Lion organization.

Anicetti also presented Smith with an engraved bowl to commemorate the occasion, stating that Smith's impact on the people of the Food Lion organization, his focus on low cost, and his lasting values of hard work, loyalty, resilience and fierce determi-

nation still exist within the organization today.

When asked what he misses most about Food Lion, Smith replied with "the people." He then went on to thank past and current associates for making Food Lion "better" and allowing it to "continue to grow."

"I wish Food Lion the very best and continued success in the grocery business," Smith said in his closing remarks.

The Tom E. Smith Learning Center will be used for various associate development training, including the Business Leadership Training Conference, Retail Management Training, Retail Development Training, Store Manager Leadership College and Team Building exercises. It is located on the second floor of the Customer Support Center-Harrison Road.

"Good Value" Is The Top Influencer Of U.S. Grocery Store Choice

Worldwide, Grocery Shoppers Agree: Value Is More Important than Product Selection, Location, Convenience or Environmental Friendliness

Good value is the most important factor in determining where global consumers spend their grocery dollars, according to a newly-released study by The Nielsen Company. Sixty percent of U.S. consumers rank "good value for money" as the most important consideration when choosing a grocery store; eighty-five percent of global consumers agree.

Nielsen's research shows that after "good value," 28 percent of U.S. consumers choose grocery stores based on the selection of high quality brands and products while 23 percent choose the grocery store that is closest. Fourteen percent of U.S. consumers choose the most convenient store with easy parking and nine percent choose a store based on its use of recyclable bags and packaging.

"Our research offers a unique global snapshot of shopping habits and the motivations behind grocery shopping behavior today," said Todd Hale, senior vice president of Consumer & Shopping Insights, Nielsen Consumer Panel Services. "What shoppers demand from grocery retailers varies significantly across regions and countries, and with increasing consolidation and globalization of the retail industry, it's crucial for retailers to understand how shopper preferences differ across markets."

In contrast to the habits of U.S. shoppers, Nielsen finds that Malaysian shoppers prefer supermarkets which offer the most convenient/easy parking, South Koreans, Indonesians and Germans like to shop at the supermarket closest to them, Russians and Indians seek out supermarkets offering a better selection of high quality brands and products, while Filipinos and Singaporean shoppers top global rankings for placing the most importance on getting good value for money.

Selection, Selection, Selection

The second most important attribute for U.S. shoppers, as well as shoppers around the world, is a supermarket that offers a better selection of high quality brands and products.

"This is a perfect example of today's conflicted shopper," said Hale. "Demanding shoppers expect the best of both worlds from retailers today. On one hand, we're all natural bargain hunters and insist on good value for our grocery dollar, and on the other hand, we expect retailers to stock a wide selection of high quality brands and products so we can indulge in our favorite premium treats. Consumers want the 'cheapest of the cheap' in some categories and the 'best of the best' in others."

"Highest rankings for choosing a supermarket that offers a better selection of high quality brands and

products are consumers in the world's booming economies of Russia (93 percent), India (79 percent), China (78 percent) as well as the emerging Baltic countries Latvia (78 percent) and Lithuania (77 percent) -- sending a clear message to retailers operating in or entering those markets and a sharp contrast with the 28 percent of U.S. shoppers who select stores on that basis.

"In fast-growing, emerging markets, there are large numbers of consumers with growing disposable incomes and newly acquired, discerning tastes," said Hale. "These consumers want premium international grocery products in their shopping baskets and seek out supermarkets with a better offering of high quality, branded products."

Defining Good Value

For consumers citing "good value" as their most important consideration, Nielsen finds that price, promotions and perceptions are most influential in helping consumers define value.

Eighty percent of U.S. shoppers consider it very important or somewhat important for supermarkets to feature frequent promotions and price discounts, while 72 percent believe a store's reputation for de-

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Smokey Bones Sold to Sun Capital Affiliate Buying

Smokey Bones Barbeque & Grill is being purchased by an affiliate of Sun Capital Partners, Inc. The popular eatery will continue operating as Smokey Bones Barbeque & Grill.

"We're delighted to add Smokey Bones to our growing portfolio of restaurant affiliates," said Anthony Polazzi, Vice President, Sun Capital Partners, Inc. "Smokey Bones is an exciting concept with the right ingredients for future growth: high average sales per restaurant, strong restaurant management teams, established operating systems and a unique barbeque flavor platform that is growing in popularity."

Barbeque Integrated, Inc., an affiliate of Boca Raton, FL-based Sun Capital, signed a definitive agreement to purchase the 73-restaurant company from Darden Restaurants, Inc. It will invest expertise and resources to help position Smokey Bones for future expansion in both existing and new markets.

"We're pleased to partner with Sun, whose affiliates have deep operating experience in the restaurant industry," Smokey Bones Chief Executive Officer Ian Baines said. "As a stand-alone company, we're going to put more sizzle back into Smokey Bones and get guests fired up about our restaurants. We'll do that by adding new flavors to our



hickory-smoked barbeque, focusing more on beer and frozen adult beverages, continuing to improve our service and creating an energetic atmosphere. Our goal is to become the best barbeque experience in casual dining."

Sun Capital affiliates have significant restaurant industry knowledge and operating experience. Sun affiliates own Boston Market, Friendly Ice Cream, Sweet Tomatoes, Chevy's Fresh Mex, Fazoli's, Bruegger's and other restaurant brands. Together, Sun's eight restaurant affiliates have more than 2,200 loca-

tions and \$3.4 billion in sales.

Orlando, FL-based Smokey Bones Barbeque & Grill opened in 1999 and employs 6,000 people in 17 states. The restaurant serves genuine hickory-smoked barbeque in an atmosphere known for friendly, attentive service. Baby-back and St. Louis-style ribs, pulled-pork, brisket and turkey are guest favorites. In addition to barbeque, Smokey Bones' menu features a broad range of American fire-grilled steaks, half-pound Angus burgers, sandwiches and a selection of fresh salads, fish and chicken entrees.

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4 On the Promotional front

Mariel Hemingway Becomes SweetLeaf® SteviaPlus® National Spokesperson

Actress, Mom and Author Counts Leading Brand of Stevia Among Pantry "Musts" for Healthier Lifestyle

Oscar-nominated actress Mariel Hemingway, granddaughter of the illustrious novelist Ernest Hemingway, and an outspoken advocate for balanced and healthy living, has become the national spokesperson for SweetLeaf® SteviaPlus®.

Manufactured and marketed by Wisdom Natural Brands of Gilbert, Arizona, SweetLeaf SteviaPlus is an all-natural, zero calorie supplement that is 30 times sweeter than sugar. Stevia, first brought to the U.S. twenty years ago by Wisdom's founder, Jim May, is made from the leaves of the stevia rebaudiana plant native to Paraguay.



Hemingway is also a mother, yoga instructor and author of "Healthy Living From the Inside Out, Every Woman's Guide to Real Beauty, Renewed Energy and a Radiant Life" (HarperCollins 2007). She is a longtime SweetLeaf SteviaPlus enthusiast, which she lists in her book as her number one pantry staple. "Mariel is so inspirational, and truly a natural as a spokesperson for SweetLeaf SteviaPlus," says Jim May, CEO of Wisdom. "We

were delighted to learn she uses our products herself and recommends them to readers seeking a healthier lifestyle. It makes perfect sense for us to spread the word to many more people, together."

"Using stevia to sweeten beverages, smoothies, cereals, baked foods, whipped cream and much more is a small change with big results," says Hemingway. "But I have learned that not all stevia is created equal. SweetLeaf SteviaPlus is the only brand that uses beneficial inulin fiber instead of high glycemic fillers. Because this product uses only the sweetest part of the leaf, it has the smoothest, most delicious taste."

No other stevia brand on the market comes close in breadth of offerings than SweetLeaf Stevia. Other SweetLeaf Stevia products include SweetLeaf Liquid Stevia in 12 flavors that take water from dull to delicious in addition making healthier desserts and cocktails and Stevia-Tabs, in convenient travel tins.

MARIEL HEMINGWAY



As the granddaughter of illustrious author Ernest Hemingway, Mariel was always destined to be well-known and publicly recognized. However, at the young age of 13, Mariel became famous in her own right when she made her silver screen debut in "Lipstick." Four years later, her work in Woody Allen's "Manhattan" earned her an Oscar nomination. She has since made 30 films and numerous television appearances including the groundbreaking kiss with Roseanne on her hit show and a role in Steven Bochco's highly acclaimed "Civil Wars." Mariel appeared in "Star 80" directed by Bob Fosse and was more recently in Rod Lurie's film "The Contender" and starred in the comic cult film "The Sex Monster" by Mike Binder.

Now at the age of 45, Mariel is a wife and mother of two, Dree 20 and Langley 18. Over the last 22 years, she has also been pursuing her passion for yoga and health and is now seen as a voice of holistic and balanced living. Now, Mariel has formed an alliance with Wisdom Natural Brands to promote the company's SweetLeaf SteviaPlus® brand, an all-natural, zero calorie supplement that is thirty times sweeter than sugar.

Dunkin' Donuts Shopping Cart Derby Serves Up a Steaming Cup of Competition

With the help of "Access Hollywood" correspondent Maria Menounos, an excited crowd of intrepid coffee drinkers enjoyed the first-ever "Dunkin' Donuts Shopping Cart Derby" Saturday, December 8, at the Santa Monica Pier in California. The lively event raised funds for America's Second Harvest — The Nation's Food Bank Network, and celebrated the launch of Dunkin' Donuts packaged coffee in retail outlets across the country.

Over 30 teams participated in the competitive obstacle course for the chance to win a two-year, one-year or six-month's supply of their preferred brew. Each team that participated generated a donation to America's Second Harvest by P&G Coffee. The result was a total donation of \$20,000 to the non-profit that feeds America's hungry through a nationwide network of member food banks. Packaged coffee at the event was donated to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank.

"It's great to be part of this event that supports America's Second Harvest," said "Access Hollywood" correspondent, Maria Menounos. "Having worked at Dunkin' Donuts as a teenager in Boston, I'm a big fan of their coffee and excited to know I can now pick it up at my local grocery store on the West Coast. This event helps to capture the enthusiasm we fans have for the brand while helping out a worthwhile cause."



"ACCESS HOLLYWOOD" correspondent, Maria Menounos, armed with a shopping cart loaded with Dunkin' Donuts Packaged Coffee, now available at grocery stores nationwide, illustrates there's no such thing as too much of a good thing.



"ACCESS HOLLYWOOD" correspondent, Maria Menounos, honors the Dunkin' Donuts Shopping Cart Derby winners with bean medals in LA. Maria and derby participants were celebrating the arrival on Dunkin' Donuts coffee in local grocery stores.

Teams with names such as "Better Latte Than Never," "The Espresso Kids" and "Cream & Sugar" worked the Derby course as fast as they could, collecting

and shelving all six current varieties of Dunkin' Donuts packaged coffee. After multiple qualifying heats and semi-final rounds, five teams were chosen



Maria Menounos bestows a \$20K check donation from P&G to America's Second Harvest. Celebrating the arrival of Dunkin' packaged coffee to retail outlets nationwide, each derby participant generated a donation to ASH and all packaged coffee from the event will be donated to LA's local food bank.

to compete in the final race. Among a throng of animated spectators, Maria Menounos crowned the following winners:

FIRST PRIZE (Whole Bean gold medal) — Team "MMM Donuts" — John and Julie Benham from Cincinnati, OH; **SECOND PRIZE** (Vanilla silver medal) — Team "Jolt & Bolt" — Sandy and Christa Meola from Los Angeles, CA; **THIRD PRIZE** (Hazelnut bronze medal) — Team "The Sweet and Lows" — Dan Lange and Justin Shabsis from Los Angeles and Culver City, CA.

"We're so proud to have won the Dunkin' Donuts Shopping Cart Derby. Our weeks of intensive training — mainly drinking

lots of coffee and frequent supermarket trips — really paid off," said Julie Benham, captain of first-place team, "MMM Donuts." "Now that Dunkin' Donuts packaged coffee is available locally, it will be easy for us to restock after we enjoy our grand prize, a two-year supply of our favorite drink."

Dunkin' Donuts packaged coffee is available in Original Blend, French Vanilla, Dunkin' Decaf®, Hazelnut and Cinnamon Spice flavors. Original Blend is also available in a whole bean variety. Dunkin' Donuts coffee is available in a 12 oz. package for a suggested retail price of \$7.99 and a 40 oz. package for a suggested retail price of \$15.99.

Wells' Dairy Sells Milk Plant

Company To Focus On Ice Cream And Frozen Products

Wells' Dairy, Inc. has entered into an agreement to sell its fluid dairy and cultured dairy facility in Le Mars, Iowa to Dean Foods Company based in Dallas, Texas.

"Following extensive analysis, we have made a strategic decision to focus all of our efforts and resources on our core business of making quality ice cream," said Mike Wells, chief executive officer of Wells' Dairy. "This committed focus puts us in the best position to reach our goal to become a top 3 national brand in ice cream and frozen novelties and to ensure the long-term viability of the company."

Over the past two years the Blue Bunny® ice cream brand, Wells' Dairy's signature brand, is one of the fastest growing ice cream brands in the nation.

"Blue Bunny ice cream and novelties in our major retailers is already a top 3 brand and in many cases we're number one, giving us great confidence in our strategic focus," said Mike Wells. "To achieve success in the ultra-competitive ice cream industry, we must concentrate our sales, marketing and manufacturing efforts on the single focus of making quality ice cream and frozen novelty products for our expanding customer and consumer base."

Wells' Dairy is currently working with Dean Foods on the transition plan for the fluid dairy and cultured products facility in Le Mars.

Through an unrelated transaction, Wells' Dairy is also exploring the sale of its yogurt plant in Omaha, Nebraska.



■ Ed Nicholson, Director of Community Relations for Tyson Foods; Jonathan Crider, Hunger All-star and Rodney W. Bivens, Executive Director of the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma.

Oklahoma 13-Year-Old Recognized as Tyson Foods' First "Hunger All-Star"

Two years have passed since Jonathan Crider first heard the public service announcement saying kids his age living nearby were going hungry. Now at age 13, he has rallied his hometown community of Lawton to raise more than \$20,000 for Food 4 Kids to help feed more than 100 children in Lawton public schools for an entire school year.

Jonathan can also add earning a truckload of much needed protein from Tyson Foods for the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma to his list of accomplishments. "Jonathan Crider is teaching all of us a lesson in serving and giving," said Ed Nicholson, director of community relations for Tyson Foods. "We're making this donation in honor of his great work in the community and his online nomination made on our company's new hunger relief website <http://www.hungerrelief.tyson.com>," added Nicholson.

The website, [hungerrelief.tyson.com](http://www.hungerrelief.tyson.com), is dedicated to those who work tirelessly in the fight against hunger, especially around the holidays and after times of natural disaster, like Oklahoma has experienced during the past week. Tyson Foods plans to select monthly winners from nominations for Hunger All-Stars submitted on the website. Jonathan was nominated by the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma. The donation is part of Tyson's ongoing commitment to lead and support hunger-relief initiatives.

"The new Tyson Foods hunger relief website has proven to be a great resource for learning about others committed to ending hunger as well as a new social medium for hunger relief initiatives. We are grateful for Tyson's innovative thinking in hunger relief and for the donation to our food bank," said Rodney W. Bivens, executive director of the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma. "Donations of poultry and other high protein foods are especially valuable as they help us provide our clients with healthy, nutritious foods."



■ Celebrity cook and best-selling cookbook author Paula Deen [center] and her husband Michael Groover [center, right], joined in a rousing cheer with the team from America's Second Harvest of Tampa Bay Food Bank during a recent visit to their facility where she presented the group with \$500 Smithfield spiral sliced hams produced in nearby Plant City.

Paula Deen Donates 500 Smithfield Hams to Tampa Food Bank

The America's Second Harvest food bank in Tampa, FL received a surprise—and most welcome—visitor last month when Food Network celebrity cook and best-selling cookbook author Paula Deen stopped in to donate 500 Smithfield hams for needy families.

"We were taken completely by surprise, but we are so grateful for Ms. Deen's generous donation," said Conway Jensen, President of America's Second Harvest of Tampa Bay. "During the busy holiday season it's always difficult for us to get enough donations to meet the needs of area families, so Ms. Deen's timing couldn't have been better."

The 500 Smithfield Crunchy Glazed Honey Spiral Sliced Hams, which are formulated with Deen's personal recipe, were produced at the nearby Smithfield Plant City processing facility.

"I decided it might be nice to take some of those delicious hams over to the America's Second Harvest food bank while I was in town visiting with the Smithfield employees in Plant City," Deen said. "I'm a mother, a grandmother and a cook, and I just love feeding people."

Deen hosts two of her own TV shows—Paula's Home



■ PAULA DEEN Food Network Celebrity Cook and best selling cookbook author made a surprise visit recently to America's Second Harvest food bank in Tampa during which she presented the organization with \$500 of her Smithfield Crunchy Glazed Honey Spiral Sliced Hams, formulated with her own personal recipe.

Cooking and Paula's Party—on the Food Network and is the best-selling author of seven cookbooks. She also publishes a lifestyle magazine called Cooking With Paula Deen and owns and operates a Savannah, Georgia, restaurant with her two sons called The Lady & Sons. Deen is a partner with Smithfield in a joint marketing venture which has resulted in the development of such products as her personal recipe Smithfield Crunchy Honey Glazed Spiral Sliced Ham. Sales of this brand-new ham

have exceeded all expectations and the ham is now distributed nationwide.

Jensen added that Smithfield's Plant City facility has been a valued food bank donor over the past several years. "We're fortunate that Smithfield is our neighbor close-by, and a very good one at that. America's Second Harvest of Tampa Bay is always in need of meats, and Smithfield comes through when they can. In my mind, it's no wonder that Paula Deen chose to partner with them."



Webster Ind. Debuts Nation's First 65% Recycled Cert. Plastic Kitchen & Trash Bags

Webster Industries, a leading manufacturer of recycled content plastic trash bags, has announced a new line of private label trash and kitchen bags with 65% recycled content certified by Scientific Certification Systems (SCS). Webster is the first and only company to receive independent certification for recycled content plastic trash and kitchen bags from SCS—a leading, independent third party auditing and certification of environmental and sustainability claims firm. The SCS certification provides important verification and validation of the recycled content claim for retailers and their customers.

6 Seafood

SALMON OF THE AMERICAS

Omega-3 Fatty Acids from Ocean Farmed Salmon Could Benefit Children with ADHD

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, the average classroom in America most likely includes at least one child that has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). This condition, which makes it difficult for children to concentrate or control their behavior, affects up to five percent — nearly two million children in America. One of the major problems that the country faces with the rising cases of ADHD is the lack of answers about just what to do to prevent and treat the condition.

There is growing evidence for a scientific theory about the relationship to diet and ADHD diagnoses. Many researchers are suggesting a link between a deficiency, or lower levels, of long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids, particularly the Omega-3 fatty acids, and the onset of ADHD. A deficiency can easily be addressed by providing children with a diet containing Omega-3-rich foods.

"There are parents scrambling to find a way address the ADHD issue in this country," explains Rafael Puga of Salmon of the Americas, a non-profit trade organization whose

mission is to educate all consumers about the health benefits of adding ocean-farmed salmon to their diets. "Adding Omega-3-rich food to a child's diet is as easy as preparing some ocean-farmed salmon for dinner."

According to the Institute of Medicine, farmed salmon is the most desirable seafood form for obtaining the fatty acid because it is the lowest in mercury. Many people choose ocean-farmed salmon as part of a healthy diet because of its high concentrations of Omega-3 oils, low fat content, lean protein and abundance of vitamins and minerals. Many children do not consume seafood on a regular basis, but doing so would address concerns of not getting enough Omega-3 fatty acids in the diet. Ocean farmed salmon is a good choice because of it is high in nu-

trients and essential fatty acids.

In 2003, the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons explained the problem with the vegetable oil and fat composition that is being used today in this country, and the link to ADHD. They explain that, traditionally, fats and oils contained a healthy ratio of fatty

acids. However, the new fats and oil largely being used in today's food supply is deficient in Omega-3 fatty acids.



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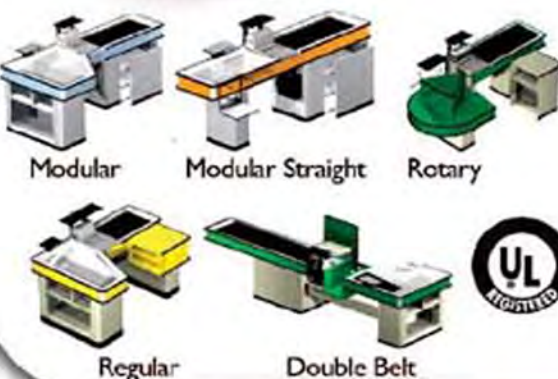
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More States Consider Ending Sunday Ban on Alcohol Sales

An increasing number of states have been debating measures to end their Sunday ban on alcohol sales, USA Today reports. Many states' blue laws go back a long ways; for example, Colorado's ban on store selling alcohol on Sundays dates back to 1933 and the repeal of Prohibition.

"Times have changed. That's the bottom line," said Colorado State Sen. Jennifer Veiga, whose attempt to change the law in 2005 failed. "There's no reason the government should dictate to a business that they can't open (on) a certain day."

Restrictions on Sunday sales of alcohol in stores, auto sales, hunting or other activities have been eased in a number of states. Since 2005, Alabama, Kentucky, New York, Rhode Island and Washington changed such laws or given each community the power to do so.

Next year, Colorado legislators will consider changing the laws on selling alcohol on Sundays and wine in grocery stores. Also in 2008, Columbia, South Carolina, voters will be able to decide whether to repeal the ban on Sunday sales of beer and wine at retail.

At least 10 other states recently attempted to pass proposals, which either failed or were postponed. Measures failed to pass in Georgia, Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico and Tennessee. Proposals in Massachusetts, Michigan and Ohio never made it out of committees.

Those who want to change blue laws say such a repeal would boost revenue and give customers more convenience, while those opposed point to religion and family as reasons enough to keep the status quo.

Currently, 34 states permit Sunday sale of alcohol.

Chicken of the Sea Receives Sustainability Certification

Chicken of the Sea wild-caught salmon now bears certification by the Marine Stewardship Council, in recognition of Chicken of the Sea International's commitment to the health and sustainability of the world's oceans.

Chicken of the Sea's canned and pouched salmon is believed to be the first consumer-branded, shelf-stable seafood product to receive MSC certification, which demonstrates dedication to operating with concern for the world's environment and natural resources - specifically, environmentally responsible fishery management and practices. Packaging on wild-caught salmon now contains MSC's official seal acknowledging Chicken of the Sea's practices.



Go Organic! Campaign

Pennsylvania Teacher Honored In National Curriculum Contest

The Go Organic! for Earth Day® campaign, an award-winning project of MusicMatters, Earth Day Network and the Organic Trade Association (OTA) that educates and increases consumer awareness of the benefits of organic food and agriculture, announced the winner of its Organic Curriculum Contest for K-12 teachers. Nancy Lendyak of Kams City High School in Kams City, PA., entered the winning curriculum and were honored recently in a surprise ceremony.

The Organic Curriculum Contest, which kicked off in February, gave teachers nationwide an opportunity to submit curriculum with lesson plans focused on organic dairy, soy, whole grains, fruit and vegetables. Entries were judged on their ability to make a clear connection between organic farm practices and the benefit to human and environmental health.

The main objective of the Go Organic! for Earth Day campaign is to educate the public on the benefits of going organic," said Michael Martin, Prez of MusicMatters. "Go Organic! created this contest to reward teachers and obtain educational materials that we could make available to teachers nationwide. The winning curriculum discusses the advantages of organic farming in a fun and creative format that can be taught in today's classrooms."



Contest winner teacher Nancy Lendyak pictured with Principal David Beck.

The Organic Trade Association is pleased to recognize Lendyak nationally for her outstanding submission and to award students with delicious organic products to share and sample with their families," said Caren Wilcox, executive director of OTA.

The Go Organic! Curriculum Contest Award was presented to Lendyak in a surprise ceremony, December 12, at the Kams City High School auditorium. The school's staff and 849 students each brought home a certified 100 percent biodegradable and compostable BioBag filled with a sampling of organic food from campaign sponsors, including Organic Valley, R.W. Knudsen Family, Santa Cruz Organic, Earthbound Farm, Annie's, Inc., Stonyfield Farm, Stemilt, and Clif Kid.

Each year the Go Organic! for Earth Day campaign is underwritten by leading organic brands such as CLIF Bar & Co., Barbara's Bakery, Earthbound Farm, Horizon Organic, Nature's Path Foods, Organic Valley Family of Farms, R.W. Knudsen Family, Santa Cruz Organic, Van's, Lifeway, Stonyfield Farm, Country Choice, So Delicious, and Stemilt.

"We are thrilled to be able to share this award-winning content with teachers across the U.S.," said Sean Miller, Director of Education at Earth Day Network. "Providing information on organic food to students has great potential to make a difference in their homes, their communities and our world."



Students enjoy one of the Kams City, PA events.

Supermarkets Experiencing Largest Sales Growth in Years

Still Face Tough Competition from Other Outlets

Supermarkets are seeing the largest sales growth in seven years, according to *What's In Store 2008*, the trends report from the International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association™ (IDDBA). But supermarkets still face stiff competition from other food outlets, including supercenters and convenience stores, which are vying for a share of this \$482.7 billion industry. Here are some of the venue trends discussed in *What's In Store 2008*:

SUPERCENTERS

The number of supercenters more than tripled from 1996 to 2006, from 708 to 2,613 outlets; 62% of American households shop at them, according to figures from the Nielsen Company. Supercenters are challenging grocery stores' bakery, deli, and dairy departments, holding 11% to 13% of the channel share in each of these departments, compared to grocery stores' 73% to 79% channel share, according to *Times & Trends* by Information Resources, Inc.

DOLLAR STORES

Traditionally, the dollar store was the domain of lower-income households. That demographic seems to have shifted to include more higher-income groups, as *Grocery Headquarters* reported that 50% to 70% of all households shopped in a dollar store in the past year. Willard Bishop's *The Future of Food Retailing* states that there were 20,543 dollar store outlets in 2006, with \$14.9 billion in sales and a 1.7% market share among food retailers. By 2011, there will be 27,696 dollar stores with sales of \$20.6 billion and a food retail market share of 2%.

CONVENIENCE STORES

Convenience store numbers increased to 145,119 by the end of 2006 according to TDILinx, a service of The Nielsen Company (compare that with 104,600 convenience stores a decade ago). Their market share among all food retailers was 16.2%. By 2011, food sales from convenience stores should reach \$166.1 billion from approximately 148,131 outlets. Market share is predicted to remain steady.

Meanwhile, convenience store operators are bracing for the expansion of Tesco's Fresh & Easy, the convenience store for-

mat of the retailing powerhouse from the United Kingdom. Tesco is known for its operational efficiency and fresh prepackaged foods. Its convenience format provides top-quality grab-and-go sandwiches and entrées in a small store with about half a dozen checkouts. Tesco's first Fresh & Easy store opened in early November. Many analysts expect the chain to shake up America's view of convenience stores and possibly prompt other big operators into the format.

CLUB STORES

This format, used mostly for monthly stock-up trips, increased in number of outlets to 1,240 in 2006 with dollar sales of \$63.5 billion and a market share of 7.4%. By 2011, store numbers should increase to 1,441, sales will reach \$84.2 billion, and market share will grow to 8.2%, according to Willard Bishop's *Future of Food Retailing*. Households with incomes of \$75,000 and above are responsible for much of this growth, said Todd Hale, senior VP of The Nielsen Company.

ON-LINE SHOPPING

On-line food, beverage, and grocery sales continue to grow. Estimates of 2006 on-

line grocery sales range widely from \$1.5 billion to as much as \$6.2 billion. According to the Food Marketing Institute, the percentage of Americans who buy food over the Internet has remained a steady 6% over the past few years.

RESTAURANTS

Today, Americans spend 47.9% of their food dollars in restaurants. Restaurant sales in 2007 are projected to increase 5% to nearly \$540 billion. The restaurant industry has been affected by some of the same forces as the retail food industry. Channel blurring has manifested itself as concepts cross over—for example, donut shops and fast-food operators promoting their premium coffee. Manufacturer-branded foods are promoted in restaurants, and restaurant-branded products are showing up in retail food stores. Smaller satellite, or kiosk, formats are appearing wherever customers can be found—including many supermarkets. To speed operations, fast food operators are using Internet- or call center-based ordering and order confirmation screens and credit card terminals at drive-thru menu boards.

8 Produce



New Fruit and Vegetable Guidelines May Not Be Feasible For Low-Income Families

To meet current dietary guidelines, low-income families would have to spend much more of their food budgets on fruits and vegetables than they may be able to afford, according to UC Davis research published in the November issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*.

The study compared the cost accessibility of 2005 guidelines for produce consumption with guidelines issued in 1995 for a family of four over the course of two weeks. In terms of the overall fruit and vegetable shopping list, the newer guidelines were slightly cheaper. However, meeting the newer guidelines for recommended amounts of fruits and certain types of vegetables came with a much bigger price tag: Low-income families would have to spend between 40 percent

and 70 percent of their food-at-home budgets in order to purchase the additional servings.

"The new dietary guidelines, which include more dark green vegetables, orange vegetables and legumes, are based on solid science and have the potential to help protect Americans from some of the leading causes of death, including stroke, heart disease and diet-related cancers," said lead author Diana Cassady, an assistant professor of public health sciences and researcher at the UC Davis Center for Advanced Studies in Nutrition and Social Marketing. "But, we need to take the next step to ensure that all consumers can actually afford to follow the guidelines. Low-income families have less discretionary income than more affluent families. Buying the recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables would take up a large proportion, perhaps an

unacceptable proportion, of their food budgets."

Noting that the economically disadvantaged have higher rates of heart disease and some cancers, Cassady said the report was part of a larger research effort she has undertaken in recent years to understand why low-income consumers have poorer health and whether or not the availability and affordability of healthy foods contribute to those outcomes. In 2006, she authored a paper that found that better after-school snack choices boost nutrition for low-income children. In 2005, she headed up a project to improve the produce offerings at a grocery store in a hard-pressed Sacramento neighborhood. In 2003, her research found that inner-city supermarkets could improve their profit margins and the health of the communities they serve by offering shoppers free transportation.

Cassady's objective in the present study was to determine if price is a barrier for low-income families in meeting the new fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines.

The investigation produced some surprising findings, including a 4 percent lower average price for the total fruit and vegetable shopping basket

for the 2005 dietary guidelines when compared to the earlier Thrifty Food Plan. This outcome, Cassady said, was mostly due to fewer recommended servings of fruit, which tend to be more expensive than vegetables, and much fewer recommended servings of starchy vegetables, such as potatoes and French fries.

Meeting the newer guidelines would require families to spend up to 70 percent more of their total at-home food budget on additional recommended servings of fruits and vegetables in specific categories, especially dark green vegetables, orange vegetables and legumes. Currently, Americans only spend about 15 percent of their food-at-home budgets on fruits and vegetables, with the rest going to other food groups such as meat, dairy products, and breads and grains. Given that price is a leading influence on food choices, low-income Americans may not be able to afford to eat as healthfully as they should.

Cassady said that it is not necessary to revise the new guidelines, which were developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Instead, she advised

that public policy makers and nutrition educators help ensure that the dietary standards are attainable for everyone. Her study suggests a combination of strategies, including distributing discount coupons for fruits and vegetables; increasing food stamp allocations; promoting low-cost sources of produce such as farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture and warehouse grocery centers or bulk stores; and counseling consumers on household budgeting approaches that could help them purchase more vegetables.

"Is Price a Barrier to Eating More Fruits and Vegetables for Low-Income Families?" was co-authored by Karen Jetter, an assistant research economist at the UC Davis Agricultural Issues Center, and Jennifer Culp, a community health program supervisor in the UC Davis Department of Public Health Sciences. It was funded by the California Cancer Research Program of the California Department of Health Services (now the California Department of Public Health). A copy of the study can be downloaded at www.adajournal.org. Information on the latest federal dietary guidelines is available at www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines.



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10 Grocery



Kettle™ Brand Bakes Pack Big Flavor in New 100-Calorie Pack



Kettle Foods is giving potato chips a makeover with new 100-calorie bags of its award-winning Kettle™ brand Bakes Lightly Salted Potato Chips.

Named "Best Chips" in *Health Magazine's* May 2006 Best New Foods for Busy Women feature, Kettle™ brand Bakes are made with real potato slices and no artificial

ingredients, cholesterol, MSG or trans fats. chips, with all the flavor, but 65 percent less fat than regular potato chips.

"With Kettle brand Bakes, snackers don't have to compromise taste or calorie count when it comes to eating on the run," said Michelle Peterman, vice president of marketing for Kettle Foods.

Demand for healthier, convenient snacking options increased significantly in the past year as more Americans seek healthier alternatives for snacking on the go, according to a recent study by Report Buyer.

Single-serving, .08 ounce bags of Kettle brand Bakes Lightly Salted Potato Chips will be available nationwide for \$1.09 – \$1.39.

AquaICE® Leads the New Ice Age with Ready-to-Freeze Purified Ice Cubes

AquaICE, LLC just unveiled the beverage and ice industry's newest product: ready-to-freeze purified ice cubes.

Patented aquaICE® is purified water in conveniently sealed, ready-to-freeze trays to allow consumers to use ice in their drinks, whether its bottled water, premium spirits or soft drinks, without the worry of off-tastes, odor transfer or contamination. Just like bottled water, these new ice cubes ensure that consumers will receive the purest beverage experience possible.

"At aquaICE, we want consumers to have confidence in the purity, taste and the quality of their ice," says Schall, "particularly when the integrity of our food supply is constantly being challenged. Our pu-



ri-fied ice cubes are sealed until they're used to prevent the risk of any impurities or absorption of off-flavors from getting into the ice through handling, storage or freezer burn," says aquaICE President and CEO, Mike Schall.

Another reason to consider using aquaICE ready-to-freeze puri-

fied ice cubes is its convenience. Since aquaICE is shelf-stable and only needs to be frozen prior to use, it's easy to transport and store. Unlike bagged ice that becomes unusable once it melts or clumpy when you put it back in the freezer, aquaICE can be frozen, thawed and refrozen multiple times without compromising its quality or taste.

A package of aquaICE contains five pre-filled ice trays, which holds 10 standard-sized ice cubes each. AquaICE comes in Original and beginning early next year—Natural Lemon Essence and Natural Lime Essence flavors for those who want to add a twist of lemon or lime to their favorite beverages. The suggested retail price is around \$4.99 per box.

On The Border® Offers Two New Tortilla Chips

Truco Enterprises, the exclusive licensee of On The Border® (OTB) brand of Southwest/Mexican retail food and beverage products, has released two new snack varieties, both currently available to grocery stores nationwide.

On The Border® Cantina Thins

The initial concept for Cantina Thins sprang from a conversation in a grocery store. Truco President David Silver overheard a group of women discussing how much they loved thin tortilla chips, and decided to challenge himself (and his company) to make them.

While most commercial tortilla chips are made by cooking corn into a mash and then immediately frying it into thick chips, On The Border® Cantina Thins are different. Their process starts with choosing select, whole-kernel white corn, then cooking it in large kettles until tender. The softened corn is then stone ground into a fine proprietary blended masa, which is pressed into authentic ultra-thin white corn tortillas. The tortillas are lightly baked in special ovens and are allowed to "rest" for several hours, while being monitored for moisture content and texture development. Once the resting process is complete, the finished tortillas are hand-cut into irregular triangles. The "pre-cut" triangles are quickly fried until light and crispy, and are then quickly bagged and rushed to local retailers.

On The Border® Premium Rounds

The story here is fan-based innovation — consumers have repeatedly requested a round chip that can be easily gripped, dipped and loaded full of salsa or queso, and On The Border® has responded. The resulting Premium Rounds have a new shape and a new size, but the same great flavor and texture as other OTB tortilla chips which are a proprietary blended white and yellow masa.



Barhyte Goes Hawaiian with New Condiment Line

NoHo's Hawaiian Café of Portland, Oregon has introduced its own line of Hawaiian sauces through its private label relationship with Barhyte Specialty Foods. The new sauces will be sold retail in NoHo's Cafés and will be sold in food stores nationwide through Barhyte Specialty Foods' wholesale food channel.

Barhyte Specialty Foods' "Saucy Mama" has worked with NoHo in concocting four different flavors from paradise for the company, including:

- Teriyaki Sauce
- Sweet Chili Sauce
- Coconut Sauce
- Sweet CHILI YAKI — (teriyaki and sweet chili blend)

NoHo's café was founded by No Ho, in 1996. A "local boy" of Hawaiian, Portuguese, and Italian descent, he was born and raised in Hawaii, and spent his summers working on his Grandfather's farm on Maui. Working up a large appetite and developing a love for "traditional home-style cooking," No Ho says that he is proud to introduce his sauces and "to share the unique flavors of home."

"NoHo's café is a Portland destination spot — people love their food and we are proud to work with NoHo's in offering the original favorite No Ho flavor combinations for their sauces," says Chris Barhyte, President of Sales and Marketing for Barhyte Specialty Foods. "We feel that the success of the restaurants is only the tip of the iceberg, or should we say 'wave,' as the sauces are authentic and restaurant patrons have sought out NoHo's secret sauces."

NoHo's Hawaiian Sauces will be distributed nationwide in 12 oz. glass jars.



Mama Mellace's Nut Hut Product Line Debuts

New Value Line Delivers Great Taste at Low Price Point

Mellace Family Brands, a snack food innovator, is introducing Mama Mellace's Nut Hut, a value-priced snack line for the convenience and dollar class of trade. Nut Hut branded products are processed using the same water roasting technique

as Mama Mellace's premium line — resulting in a great tasting product at a low price point.

"The Nut Hut brand was created with convenience stores in mind," said Mike Mellace, chief executive officer, Mellace Family Brands. "The line focuses on products with wide appeal that can be produced and sold at a lower price point without compromising taste and quality. Packaging and

point-of-purchase merchandising have all been designed to address convenience store retailers' unique needs."

Mama Mellace's Nut Hut line is launching with three popular flavors: Steakhouse Peanuts, Sweet & Salty Peanuts and Cinnamon Peanuts. The products are packaged in 4 oz. Bags and available in both tubes and clip strips. Eye-catching point of purchase displays are shipped with every order.



Forces Shaping the Future of Food Retailing

BY: **JOHN SACCOMANNO**
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Of all the fac-toids I've seen about people's eating habits, the one that probably provides the best clue as to how food is purchased and consumed comes from a mid 1990s study conducted by

Arthur Anderson Consulting. According to Arthur Anderson's International Retail Trends report, 50 percent of consumers don't know what they'll have for dinner two hours before they eat. You can imagine the millions of food dollars at stake in that two hour window.

Why, at such a late stage, are so many people undecided about what they're going to eat? One reason may be because we can be. Certainly keeping your meal options open as late as possible allows you

to better choose meals to match current cravings or meet convenience needs.

I remember my parents doing their weekly food planning every Sunday evening. Armed with coupons and ads, they would meticulously plan out every dinner for that week. With that plan, my mom would then create a shopping list for her Monday morning grocery trip. I've been married 30 years, and can't recall my wife and me ever planning our weekly meals.

Do you know how to cook? Don't be embarrassed if you answered no. According to a study done by Yankelovich Partners in 2000, 31 percent of the U.S. adult population has few if any cooking skills. Perhaps this is contributing to the large population of "undeciders."

For the most part, cooking is a skill passed down generation to generation, historically from a female of one generation to a female offspring. That tradition is slowly dying. As discussed in my November column, a majority of females are now working and are too "time starved" to be tied to the kitchen. Consider this, today is the first time the majority of a new generation are being raised by working moms. Perhaps there's a growing number of "undeciders" because the marketplace makes it so easy to be one.

Go to the cookbook section of any book retailer and you'll see a vast selection of aids available for today's "time/cook-challenged." Cookbooks have always been popular, but in the past they were about adding recipes to a household's cooking repertoire. Today's most successful cookbooks are more practical, providing kitchen survival skills rather than preparing the exotic feast. Arguably the most popular cookbook author is Rachel Ray. Her success was built on mastering meal preparation within 30 minutes. If you're not satisfied with meals in 30 minutes, Ray's recent book "Just in Time" has a section dedicated to recipes for just 15 minutes.

Those "undeciders" electing to prepare a meal for home consumption often need a quick store visit for last minute food ingredients. As such, nearly 69 percent of all consumable shopping trips are for "immediate need" items.

To some extent, the renewed interest in small format food retailers can be credited to the "undeciders." After all, does a large supermarket offer a convenient experience for that person wanting just two to three items to complete their evening meal?

Perhaps the large population of "undeciders" also influences the rising trend of

food grazing. The Food Marketing Institute's 2007 Shopper Trend Survey shows consumers increasingly spend across different store formats. Convenient location is a key factor in selecting a secondary food store.

Finally, the ready-to-eat takeout movement is also being influenced by "undeciders." Not having much time or effort invested in an evening meal opens up a number of options within that two-hour time slot. Smart grocers are responding by expanding their ready meal offerings. Having 50 percent of all your customers not knowing what they're going to eat two hours before dinner can be a great opportunity for the grocery industry. Are you taking advantage of it?

JOHN SACCOMANNO is director of Food, Drug and Petroleum Industry Marketing for NCR Corporation's Retail, Hospitality and Self-Service Solutions business. He has global responsibility for developing and deploying NCR marketing programs for food stores, drug stores and the retail petroleum industry, including convenience stores. As industry marketing director, his role includes identifying significant trends, initiatives and best practices to drive retail automation requirements.

Smart & Final Opens New Store in Camarillo, CA

Smart & Final Stores LLC has opened a new store in Camarillo, CA. Operated under the company's Smart & Final banner, the new store is located at 389 Arneil Road. It has approximately 21,000 square feet of selling space.

The new Camarillo store opened on November 16 and celebrated its grand opening with a block party Tuesday evening, November 27, 5 pm - 9 pm. This event included live entertainment and clowns for the children. Vendor product sampling included customer favorites such as Johnsonville sausages and Ben & Jerry's ice cream. Door prizes were raffled off throughout the evening. The Ventura County Fire Department was on hand with information about disaster preparedness. Five percent of sales during the Tuesday night event were donated to the fire department.

On Wednesday, November 28, the opening celebration continued with a dedication and ribbon cutting at 7:50 am. The store opened at 8 am and the first 200 shoppers received Smart & Final gift bags brimming with great merchandise and gift cards in random denominations.

Originally founded in 1871 in downtown Los Angeles, Smart & Final Stores LLC operates 283 retail stores. Under the "Smart & Final" and "Smart Foodservice" banners, the company operates 248 non-membership warehouse stores for food and foodservice supplies in California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Nevada, Idaho and northern Mexico. Under the "Henry's Farmers Markets" and "Sun Harvest Markets" banners, the company operates 35 farmers market-style stores emphasizing natural and organic products in Southern California and Texas.



■ SMART & FINAL formally opened this new store November 28 in Camarillo, CA. The 21,000 sq. ft. unit is located at 389 Arneil Road.



■ OPENING DAY ACTION was fast and furious as demonstrated by this picture of the front-end checkout area.



■ SHOPPERS are taking to the wide selection offered in the store's perishables area.



■ The store offers a large selection of frozen foods.

12 Beverage



Maxwell House Reawakens Consumers' Taste With New Formulation

Maxwell House, one of America's most beloved and iconic coffee brands is redefining the mainstream coffee category by reformulating its coffee with 100% Arabica beans, innovating its packaging and kicking off an integrated marketing campaign around "It's A New Morning. Brew Some Good."

Maxwell House is the only major canned coffee brand to offer a range of coffees made with 100% Arabica beans. Arabicas are known for their superior quality, rich aroma and distinctive taste giving consumers a delicious cup of coffee that is full of flavor without bitterness. Maxwell House made with 100% Arabica beans will launch nationwide in stores this fall supported by a multimillion dollar "Brew Some Good" marketing campaign.

"The 'It's a New Morning. Brew Some Good' campaign furthers Kraft's commitment to contemporize even our most iconic brands for a new generation of consumers. This is by far our best coffee ever," said Lorraine Hansen, Senior Vice President and General Manager of coffee at Kraft.

"For years, Maxwell House has been an important part of America's homes and communities. The 'Brew Some Good' campaign recognizes good on many levels – inside the coffee cup, in our lives and in our communities. With Brew Some Good we hope to get people tasting and talking about Maxwell House in a new way. And we just might surprise a few folks along the way."



MAXWELL HOUSE with 100% Arabica beans is available starting in Fall 2007 in stores nationwide for an MSRP of \$3.59 for an 11-13 ounce can and \$8.59 for a 33-39 oz. canister.



Sambazon Açaí Comes to Florida

Sambazon, a marketer of Amazon açaí, announces has launched of award-winning juice and smoothie lines in Publix SuperMarkets across Florida. All products feature organic açaí, a purple açaí berry that grows wild in the Amazon Rainforest and is considered to be one of the healthiest foods on the planet for its synergy of powerful antioxidants, healthy omega fats, protein and fiber.

Sambazon organic açaí juices and smoothies have a delicious exotic berry taste and are a convenient way of getting the powerful nutrition and 'inside out' beauty benefits of açaí into you and your family's daily diet.

Organic Açaí Juices and Smoothies Debut at Publix

Sambazon açaí juices include "Original Blend" (açaí lightly sweetened with agave), "Antioxidant Trinity" (açaí with blueberry and pomegranate) and "Rio Energy" (açaí boosted with guaraná and yerba mate). Smoothies feature "Strawberry Samba" (açaí and strawberry blend) and "Supergreens Revolution" (açaí with Amazing Grass™ supergreens). All products

will be available in 10.5 ounce size with a SRP @ \$2.79 in the fresh juice or organic produce area of Publix Stores. Products are also available at Whole Foods Market, Publix Greenwise and many other natural products and specialty food stores across the state.

"Sambazon juices and smoothies are some of the healthiest beverages you can find," said Jeremy Black, Global Brand Manager, Sambazon. "They bring together the most powerful purple antioxidant fruits on the planet into a product line of highly nutritious beverages you'll want to drink every day."

Simply Orange Expands Offerings

To Include Simply Apple And Simply Grapefruit

Simply Orange Juice Company has added two new products to its Simply line: Simply Apple™, a pure-pressed, 100 percent not-from-concentrate premium apple juice; and Simply Grapefruit™, a 100 percent not-from-concentrate premium grapefruit juice.

As with all the Simply products, Simply Apple and Simply Grapefruit offer consumers a "closest to fresh-squeezed taste experience." The Simply portfolio has flourished – in just over three years, its chilled juices and ades have grown more than 40 percent.

"The Simply line of premium, not-from-concentrate juices and ades has received an overwhelmingly positive response from consumers," said Ashley Schmidt, senior brand manager for Simply Orange. "When we looked at growing the Simply line to expand refreshing juice options throughout the day, Simply Apple and Simply Grapefruit were natural choices to offer consumers more variety with the same fresh-made experience we're known for."

Offering a unique, crisp apple taste, Simply Apple will be the only chilled apple juice available in supermarkets nationwide. Simply Apple is a pure-pressed apple juice with a fresh apple taste in every sip. It contains no artificial flavors or colors and is never sweetened or concentrated.

New Simply Grapefruit provides citrus lovers a refreshment alternative beyond the breakfast table. The perfect balance of sweet and tart, the fresh-squeezed taste of Simply Grapefruit is made from a blend of a variety of grapefruits and is a 100 percent not-from-concentrate juice.

Simply Apple and Simply Grapefruit are packaged in the unique 59 fl. oz. clear Simply carafe, with a suggested retail price of \$3.49 and \$3.89 respectively.



Sesame Street Juice "Goes Organic"



Apple & Eve has expanded its popular Sesame Street line of juice boxes with the launch of new Sesame Street Organics 100% Juice Boxes – providing families who prefer organic products with a perfectly sized, all-natural organic 100% fruit juice that will make following an organic lifestyle as easy as "ABC."

Sesame Street Organics 100% Fruit Juice, which are fortified with calcium and contain a full day's supply of Vitamin C, will be available in three favorite flavors: Big Bird's Apple, Elmo's Punch

and Ernie's Berry. The Organic line will showcase each of the three Sesame Street characters dressed as a farmer – highlighting the "fresh from the organic farm" spirit of the new products. In addition, Sesame Street Organics will be packaged in kid-friendly 125 ml. (4 ounce) juice boxes – the recommended beverage size for kids ages 2 to 5, and the perfect fit for young hands to hold onto whether at the playground, pre-school or birthday parties. Sesame Street Organics are USDA-certified organic, and carry the Quality Assurance International seal that verifies that they are produced according to the strictest USDA standards.

Apple & Eve's new Sesame Street Organics will be sold both in individual single-flavor four-packs priced at \$1.69, as well as in 36 count Club Store Variety Packs priced at \$10.99, which will offer a combination of all three flavors.



New York Springs Natural Spring Water™ Debuts

Offers Environmentally Friendly, Innovative "Cup-A-Water" Size

New York Spring Water, Inc. has launched New York Springs Natural Spring Water™, a water bottled at the source in the Catskill Mountains from a naturally flowing spring on Vly Mountain – the same region from which the municipal drinking water for New York City, long recognized as one of the finest and most palatable waters in the world, is drawn.

While New York City water is famed for its taste, New York Springs is promoting its water as better in flavor, as it is bottled directly at the source, avoiding contamination by the trace elements that find their way into New York City municipal water as it passes through reservoirs, the municipal water system and local plumbing.

In addition to coming in recyclable plastic bottles in 8-ounce, 16.9-ounce, 1-liter, and 1.5 liter sizes, New York Spring Water is also available in an innovative 6 gram plastic cup offering eight ounces of New York Spring Water. Called "Cup-A-Water" the packaging is one of the most environmentally favorable in the bottled water segment, using much less plastic than conventional bottles.

The suggested retail price of New York Spring Water ranges from \$14.16 for a case of 24 8 oz. bottles to \$18.96 for a case of 12 1.5 litre bottles.



SUPERMARKETS FOR SAVINGS

2008

**Bravo welcomes 2008 with the Grand Opening
of our NEW LOCATION!**
**4651 Old Pleasant Hill Road,
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**Looking to the future, we build state of the art
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- Complete Field & Operational Support
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- Knowledge to Merchandise to a Diverse Ethnic Market
- Commitment to providing Efficient & Low Cost Product Supply



**CONGRATULATIONS TO Mike Miguel & Juan Rodriguez ON THE
SUCCESSFUL OPENING OF THEIR NEW STORE IN KISSIMMEE!**

Find out how the Bravo Program can enhance your bottom line.
Call: Dennis Wallin, Vice President of Store Development
(800) 248-5727 ext 5301, or Julio Sanchez, Manager,
Bravo Florida, (305) 629-3567.





■ BRAVO SUPERMARKET opened this showplace supermarket formally on December 6. The new store — at 15,000 sq. ft. — may not be the largest for the company in Florida, but certainly represents one of its most unique and appealing. The store is located at 4651 Old Pleasant Hill Road in Poinciana near Kissimmee.



■ BRAVO Owner/Operator Tomas Rodriguez (fourth from right), assistant store manager Jose Estevez (left), store manager 'Mikey' Miguel (right), are pictured receiving grand opening congratulations from the Bravo team in Florida (left to right): Bob Sawyer, Jose Jorge, Richard Sanchez, Julio Sanchez, Dennis Wallin, and Lou Papa.



■ BRAVO Manager-Retail Services, Southeast Division, Julio Sanchez (right) pictured with store manager 'Mikey' Miguel, owner/operator Tomas Rodriguez, and assistant store manager Jose Estevez.

Bravo Opens Showplace Supermarket in Florida

New 15K Store Opens in Poinciana, Near Kissimmee

STORY AND PHOTOS BY: DENNIS KANE, EDITOR

Bravo SuperMarkets continues its growth in the Sunshine State following the opening of its latest entry in Poinciana, near Kissimmee. The store — which had had a soft opening on November 15 — celebrated its official grand opening on Thursday, December 6. The new Bravo, located at 4651 Old Pleasant Hill Road, is owned and operated by Tomas Rodriguez.

Though not large in size — it comes in at only 15,000 sq. ft. — it certainly represents one of the most unique and attractive stores Bravo has opened in Florida to date. Located on an unusually shaped parcel of land, near a wetlands, these circumstances have come together to create a very appealing experience for shoppers.

Rodriguez, who owns other stores in Poinciana and Ocala, told TODAY'S GROCER, "Our goal is to bring the excitement and vitality of the Bravo shopping experience to this area of Kissimmee. Based on the demographics, I expect the store will attract consumers from a broad economic spectrum. Our store team is committed to bringing customers personal service and quality food products. We realize that, by knowing our customers and satisfying their needs, we can compete successfully with the large established chains in the area."

"I want our customers to feel at home when they shop with us. I am confident that we can live up to our statement that Bravo is the 'supermarket for savings' and customers will be saying 'bravo to Bravo!'"

The new store, managed by 'Mikey' Miguel, and assistant store manager Jose Estevez, is staffed by 25 associates. The store features state-of-the-art technology at each of its five checkouts and Customer Service counter/express lane thanks to front-end equipment supplied, installed, and maintained by Miami-based ISE Corp. Primary supplier of the new store is Associated Grocers of Florida, Inc.

The new store marks Bravo's 24th store in Florida. Additional upcoming Florida openings are scheduled for Orlando, Pembroke Pines (2), Sanford, Jacksonville, and Naples.

The Old Pleasant Hill Road Bravo is open Monday through Saturday: 7:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., and on Sunday: 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.



■ Shoppers will get a big smile from customer service counter clerk Indra Cespedes.



■ BRAVO Retail Counselor Richard Sanchez [left] gives an opening day handshake to produce department manager Hermínio Nuñez.



■ BRAVO Retail Counselor Richard Sanchez pictured with meat department manager Marco Salas who originally hails from Nicaragua.



■ Potential Bravo operators Angela and Ramon Sanchez from Orlando were on hand to check out the new store. Here the couple is greeted by Bravo development manager Bob Sawyer [left] and Bravo manager-retail services, southeast division, Julio Sanchez [right].

Getting To Know -

TOMAS RODRIGUEZ
Owner/Operator
Old Pleasant Hill Rd. Bravo SuperMarket

TOMAS RODRIGUEZ Owner/Operator of the new Bravo SuperMarket located on Old Pleasant Hill Road in Poinciana, Florida (near Kissimmee) is a true entrepreneur. In addition to his new supermarket, Rodriguez owned La Isla Supermarket in Kissimmee for three years, and currently owns Mi Pueblo Supermarket in Poinciana, Pepe's Tienda Mexicana in Ocala, and the Millennium Billiard Parlor in Kissimmee. Originally from the Dominican Republic, he arrived in the U.S. with his family as a young child where his family settled in New York City. Rodriguez fueled his lifelong love affair with flying as a young man by studying aviation mechanics, but would later spend ten years operating grocery stores in Brooklyn. He and his wife, Maria, and children moved to Florida in 1999 at which time he purchased and operated his first store, La Isla. Today, Maria and Tomas reside in Kissimmee along with their four children: Tiffany 13, Marleny 11, Natalie 6, and Michelle 3. When he does find time for recreation, Tomas still enjoys flying, playing pool, and bowling.



■ TOMAS RODRIGUEZ



■ BRAVO Director of Meat Operations Lou Papa [right] with the team from Quirch Foods: Ricardo Casanova, Gerald Aponte, Ramon Aldape, and meat merchandiser Luis Pugo [second, right].



■ DELI TEAM - Zoralis, Sam, Marilyn, Thais, Augustin, and Crispulo.



■ BRAVO operator/operator Tomas Rodriguez pictured behind one of his state-of-the-art checkout counters with ISE Corp. project coordinator David Hernandez.



■ The store features all new refrigeration equipment throughout provided by Arneg® U.S.A. and Arneg U.S.A. southeast region sales manager, Ken Thomas.



■ The compact yet appealing Wine Department offers the finest in domestic and imported vinos.

Frozen Foods



Palermo's Adds All-Natural Ingredients to its Recipe for Success

Palermo's Primo Thin Pizza Debuts

Fifty-nine percent of American adults who eat frozen pizza reported that they don't care if it's healthy as long as it tastes good, according to a recent survey by Mintel. But what if indulging in pizza didn't have to mean sacrificing your waistline? Palermo's Primo Thin™ pizzas are now made with an all-natural crust, giving consumers a health-conscious frozen pizza option without giving up taste.

In addition to the healthier crust presented in the entire product line of the Primo Thin™ pizza varieties, the Primo Thin pizzas will offer four completely all-natural selections — crust, toppings and all. These pizza varieties include: *Roasted Vegetable & Goat Cheese*, *Margherita*, *White Cheddar Cheese & Tomato* and *Old World 6 Cheese*.

"Palermo's knows that when people eat pizza, they want it to taste great. Our company found

a way to meet this need without packing it with fat and calories," said Giacomo Fallucca, President and CEO of Palermo's Pizza. "We've built our legacy on an old world Sicilian flavor and in the Primo Thin pizzas, it was really important for us to offer the all-natural selections while providing gourmet toppings that ap-



peal to the most discerning of palates," Fallucca added.

Palermo's Pizza is one of the first non-specialty health food consumer brands to create an all-natural pizza. Taste is the overriding benefit of Palermo's

new all-natural pizzas, but calorie counters can put guilt aside. Palermo's Primo Thin™ all-natural pizzas have 260-350 calories, 12-20 grams of fat and 26 grams of carbohydrates per serving. Each serving is 1/3 of the entire pizza. With great taste and minimal calories, Palermo's Primo Thin™ all-natural pizzas are a great choice for health conscious consumers.

Palermo's Pizza is the premier frozen pizza manufacturer offering pizzeria-quality pizza including the company's Rustico™ pizza, inspired by pizzas served in the original Palermo Villa Inc. pizzeria, founded in 1969. Rustico™ features a light and airy, self-rising, thick crust and bold flavors such as Buffalo Chicken and White Cheddar & Tomato that will give pizza lovers a robust selection of toppings for a hearty, flavorful meal.

Palermo Villa Inc. has been making quality, Italian style pizzas for over 40 years. What began as a small ethnic bakery featuring authentic Italian pizza has become a leading name in the frozen pizza industry.



French Meadow Bakery™ Rolls Out With First Premade, Frozen Organic Dinner Rolls

French Meadow Bakery™ has made dinner a little easier!

The take-and-bake rolls are: 16 oz. **Healthy Hemp™ Rolls**, 10 oz. **Organic Ciabatta Rolls** and 16 oz. **Sprouted Organic Peasant Rolls with Ezekiel Grains**. Located in the frozen natural bread section of your grocery store, each bag contains eight rolls for a suggested price of \$3.49. The Healthy Hemp Rolls SRP is \$4.49.

The Healthy Hemp Rolls are made with organic sprouted grains and they are loaded with hempseed, flaxseed and organic pumpkin seeds. They are high in whole grain fiber and protein as well as offer a rich source of omega 3 and 6. The Organic Ciabatta Rolls are an Italian classic — crunchy on the outside and moist on the inside. For the calorie counters, these rolls have only 80 calories per serving. The Sprouted Organic Peasant Rolls with Ezekiel Grains offer a delicious whole grain nutty taste. By combining organic whole wheat berries, barley, millet, lentils and spelt and soaking them, you have a complete protein roll that is nutritious and convenient to bake. The rolls contain no sweeteners, oils, artificial ingredients or preservatives.

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Spotlight On: Charlie Coiner

Rock Garden Makes Fresh Herbs Always in Season

As the culinary use of fresh herbs continues growing in the U.S. and abroad, Miami-based Rock Garden is expanding its operations and offerings for retailers in order to consistently provide the very finest quality and freshest herbs and baby greens year-round. The company's 47,000 sq. ft. facility at its headquarters in Miami is integrating more than \$2 million in new equipment in 2007 and early 2008, including a vacuum cooler, five refrigerated trucks, computers and packaging equipment, and laser scroll labelers. All of the new

systems will build on the facility's reputation for optimal sanitation and safety in its food processing.

Founded in 1977 by Charlie Coiner, a seventh-generation Virginia farmer who earned a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from the College of William and Mary, Rock Garden has grown through the years together with the increasing consumption of fresh herbs and baby greens. The worldwide industry for herbs and spices is now estimated to have surpassed \$10 billion, and the growth is being driven by the increasing acceptance of ethnic and international foods by American

and European palates. The upsurge in ethnic cuisine and popularity of star chefs on cooking shows has helped to make the use of fresh herbs grow dramatically, and they have become staples in the produce sections of most supermarkets in the country.

Rock Garden has become one of the largest farming, distribution and wholesale companies dealing almost exclusively in fresh herbs and baby greens in the country. It started from humble beginnings when Coiner began growing fresh herbs for restaurants in the Washington DC area from his grandmother's farm in the Shenandoah Valley in the mid-1970s. He also partnered in a venture in holistic healthcare and organic farming with Dr. Hunter "Patch" Adams, the legendary doctor of alternative medicine who was portrayed by Robin Williams in the popular movie. After Coiner was diagnosed with a rare cancer, Dr. Adams had determined that it was actually a tropical parasite that had penetrated his liver. Coiner had been infected while he served for a year as a member of the CARE organization in Guatemala in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake that killed 33,000 people. Treatment from Dr. Adams that included the use of medicinal herbs helped to kill the parasite and save Coiner's life.

Today, Rock Garden's fresh herbs and baby/specialty greens come from farms located throughout the Americas and in Israel, which helps to ensure their year-round availability with consistent quality and price.

To accommodate the growing demand, Rock Garden has expanded significantly and will continue to do so in 2008. In addition to the new systems for its Miami headquarters, the company is relocating its Washington DC processing and warehouse operations to a 30,000 square-foot location in the Maryland wholesale food market area. It is also funding re-

Getting to Know - CHARLIE COINER

CHARLIE COINER owns and operates Miami, FL-based Rock Garden, one of the largest farming, distribution and wholesale companies dealing almost exclusively in fresh herbs in the country. He began his business in fresh herbs from his grandmother's farm in the Shenandoah Valley in 1977, which was just after he had partnered in a venture in organic farming with Dr. Hunter "Patch" Adams, the legendary doctor of alternative medicine who was portrayed by Robin Williams in the popular movie. After Coiner was diagnosed with a rare cancer, Dr. Adams had determined that it was actually a tropical parasite that had penetrated his liver. Coiner had been infected while he served for a year as a member of the CARE organization in Guatemala in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake that killed 33,000 people. Treatment from Dr. Adams that included the use of medicinal herbs grown using organic farming killed the parasite and saved his life.

Today, Rock Garden's fresh herbs and specialty greens come from organic farms located in various parts of the United States, Latin America and Israel, which helps to ensure year-round availability with consistent quality and price. The worldwide industry for herbs and spices is now estimated to have surpassed \$10 billion, with the growth being driven by the globalization of American and European palates. The upsurge in ethnic cuisine and popularity of star chefs on cooking shows has helped to make the use of fresh herbs grow dramatically, and fine restaurants will now often use several pounds per night when just 15 years ago they may have used the same amount per week. To accommodate the growing demand, Coiner has expanded his operations dramatically in the last several years.



ROCK GARDEN's Charlie Coiner discusses herb sales and merchandising with Sedano's Supermarket Supervisor Tino Valle.



ROCK GARDEN HERBS are available in attractive 'clamshell' plastic packages as well as loose/bulk. Approximately 35 varieties are available.

search efforts to develop a strain of sweet basil that is cold resistant, which will reduce chill damage from exposure to extreme cold and create a longer shelf life for the herb for retailers.

With Coiner's background in biochemistry and his role as a contributor for the IR-4 Project, the federal program that researches and recommends regulatory clearances for pest control products for specialty crop growers, Rock Garden's focus on food safety from cultivation and transportation to processing and packaging will remain at the forefront. Popular eateries such as Outback, Carrabba's, Olive Garden and Red Lobster have visited the company's farms and facilities before making Rock Garden one of their main sources for fresh herbs, spices and specialty greens, and the company will continue to set a high standard as it expands its operations both in Florida and Washington DC.

In recognition of the company's commitment to safety, Coiner was nominated in 2007 to serve on the National Organic Standards Board.

For grocers and food retailers, Rock Garden offers a variety of effective and eye-catching displays and packaging options for both conventional and certified organic fresh herb products. It also creates private-label packaging for store-brand herbs, and the company's products can be found at Safeway, Giant, A&P, Publix, Sedano's, Epicure, and other major food retailers.

As home gourmets continue to demand the very finest and freshest herbs at all times of the year, Rock Garden plans to keep growing and building on its facilities and farms throughout the Americas. Its offerings for food retailers will be among its primary growth areas, as the use of herbs in home-cooked meals in the United States continues to expand.

ROCK GARDEN sources its herbs from seven countries, including the U.S.



Earth Fare Opens



■ EARTH FARE MARKET & CAFÉ arrived in Augusta, Georgia in a big way, November 14, with the opening of this new 35,000 sq.ft. store. Prior to the opening a party was held which raised over \$13,000 with proceeds going to benefit the Greater Augusta Arts Council.



■ A long line of people wait to get in the pre-opening party to the new Augusta Earth Fare. Admission was a recommended donation of \$10 per person, and thanks to the generous donations of partygoers at Earth Fare, the arts council was able to raise \$13,000.

Natural, Organic, Local...It's What Augusta Was Waiting For

Benefit Party Raises \$13,000 for Greater Augusta Arts Council

Augusta, GA got its first full service all natural and organic food store just in time for the holiday season! Earth Fare Market and Café opened its Martinez location on Fury's Ferry Road November 14. A benefit party the day prior to opening gave customers a sneak peak at the 35,000 sq. ft. store and all its offerings.

The Market and Café boasts the largest selection of natural, organic and gourmet foods including: farm fresh fruits and vegetables, a wine shop with eclectic small vineyard selections, a gourmet cheese shop with over 250 varieties of European and American Artisan cheeses, a full service meat and seafood department, on-site bakery and deli with ready-to-go meal options, a fully stocked grocery department, and a health and body care department featuring the highest quality supplements and personal care items.

"We are grateful for the warm welcome from the community and can't wait to offer the Augusta area the best in natural and organic food," says Heather Parker, community coordinator for the new location.

On Tuesday, November 13, from 6-8 p.m., Earth Fare hosted a benefit party for the Greater Augusta Arts Council. The evening began at 6 p.m. with a ribbon cutting by the Augusta City and Columbia County Chamber of Commerce. Guests enjoyed a variety of dishes such as petite crab cakes with roasted garlic aioli, pulled-pork sandwiches, cocoa espresso tri-tip steak, local marinated heirloom tomato salad, brie layered with local chutney, and a variety of wine and beer.

Live music provided by Patrick Blanchard and the Riverside Band created a festive backdrop that had guests dancing in the aisles. Vendors and Earth Fare team members were present to talk to guests about their products and address the advantages and benefits of organic and natural shopping.

All proceeds from the event will go directly to the Greater Augusta Arts Council whose mission is to advance the arts and thus enrich the quality of life in Augusta and the Central Savannah River area.

The Grand Opening of the Martinez store was held Wednesday, November 14. All month long customers will have a chance to sample many of the wonderful items offered at Earth Fare.

Customers were welcomed by eager Earth Fare team members and received a free Earth Fare Recyclable tote for their groceries as a way to reduce the use of plastic and paper bags. Food and beverage samplings were available down almost every aisle and customers packed the store all day. "The crowd we had on opening day is a clear sign that the community of Augusta was literally starving for high quality, organic and natural food," said Tony DeGroff, Director of Sales and Marketing for Earth Fare. "We are thrilled by the response and hope to serve the CRSA well."

On Saturday, November 17, the Greater Augusta Arts Council held an "Art Tasting" at Earth Fare. Shoppers enjoyed the works of local artists, visit the young artist's market, taste delicious samples provided by Earth Fare, and more.



■ EARTH FARE PRESIDENT/CEO Mike Cianciarulo [second, right] was joined by August store manager Mark Osborne [holding bow] and Brenda Durant, Executive Director, Greater Augusta Arts Council and dignitaries from Columbia County and the Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.



■ ALL SMILES – Enjoying themselves at the pre-opening party are: Emily Billinger, Will Oglesby and Robin Juelfs.



■ PRE-OPENING PARTYGOERS – Augusta residents get a sneak preview of their new Earth Fare Market & Café at a pre-opening party where they were greeted by an array of enticing smells, sights and sounds. The event was a huge success and was called the "social event of the year" by the Columbia County News-Times.

Beichler Named V.P. of Real Estate at Food Lion

Food Lion LLC has named Shawn Beichler Vice President of Real Estate reporting to Glenn Dixon, Senior Vice President of Corporate Development.

In this new role, Beichler, will lead the organization in achieving aggressive growth targets for new stores, in addition to overseeing all Real Estate Department operations, which includes managing the location and development of Food Lion, Bloom, Bottom Dollar Food, Reid's and Harveys stores, lease administration and the disposition of excess property.

Beichler joined Food Lion LLC in 2005 after more than 13 years of construction, real estate and development work for McDonald's USA. Prior to that, he worked for several privately-owned architect firms, designing plans for hotels, office buildings and large corporate clients.

In his previous role as Food Lion's Director of Real Estate, he served on the New Store Performance Team where he was instrumental in developing market-by-market new growth strategy, as well as the implementation of increased store growth for all banners within the company.

A native of Ohio, Beichler holds a Bachelor of Science degree in architecture from Kent State University. He is an active volunteer in Food Lion's support of the Children's Miracle network. He, his wife Julie and their three children reside in Mooresville, N.C.



■ SHAWN BEICHLER

2008 Supermarket Store Management Compensation & Benefit Survey Released

The National Grocers Association (N.G.A.) and People Solution Strategies have released the new 2008 Supermarket Store Management Comprehensive Compensation and Benefits Survey.

In today's competitive environment, execution is essential. This survey will help your organization develop strategies for determining salary increases, creating structured performance appraisals, developing annual incentive plans, offering cost-effective health plans and retirement benefits. The survey is an analysis of information concerning compensation and benefits collected from the N.G.A. mem-

bership in the year 2007. N.G.A. is confident that this survey will assist all users in the effective management of compensation and benefit administration programs.

Survey results reveal:

MEDICAL PLANS

- ▶ 75% of the respondents offer a PPO (Preferred Provider Organization) as the primary medical plan. A PPO is defined as a plan with in-and-out of network coverage without primary care physician (PCP) "gatekeeping" referral required.
- ▶ 20% of the respondents offer an HMO (Health Maintenance

Organization). The HMO has only in-network coverage.

- ▶ 9% of the respondents offer a POS (Point of Service) plan. POS plans are defined as having in-and out-of-network coverage where the in-network coverage requires PCP "gatekeeping" referral.
- ▶ 55% of the respondents offer Dental benefits.
- ▶ 84% of the respondents require employee cost sharing for health plan participation.
- ▶ 55% of the respondents require 90 days as the minimum amount of service for health plan benefits eligibility.

RETIREMENT PLANS

- ▶ 75% of the respondents offer a 401K pre-tax plan.
- ▶ 9% of the respondents offer no retirement plan at all.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

- ▶ 34% of respondents do not regularly calculate employee turnover.
- ▶ 17% only occasionally calculate employee turnover.
- ▶ 55% of the respondents use a subjective system for selecting candidates for store management positions.
- ▶ 73% of the respondents do not have an identified career path for employees who might want to consider a career with their organization.
- ▶ 74% of the respondents do not have a formal customer service training program (only on the job).
- ▶ 55% of the respondents do not have a formal employee recognition program.

HUMAN RESOURCE INITIATIVES

Top 3 areas that Human Resource Departments will be placing the most emphasis on over the next year:

- ▶ 64% employee training and development.
- ▶ 47% employee recruitment, selection, and placement.
- ▶ 40% employee retention.

Frank DiPasquale, Senior Vice President of N.G.A., said, "N.G.A. recognizes that in today's competitive environment, performance excellence in execution is the key to success and a significant point of market-place differentiation. Companies that excel in their execution understand the importance of their employees and an effective human resource management program."

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South Korea	10,600,000

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Source: CIA World Factbook

www.todaysgrocer.com



Food Lion Announces Winners of Kitchen Makeover Giveaway

Two Food Lion customers recently won a \$25,000 Kitchen Makeover Giveaway and groceries for a year as part of the Myrtle Beach Food Lion market renewal efforts. The winners are: Judith Cirolia of Calabash, NC, and Ann Kinlaw of Elizabethtown, NC.

During a celebration at the remodeled Food Lion store located at 7601 N. Kings Highway in Myrtle Beach, Cirolia and Kinlaw each received a check for \$25,000 and Food Lion gift cards to purchase \$100 in groceries a week for 52 weeks.

Each of the winners entered themselves in the giveaway by shopping at Food Lion during its "Fresh New Day," campaign, which ran from May 23 to July 3. The more times they shopped at Food Lion and used their MVP customer cards, the more times they were entered to win.

Food Lion launched its "Fresh

New Day" campaign after remodeling 24 of its stores in the Myrtle Beach area. Completed in June, the remodels paid special attention to the fresh departments — produce, meats and deli/bakery. Many of the stores added a new section called "Nature's Place," devoted entirely to natural and organic products, and a wider selection of wines. Providing a better presentation of the products, showcasing Food Lion's freshness and increased variety, was a primary goal of the remodeling work.

"This is an effort to better serve our customers," said Geoff Waldau, Food Lion divisional vice president of retail operations. "The Myrtle Beach area has been an important market for Food Lion, and these changes will offer an enhanced shopping experience in addition to our great prices and neighborly service for our Myrtle Beach shoppers."



CONTEST WINNERS Ann Kinlaw (third from left) of Elizabethtown, NC, and Judith Cirolia of Calabash, NC, pose with Food Lion associates at the check presentation. Kinlaw and Cirolia were winners of a \$25,000 Kitchen Makeover Giveaway and groceries for a year as part of the Myrtle Beach Food Lion market renewal efforts.

Winn-Dixie Foundation Donates \$1,050,000 to 39 Charities

"Better Holidays... Better Communities" Program Assists Non-Profit Groups Throughout the Southeast

The recent holidays were brighter for thousands of families this year, thanks to donations by the Winn-Dixie Foundation. Winn-Dixie executives presented donations totaling \$1,050,000 last month to 39 non-profit community organizations throughout the Southeast in the past week.

The \$25,000 donations were made at events during a five-stop "Better Holidays... Better Communities" tour of the Jacksonville-based grocer's operating area. In addition to the cash donations, Winn-Dixie Stores donated \$75,000 worth of food filling several truckloads to regional food banks in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Jacksonville.

"For more than 80 years, Winn-Dixie has been known as the company with a heart," said Lynch. "We are continuing tradition by donating funds from our Foundation to worthy organizations that share our goal of improving the lives of families in the neighborhoods we serve."

The Western Union Foundation matched four of the Winn-Dixie Foundation's contributions to area food banks. The



An overwhelmed recipient shows her excitement and gratitude to Winn-Dixie President/CEO Peter Lynch.

company presented matching \$25,000 checks to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana, the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank, Second Harvest of Tampa Bay and the Citrus Community Food Bank.

Speaking on the matching gifts from the Western Union Foundation, Luella Chavez D'Angelo, president of the Foundation stated, "The Western Union Foundation promotes understanding, hope and opportunity for people who journey toward a better life. We are pleased to partner with our Western Union Agent, Winn-Dixie, and America's Second Harvest to help those in need."

The Winn-Dixie Foundation presented checks to the following organizations:

JACKSONVILLE

Daniel Memorial, Inc.
Fresh Ministries
Girl Scouts of Gateway Council
Habitat for Humanity
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Real Sense Prosperity Campaign
United Negro College Fund
Toys for Tots
Dreams Come True
Ponte Vedra Beach Park



ORLANDO Boy Scouts of America, Central Florida Council - \$25,000.



TAMPA Citrus Community Food Bank - \$25,000.



JACKSONVILLE Habitat for Humanity - \$25,000.

MIAMI

Abriendo Puertas, Inc.
BLSC Foundation
Daily Bread Food Bank
Deliver the Dream
Junior Achievement
La Liga Contra el Cancer
Take Stock in Children
United Negro College Fund

TAMPA

Citrus Community Food Bank
Second Harvest Food Bank of Tampa Bay
American Cancer Society Relay for Life
ENLACE
Hillsborough Education Foundation



NEW ORLEANS Children's Hospital - \$25,000.



MIAMI Abriendo Puertas, Inc. - \$25,000.

NEW ORLEANS/GULF COAST

United Negro College Fund
Second Harvest of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana
Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank
Children's Hospital of New Orleans
St. Tammany Hospital Foundation
Covington, La.
Memorial Hospital Foundation - Gulfport, Miss.
University of South Alabama Mitchell Cancer Institute - Mobile, AL

ORLANDO

Boy Scouts of America
Communities in Schools of Florida
Harvest House Community Development Corp
Latino Leadership
Seminole North Little League
Sumter County Parks & Recreation
United Negro College Fund
Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida

The nonprofit Winn-Dixie Foundation was created in 1944 and makes grants to local nonprofit organizations focused on hunger, women and children, youth, education, and health initiatives. It is funded by The Winn-Dixie Charity Classic presented by Wachovia which was held this year on October 30, and generated \$1.425 million.

22 Dairy & Deli



Hillshire Farm Adds Premium Hearty Slices to Deli Select Sandwich Line

Sara Lee North American Retail announced that Hillshire Farm® Deli Select® product line is introducing the new Premium Hearty Slices brand of sandwich meat. Four flavors are launching - Signature Honey Ham, Virginia Brand Baked Ham, Honey Roasted Turkey, and Oven Roasted Turkey - offering consumers the same premium quality lunchmeat from Hillshire Farm, but in a thicker slice for a heartier sandwich.

Two-thirds of pre-packaged lunchmeat consumers prefer heartier, thicker slices (Source: 2003 AA&U), and with new Deli Select Premium Hearty Slices brand, consumers can now choose the slice thickness they prefer when making a sandwich. Hillshire Farm Premium Hearty Slices start with premium quality meats so consumers may enjoy a hearty, deli-quality sandwich anytime. Additionally, the thicker slices are folded and layered which allows sandwich eaters to take as many slices as wanted when making their favorite sandwich.

"Hillshire Farm is dedicated to providing our consumers with new, fresh and delicious food options," said Tim Roush, vice president for Hillshire Farm. "With the launch of Deli Select Premium Hearty Slices product line, it's all about providing meat lovers with options, and Hearty Slices meets our consumers' needs for the flavorful, heartier slice of lunchmeat they crave with the quality they have come to know from Hillshire Farm."

Deli Select Premium Hearty Slices sandwich meat, which are double-sealed in a re-sealable GladWare® container for freshness, will be sold in the refrigerated meat section at a retail price of about \$3.99.



A Healthy Marriage

New Smart Balance® Omega Buttery Spreads Take to the Aisle

Smart Balance, Inc. has great news for everyone who wants to incorporate the heart healthy benefits of Omega-3s into their diet. Smart Balance® Buttery Spreads now have the benefits of two types of Omega-3 fatty acids -EPA/DHA and ALA. The four new Smart Balance® Omega Buttery Spreads, which are naturally free of trans fats and hydrogenated oils, are now available nationwide: Smart Balance Omega Buttery Spread, Smart Balance Omega Buttery Spread Light, Smart Balance Omega Buttery Spread with Extra Virgin Olive Oil, and Smart Balance Omega Buttery Spread Light with Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

The patented Smart Balance oil blend, developed by nutrition scientists at Brandeis University, has been shown to help improve the ratio of "good" to "bad" cholesterol.

Most American diets are high in Omega-6, but deficient in nutritionally essential Omega-3s. Evidence continues to build that Omega-3s promote a healthy cardiovascular system and reduce the risk of heart disease.

"A lot of science goes into these products," said Steve Hughes, president and CEO of Smart Balance, Inc. "But science doesn't necessarily make things taste good. We're equally committed to the flavor half of the equation." That commitment is paying off for consumers. Smart Balance® Buttery Spreads have won "Best Taste" awards from the American Culinary Institute for three years in a row.

IDDBA Program Reimburses Retailers For Food Safety Certification

To promote food safety certification for retail dairy, deli, and bakery department employees, the International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association (IDDBA) offers a Food Safety Certification Reimbursement Program (FSCR). This program reimburses IDDBA member retailers a portion of their costs for training materials, workshops, and food safety certification exams for dairy, deli, and bakery employees who successfully complete the certification exam. Since its inception in 2003, the FSCR has reimbursed retailers over \$133,000 to certify nearly 3,300 department managers and associates.

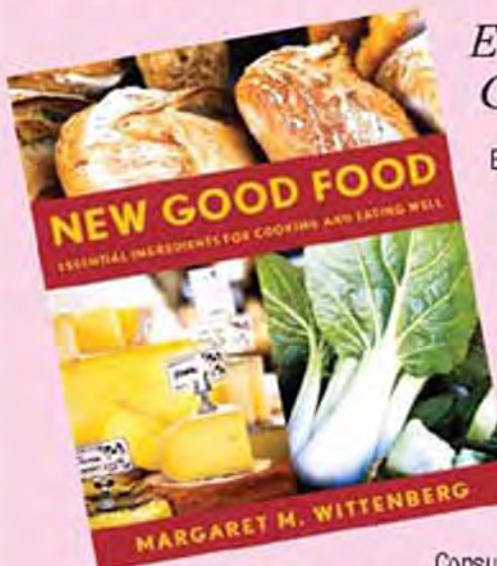
"With this program, IDDBA is encouraging retail members to train and certify their dairy, deli, and bakery department managers and associates in food safety," said Mary Kay O'Connor, Director of Education, IDDBA. "Currently, many states have mandatory requirements that a certified food handler be on the premises during the hours that a store is open for business. Counties and municipalities also have their own regulations, sometimes even more stringent than the state requirements. Store managers are often times the professionals certified."

O'Connor added, "We think, as do many retailers, that it's important for perishable department managers and associates to be skilled in handling food safely and uphold the highest standards in personal hygiene. This IDDBA program supports retailers' efforts to achieve these goals."

For more information or an application for reimbursement, go to www.iddba.org/certprogram.htm, or call Karen at IDDBA, 608-310-5000.

Book Reviews & Video

NEW GOOD FOOD



Essential Ingredients for Cooking and Eating Well

BY: MARGARET M. WITTENBERG

Quinoa, broccoli raab, udon, flaxseed oil, ancho chiles, tilapia, miso—not long ago, these ingredients were alien to most Americans. But today, shoppers are more educated than ever before about the foods they buy and eat, and eager for more information. People are discussing whole grains, sustainable seafood, and the dangers of high-fructose corn syrup, trans fats, genetic engineering, and E. coli. Even Wal-Mart is offering new arrays of organic and healthy choices.

Consumers are ready for a practical and well-researched guide to the enormous variety of natural foods now available. New Good Food is that book. Not only is it the definitive guide to buying, storing, and preparing everything from agar to zucchini, but industry veteran Margaret M. Wittenberg also clarifies confusing food labels, misleading marketing claims, and common misperceptions behind everyday foods, with answers to questions like "Grass-fed beef versus grain-fed... what's the difference?" and "What are the options for gluten-free cooking and baking?" New Good Food contains seasonal produce charts, profiles of new sweeteners and gourmet salts, information on the healthiest oils, and advice on how to choose fish with the lowest mercury levels.

A former member of the USDA National Organic Standards Board and a vice president at Whole Foods Market, Wittenberg wrote their original employee training manual to explain all the foods sold in the store. Distilling her thirty years of insider expertise on health-conscious issues and the overwhelming array of products available to the modern consumer, New Good Food is the perfect reference for anyone interested in shopping smart and eating well.

MARGARET M. WITTENBERG is an acclaimed authority on natural and organic foods and environmental sustainability. She is VP of Communications and Quality Standards for Whole Foods Market, Inc., the nation's largest chain of natural food supermarkets, where she has worked since 1981. Wittenberg is a former member of the USDA National Organic Standards Board and currently serves on the Marine Stewardship Council's Board of Trustees and chairs the Animal Compassion Foundation. An avid cook, Wittenberg lives in Fredericksburg, TX. She is available for interviews.

New Good Food by Margaret M. Wittenberg • \$19.95 paperback
• ISBN-13: 978-1-58008-750-6 • 8" x 10" • 336 pages • two color

"Bob the Builder On-Site Roads & Bridges"

Hold on to Your Hard Hats When Bob the Builder™ Visits Real-Life Construction Site Roads & Bridges

Take a front-seat tour of giant trucks and huge machines building roads and bridges when Bob the Builder and the Can-Do Crew visit real-life construction sites for the first time ever. "Bob the Builder On-Site Roads & Bridges" hauls onto DVD February 5, 2008 from Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment and HIT Entertainment for a suggested retail price of \$19.98.

Bob and his team take young viewers on an exciting behind-the-scenes look at how the impressive machines do their big jobs. Bob fans will meet a real-life Scoop, Muck, Dizzy, Roley and more, and see how these machines help construct actual roads and bridges. Eye-catching foil and embossed packaging with a book-flap cover captures the excitement and fascination children have with big rigs and their awesome power.

For the first time ever, join Bob the Builder and his Can-Do Crew as they explore real life construction sites. See giant diggers, mixers and trucks work together to build super roads and massive bridges. From digging the first hole to building a foundation and then laying the final asphalt cover, Bob the Builder teaches budding engineers how the process is done. Learn about the three types of bridges: support, arch and suspension. Then follow the steps and build your very own road or bridge, just like the pros! Sing-along with the catchy "How Do You Do It" song and see how new friends Flex, Bristle, Packer, Dodger and Tumbler help to demonstrate how roads and bridges are built.

Bob the Builder On-Site Roads & Bridges Fast Facts:

- Street Date: February 5, 2008
- DVD SRP: \$19.98 (U.S.), \$18.98 (Canada)
- DVD Running Time: 60 minutes



NEW FORMAT FOOD CHAIN

Freshco Expansion Continues

30K Superstore Opens in Kissimmee

Freshco International Supermarket is continuing its rapid growth and expansion in the Sunshine State. "First in Freshness, Quality, Selection and Savings" is the motto for the new food chain which entered the Central Florida market recently. The flagship store location debuted August 30 in Orange City, about 30 minutes north of Orlando. Now, the company has already opened its third store location. Freshco #3 opened December 6 at 2600 Boggy Creek Road in Kissimmee.

The new 30,000 sq. ft. Freshco store opened on the site of a former Winn-Dixie location which has been acquired by Freshco owner/operator Cesar Ramirez. The store went through extensive renovation and re-merchandising prior to its opening under the Freshco banner.

Ramirez told TODAY'S GROCER that his new store will serve Florida's diverse international customer base emphasizing a full selection of international products, full service meats, fresh produce, complete deli and bakery selections (highlighting international pastries, meats, and including hot breakfast and lunch specials), full-service fresh seafood, extra large selection of international frozen foods, and Aisle of Value featuring great buys on grocery items and a full service customer service counter. The new store features state-of-the-art technology installed and maintained by Miami-based ISE Corp. Michael Verdes heads a staff of approximately 50 associates at the new Boggy Creek Road location.

The Freshco management team understands today's economy and how important it is to maintain the right price, maintain freshness and quality of goods and running clean, bright stores. "Knowing the needs of our international customers is what will help us serve them better. Freshco will listen to our customers and continually change to meet their needs," says Cesar Ramirez.

Ramirez told TODAY'S GROCER, "We are thankful to our central and southern Florida customers for embracing us in their homes. With this new Freshco International Supermarket, we have found a way to continue to give back to our customers the service, quality, freshness and low prices that they deserve."

In support of its grand opening celebration, the new store ran advertising in local newspapers and radio stations and opening day afternoon featured a bounce house for the kids and a mariachi band.

The next Freshco opening will come later this month in Port St. Lucie to be followed by additional openings in February in the central Orlando area.



FRESHCO continues its rapid growth in the central Florida area with the December 6 grand opening of this 30,000 sq. ft. unit located at 2600 Boggy Creek Road in Kissimmee.



FRESHCO owner/operator Cesar Ramirez [right] receives opening day congratulations from his SUPERVALU supplier team Tom Habblett, Jim Dunn and Anne Huntsinger.



FRESHCO Store Manager Michael Verdes [center] pictured with ISE Corp. Sales & Marketing Account Mgr. David Hernandez and Project Manager Jorge Mulet.



THE GOYA TEAM — Angel Iglesias, Juan Alfaro, Peter Negron, Enrique Fernandez, and Francisco Vasquez.



Marino Abreu [center] and Cesar Ramirez with the group from Sun International: Benny Carmona, Dennis Ledesma and Ira Bernhard [right].



FRESHCO President Cesar Ramirez receives an opening day congratulatory handshake from ISE Sales & Marketing Account Mgr. David Hernandez.



Santiago Marte, District Sales Supervisor, Sunny Florida Dairy pictured with Freshco Pricing Coordinator, Sandra Schiradi.

24 Bakery



Sara Lee Adds a Little Honey to Soft & Smooth Bread Line

Offers Unique Combination of Soft White Bread Texture, Whole Grain Nutrition and Honey Flavor

Sara Lee is expanding its successful Soft & Smooth bread line to include new Sara Lee Soft & Smooth Honey made with Whole Grain White Bread. Debuting late last month, its sweet taste of real honey combined with whole grain nutrition satisfies taste buds while giving consumers a good source of whole grain (10 grams per two slice serving). This new bread offers: taste, texture and appearance of white bread, good source of whole grain (10g per two slice serving), real honey flavor, excellent source of calcium, good source of vitamin D, no artificial colors or artificial flavors, and 0gms trans fats.

"Sara Lee Soft & Smooth Honey made with Whole Grain White Bread gives consumers the best of both worlds — a soft and smooth texture that pleases tried-and-true white bread lovers and the goodness of whole grain," said Tim Zimmer, vice president, Sara Lee U.S. Bakery. "In fact, this new bread's unique honey flavor ranked very high in taste tests with teenagers, who can be the pickiest of bread eaters."



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New Kingsport Food City Opens

**55K Showplace is
Largest Store Ever
Built by the Company**



■ The new Eastman Road Food City, which opened November 14, replaces an earlier store which was demolished to make room for the new project.



■ Area veterans watch as the Stars and Stripes unfurled during the flag ceremony on opening day [FOOD CITY PHOTO].



■ A Dixieland band gets the new store off to a rousing beat [FOOD CITY PHOTO].



■ THE WAIT IS OVER - At 55,000 sq. ft. the new state-of-the-art Food City in Kingsport, TN represents the largest store ever constructed by K-Va-T.

The wait is over! Following much preparation, work, and anticipation, the long awaited opening of the new Eastman Road Food City came on November 14. At 55,000 sq. ft., the state-of-the-art facility in Kingsport, TN represents the largest store ever constructed by the company. The new showplace super store was built on the same site as the original location which was demolished early last summer.

"Food City has enjoyed a long and prosperous relationship with the residents of Kingsport and we're extremely excited about the opening of a larger, more modern supermarket in the area," Steven C. Smith, Food City president and chief executive officer told TODAY'S GROCER.

"This is a great day for me!" said Ed Moore, long time Eastman Road store manager. "I've enjoyed visiting with my customers at the area Food City locations during our closing, but I'm thrilled to be back home and I know my customers are anxious for this opening as I am. They're going to love this magnificent new store and I think everyone will agree, it was worth the wait."

Assisting Moore in the management of the new

store are members of his key management team, including: ASSISTANT MGRS. - Ray Hayes, Mike Simpson, Danny Gordon, DESIGNATED ASSISTANT MGRS. - Charles Ford, Josh Woody and Derek Smith, STOCK MGR. - Justin Hopkins, MEAT MGR. - John Hammonds, PRODUCE MGR. - Joel Bowman, SEAFOOD COORD. - Nicole Carroll, FLORAL MGR. - Traci Trent, VIDEO MGR. - Martha Murray, SALAD BAR COORD. - Kay Williams, BAKERY MGR. - Stephanie Foster, CATERING COORD. - Sue Mallick, HEAD CASHIER - Sherry Owens, OFFICE MGR. - Jamie New, and PHARMACY MGR. - Bill Potter, D.Ph.

The new store includes full service Seafood and Meat Departments, staffed with in-house meat cutters to hand cut steaks and fresh meat to order. A wide variety of pre-marinated and seasoned oven ready products, in addition to a complete selection of top quality meats that are all-natural with no solutions added and Certified Angus Beef will be available. The new store will continue to offer a Floral Boutique, stocked with a complete assortment of fresh-cut floral and gift items; Video department, featuring the latest releases and classic favorite and expanded Grocery, Frozen Food, Pro-



■ FOOD CITY President and CEO Steve Smith and Store Manager Ed Moore are joined by company management and store personnel and civic dignitaries cutting the ribbon formally opening their beautiful new 55,000 sq. ft. shopping experience on Eastman Road [FOOD CITY PHOTO].



■ The wide, expansive selling floor as pictured from the balcony.



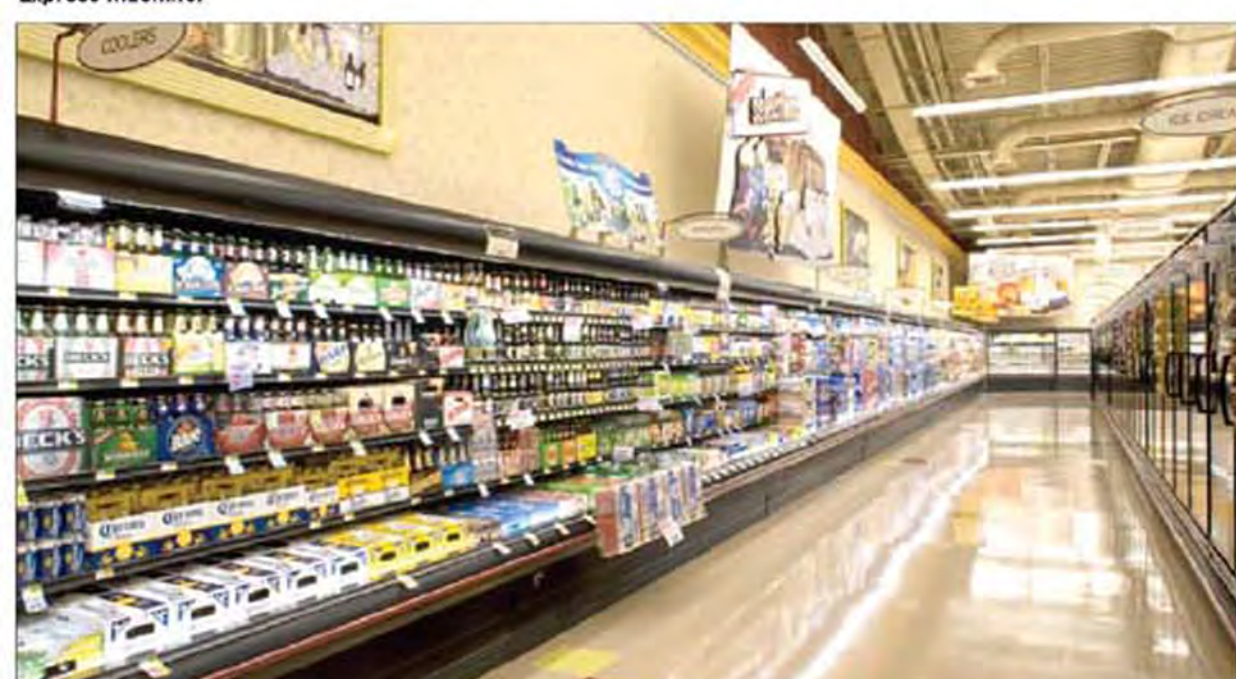
■ THE FLORAL BOUTIQUE offers a complete assortment of fresh-cut floral and gift items.



■ The front wall features Food City low prices, and for thirsty shoppers there is even a Seattle's Best Coffee Express machine.



■ A view of the bakery/deli.



■ Chilled beer and dairy departments.



■ The grocery selling floor as pictured from the balcony.

duce and Health & Beauty Care departments have been included as well. Pharmacy customers can continue to enjoy the added convenience of the Food City Pharmacy, where registered pharmacist, Bill Potter, D.Ph. will be on hand to meet prescription needs and answer health related questions.

Additionally, a ValuCare Health Clinic is now located beside the Pharmacy, providing quick, affordable health care for the entire family. And the store also includes a Bakery/Deli, complete with a Hot Food Bar and a lower and upper level Sit-Down Café, a new feature for Food City. The upper level is equipped with a demonstration kitchen and meeting facilities with a seating capacity of 100+, which will be made available to area civic groups to host their group meetings.

"The larger departments allow for enhanced variety and selection and greater ease maneuvering through the store," commented district



■ A cooking class gets culinary instruction from a well-known area chef [FOOD CITY PHOTO].



■ The loooooong, wide and attractively merchandised frozen food aisle.



■ A picture perfect meat display.



■ THE NATURAL CHOICE! The new Food City features a wide selection of natural & organic foods.

manager, Haskel Bledsoe. "I know our shoppers are really going to be pleased with this magnificent, new state-of-the-art facility.

Customers will be able to move quickly through the 9 traditional checkouts and one express lane. The store is equipped with four self-checkouts, allowing customers to scan their items and pay for their purchases unaided, should they wish to do so. To complete the package, the location was outfitted with an attractive new interior design concept, including department coordinated floor tiling, large department signage and a new store-wide color scheme.

Headquartered in Abingdon, Virginia, K-VA-T Food Stores operates 95 retail food outlets throughout the tri-state regions of South-east Kentucky, Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee.

Photos By FRESH AIR PHOTO
Except as noted



■ A Community Room with seating capacity of 100+ is available for meetings and events.



■ The upper level of the store is equipped with a fully-equipped demonstration kitchen including an overhead television monitor so that students may easily watch the instructor in action.



■ Looking toward the HBC Department.



■ OPEN HOUSE – More than 1,000 community and business leaders turned out for an open house held the evening prior to the store's opening [FOOD CITY PHOTO].



■ Views of the expansive, attractively merchandised Produce Department.



■ Shoppers will enjoy the numerous taste-tempting offerings available at the salad bar.



■ Customers will enjoy the added convenience offered by the Food City Pharmacy.



■ Located next to the Pharmacy is a VALUCARE Health Clinic providing quick, affordable health care for the entire family [FOOD CITY PHOTO].



■ The store features full service Meat and Seafood Departments, staffed with trained personnel to fill shoppers' requests.



■ FOOD CITY VIDEO features the latest releases along with classic favorites.

Sales Appeal!

“America’s Favorite Rice”

Mahatma



Make Sure You’re Stocking the Full Line



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Houston, TX

TO ORDER, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL BROKER.

30 Guest Editorial

Technology and the Independent Grocer

BY: **BILL THOMSON**

MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT
JOHN ANDERSON & COMPANY



Managing an independent grocery store is no picnic, particularly in today's competitive environment. Companies like Wal-Mart and Publix are investing millions of dollars in technology to run their stores

and to serve their customers. How can the independent grocer compete? Who has the staff and budget to keep up? Well, there is a surprising answer to these challenging questions and it is called the Internet.

Larger supermarket chains have the resources to invest in high-performance computer servers that run sophisticated software and have many people to manage these resources. However, the Internet has enabled software companies to run and manage the same servers and software in their own offices (or data centers), and to offer access to these applications to grocers through an Internet Web browser. Offering applications in this manner is called Software-as-a-Service, or SaaS. You are effectively renting their systems instead of buying them. They make their

Leveraging State-of-the-Art Technology without the Investment

money by charging many customers a reasonable monthly fee and you get the same technology as the big boys without the large investment. Talk about a win-win scenario!

Let's look at a few areas where this new model can help you improve your business.

Grow Revenue with Price Optimization

Determining the optimum price for all the items in your store requires a lot of experience and time. Most managers use an educated gut feel and comparisons with local competitors. But the large chains use sophisticated software that analyzes customer buying patterns, evaluates target margins by category, assesses competitive pricing and recommends optimum pricing for each item. You can have access to the same price optimization technology over the Internet from companies such as Revionics. Revionics estimates that by using their system you can increase gross margins by least 2 percent and net income by 1%. On a store doing \$10 million in sales, that is an increase of \$100,000 in profits! In addition, you can save much of the manual time you spend updating prices. With prices starting at about \$200/week (depending upon store size and volume) and modest set-up fees, the return on investment is quite compelling.

Gain Business Visibility with Improved Decision Support

Another way you can significantly improve your business is through better information. Many grocers use the data obtained from their aging point-of-sale and accounting systems to make key business decisions. They spend a good amount of money on servers and software and on the staff time to enter data manually, but they are not getting the kind of detailed information needed to run their store optimally. What if you could let someone else run state-of-the-art accounting and payroll systems that were developed specifically for the grocery industry? A company called FMS does just that, and if you need the help, they can provide the accountant as well. The FMS system provides comprehensive reports that provide good visibility into your store's operations. When combined with a solid financial plan (a service provided by companies like John Anderson & Company), you can easily compare results against your financial goals and drive your store to even greater profitability.

Improve Customer Service with Your Web site

An area of emphasis for many grocers is customer service. Did you know 44 percent of grocery store consumers search their store's

Web site for product information, to learn more about the store and to find special offers? If you do not have a Web site, your customers may be searching your competitors' sites. Companies such as MyWebGrocer are in business to establish your Web presence and to provide innovative ways to service your customers. Set up interactive circulars, have daily recipes emailed to your customers, take deli or catering orders online, make personalized offers based upon customer loyalty information, or set up a "blog" and have online dialogues with your customers. The opportunities are endless.

The Internet provides smaller businesses access to sophisticated technology previously unavailable to them. The key benefits of this model include:

1. No technical staff required to install, manage, or upgrade the technology
2. No capital investment required
3. Predictable weekly or monthly fees

With expert assistance, you could be up and running in a matter of weeks with minimal impact to your current operations.

So consider how your business can use the Internet to maximize revenue, increase margins, and improve customer service.

BILL THOMSON is a management and technology consultant with John Anderson & Company, a financial and operations consulting firm providing services to independent retail grocers and wholesalers since 1991. You can reach Bill at bill@jandersonco.com, www.jandersonco.com, or 954-757-9882.

Food Lion Recognized as Founding Partner in EPA's GreenChill Program

In a ceremony, November 28, at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Food Lion LLC was recognized as a founding member in the U.S. EPA's GreenChill advanced refrigeration partnership, an initiative through which companies pledge to go above and beyond regulatory requirements in protecting the ozone layer and reducing greenhouse gas

emissions.

"GreenChill membership advances and expands Food Lion's decade-old commitment to preserving the earth's resources," said Kyle Mitchell, Food Lion LLC vice president of store development. "As a founding GreenChill partner, we look forward to working with the U.S. EPA on new and improved refrigeration tech-

nologies the same way Food Lion and the U.S. EPA partnered on energy conservation initiatives through the ENERGY STAR program."

As a GreenChill partner, Food Lion has committed it will: require all new and remodeled stores to be ozone friendly in advance of Clean Air Act phase-out requirements; establish an emissions inventory of ozone-depleting sub-

stances, which will be used to set emissions reduction targets; and participate in an industry/government research initiative to assess the performance of advanced refrigeration technologies.

"As Americans make greener choices, we look for companies that support a greener lifestyle," said Robert J. Meyers, principal deputy assistant administrator of EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. "The GreenChill logo is a clear sign of a supermarket's environmental commitment. It shows that Food Lion is doing their utmost to save the ozone layer."

Food Lion has been at the forefront of companies — grocery stores and otherwise — putting in place measures and initiatives that reduce emissions of ozone-depleting refrigerants, test refrigeration technologies, conserve energy and support environmental sustainability. Food Lion has two stores already using advanced refrigeration technologies. Both systems were created with refrigeration partner Hill PHOENIX. The first store, in Dinwiddie, VA, opened in early 2006 with a medium temperature secondary coolant system that uses water and glycol to refrigerate products. The second store, which opened in late 2006 in Montpellier, VA, uses a low temperature system featuring carbon dioxide (CO2) (a naturally occurring gas) to refrigerate low-temperature food products. Both systems will be tested together in a third location, Portsmouth, VA, which is scheduled to open in the Spring. The two companies are working together to identify smarter ways to refrigerate food products using technologies that are gentler on the environment.

"Food Lion believes that a critical aspect of serving our customers is to be a responsible corporate citizen," said Glenn Dixon, Food Lion LLC's senior vice president of corporate development. "We take great pride in undertaking initiatives such as these, which will protect the environment and sustain the communities in which we operate for years to come."

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32 Guest Editorial

Does Your Store Stink??? !!!

Maintain a Pleasant Atmosphere by Removing Foul Odors

BY: **ZIA SIDDIQI, PH.D., B.C.E.**
DIRECTOR OF QUALITY SYSTEMS
ORKIN, INC



Does your store stink? Many do! Nothing can be more obtrusive to shoppers when entering a store as being hit by a big whiff of a bad smell. While fresh food, clean aisles and great customer service can keep customers flocking to your store, foul odors will not be a hit with shoppers. However, they will be a huge hit with pests. Odors from decaying organic matter and trash can signal the availability of food sources to pests and encourage them to look inside for sustenance. Once pests enter your store and have access to their essential survival needs – food, water and shelter – they are likely to stay and not check-out!

The first step to prevent foul odors from disgusting customers and keep pests away from your store is to identify the sources of odors. Decaying organic matter such as spoiled meat or rotting fruits and vegetables is one possible cause of foul odors. If trash receptacles are not properly cleaned, lined and sealed or if dumpsters aren't regularly cleaned, the odors from the waste can linger long after the trash has been removed. Another potential source of unpleasant odors can come from small animals that may expire on or near your property. Always check hard-to-reach areas – including underneath, on top of, and behind equipment.

After you've located the source of the odor, the next step is to eliminate it. Us-



DUMPSTER: Keep dumpster lids closed and work with your waste management company to regularly clean and change out your dumpster.



CLEANING DRAIN: Cleaning drains regularly with an organic cleaner and a brush can help prevent the build-up of odor causing bacteria.

ing air fresheners and other masking agents will not remove the source of odor. Let's take a look at how to remove two sources of odors: decaying organic material and decomposing animals.

Good sanitation is the best defense against decaying organic matter. To remove odor-causing bacteria, clean and disinfect counters in food preparation areas and shelves in dry and refriger-

ated storage areas. Remove drain lids and clean drains using a brush and an organic cleaner to breakdown grease and grime buildup.

To help prevent odors in trash receptacles, line all trash cans and make sure they have properly fitting lids. Dispose of trash inside your store daily, and work with your waste management professional to schedule frequent pick-ups of

waste. Keep dumpsters as far from your building as possible, and regularly clean and rotate them.

If a decomposing animal is the cause of odors, notify your pest management professional and work with your professional and Animal Control for proper removal. Once the animal has been removed, clean the area as appropriate.

In some cases, even once the source of the odor has been eliminated, it can be beneficial to try to neutralize the lingering effects of the odor with masking agents. Masking agents such as air fresheners can help minimize the unpleasant odor. It's key to note that masking agents are not effective for long-term odor control. To keep your store smelling clean and fresh, take efforts to prevent and remove sources of stinking smells.

Preventing foul odors is an on-going process and should become an important part of your regular sanitation and pest management efforts. Make sure your staff understands the role they play in removing foul odors, and encourage them to practice good sanitation in their areas of the store. Work with your pest management professional to identify potential problem areas, and create a plan to rid your store of unpleasant odors. The result will keep customers coming back and send pests packing.

DR. ZIA SIDDIQI is Director of Quality Systems for Orkin, Inc. A board certified entomologist with more than 30 years in the industry, Dr. Siddiqi is an acknowledged leader in the field of pest management. For more information, email zsiddiqi@rollins.com or visit www.orkincommercial.com.

"Souper Chef"

Quick Chek Announces Contest Winners

Quick Chek, a family-operated chain of food stores throughout New Jersey and southern New York, announced that Monica Garcia of Rahway, NJ has been declared the company's first-ever Quick Chek Souper Chef Contest Champion.

Following a month-long submission process calling for original recipes incorporating one of Quick Chek's 14 Fall Menu Soups as a main ingredient, Garcia, along with four other finalists, was chosen to compete in Quick Chek's Souper Chef Contest Cook-off recently at its South Plainfield location on Durham Ave. Each contestant prepared and presented their dishes to team of four culinary experts from the Center for Food Development and Manufacturing Technology at the School of Environmental and Biological Science of Rutgers University and the H. J. Heinz Company.

The winners of Quick Chek's Souper Chef Contest are:

First Place: Monica Garcia, Rahway, NJ. The grand prize winner of a set of Gourmet All-Clad Cookware valued at \$750 created Pancetta Tomato and Garlic using Quick Chek's Roasted Tomato and Garlic soup.



Second Place: Stacey Palermo, Middlesex, NJ: Palermo won a \$500 gift card to Bed Bath and Beyond presenting her Scrambled Breakfast Wrap using Quick Chek's Creamy Cheddar Broccoli soup.

Third Place: Ellen Sweeney, Hillsborough, NJ. Sweeney created Carrot Nut Muffins using Quick Chek's Roasted Tomato and Garlic soup and won Quick Chek's Soup for a Year prize package valued at \$250.

Runners-Up: Alison Bond, North Bergen, NJ. Bond created Roasted Tomato and Spinach Risotto in-

corporating Quick Chek's Roasted Tomato and Garlic soup. She was presented with a \$50 Quick Chek gift card.

Devon Delaney, Princeton, N.J.: Delaney's Warm Brie and Mushroom Steak Sandwiches incorporated Quick Chek's Mushroom with Brie Bisque soup. She also was presented with a \$50 Quick Chek gift card.

In addition to the prizes each contestant won during the competition, all finalists' original recipes will be published in a Quick Chek brochure to be available at each of the company's retail locations.

"Good Value" Is The Top Influencer Of U.S. Grocery Store Choice

Continued from PAGE 2

livering low prices – even if, in reality, this is not the case – is very or somewhat important.

Ranking third are prices published in the stores' leaflets (71 percent) and everyday low prices (70 percent). Slightly less important to U.S. consumers are discounts for store card holders (63 percent), price comparison across retailers (59 percent), private label offerings (53 percent) and friends' recommendations (43 percent).

"Our research shows that the importance of good value and low prices resonates much more with lower income households in the U.S.," said Hale. "More affluent households regard quality of fresh produce, meat and seafood and selection above good value. That said, the success of warehouse club retailers speaks loudly to the importance affluent American consumers place on value."

According to Nielsen's research, three in four consumers around the world consider it very or somewhat important that supermarkets feature frequent promotions and regular price discounts, and sev-

enty percent vote it very or somewhat important the store have a reputation for being cheaper than competitors. In third place are prices published in the stores' leaflets (62 percent), followed by research and price comparisons across retailers (60 percent), price reductions offered through loyalty/store cards (57 percent) and stores that promised to have every day low prices (57 percent).

Interestingly, some consumers are not attracted to promotions and regular price discounts. One in four (22 percent) Finnish shoppers do not consider price promotions and discounts to be important and the emerging European economies of Russia, Hungary and Estonia share this view.

"The retail and media trade are both highly fragmented in Russia's urban centers and it's difficult for consumers to receive and access information on price discounts and promotions," said Hale. "The main reason Russian shoppers aren't interested in promotions and regular price discounts is simply that they don't know about them because advertising and promotional channels are still underdeveloped."

Researchers Say New Steak's a Hit with Consumers

BY: **CHUCK WOODS**
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

A cut of beef once ground into hamburger has become one of the nation's most popular steaks, thanks to a processing method co-developed by a University of Florida researcher.

Recent figures show flat iron steak sales now top 90 million pounds a year, making the value-priced cut the nation's fifth best-selling steak.

Dwain Johnson, a meat science professor with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences who helped develop the steak in 2002, said some consumers say the cut tastes better than a New York strip.

"The cut is as tasty and tender as more expensive steaks, yet affordable enough for the average family to enjoy on the regular basis, and it costs a lot less than a choice filet or strip steak," he said.

Steve Wald, director of new product development for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association in Centennial, Colo., said 47 million pounds of flat iron steak were sold in 2005, increasing to 92 million pounds in 2006 and about 90

million pounds so far this year. He said the sales data was compiled by Technomic Inc., a Chicago-based research firm.

"In the food service industry, which includes restaurants, the flat-iron steak outsells T-bone and porterhouse steaks combined," Wald said. "Strong consumer demand prompted several national retailers to introduce the steak during the summer of 2007."

Johnson, who developed the steak in cooperation with the University of Nebraska and the cattlemen's association, said their research was aimed at identifying undervalued portions of the beef carcass. In the largest study of its kind, the researchers evaluated more than 5,600 muscles for flavor and tenderness.

He said the flat iron steak — also known as the top blade steak — is cut from deep within the shoulder muscle known as the chuck, traditionally used for roasts or ground beef.

"Although the cut is flavorful and relatively tender, the flat iron steak has a serious flaw in the middle of it," Johnson said. "There is a tough piece of connective tissue running through the middle, but it can be re-

moved to create an amazing cut of beef."

By developing a method for cutting the connective tissue — similar to filleting a fish — the researchers created a steak that has the tenderness of a ribeye or strip steak with the full-flavored character of a sirloin or skirt steak. It's also perfect for grilling over medium high heat, he said.

"Supposedly named because it looks like an old-fashioned metal flat iron, the flat iron steak is uniform in thickness and rectangular in shape," Johnson said. "The only variation is the cut into the middle where the connective tissue has been removed."

Johnson said the research to produce leaner and more convenient beef products was initiated when demand for chuck, round and "thin cuts" — which make up 73 percent of total beef carcass weight — declined by more than 20 percent from 1980 to 1998.

"The Cattlemen's Beef Board realized that a more concentrated effort was needed to study the cause for the decreased demand in products from these carcass locations," he said. "They also wanted to



■ DWAIN JOHNSON

find out what could be done to reverse the trend and increase the demand for the chuck and round cuts."

He said other value cuts such as the petite tender and ranch cut are starting to be used by the food service sector.

Supermarket Industry Boosts Profits Despite Sharp Cost Increases

Focus on Consumers, Efficiency and Technology

Food retailers overcame continuing sharp increases in energy, healthcare and other costs to post a median after-tax net profit of 1.91 percent in fiscal year 2006-2007, up from 1.46 percent the previous year, according to the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) Annual Financial Review 2006-2007.

The smallest and largest companies reported strong bottom-line results. Retailers with annual sales under \$100 million had a median net profit of 1.83 percent, and those with sales of \$1 billion or more 1.93 percent. Mid-sized retailers with sales in between did not fare as well with profits of 1.10 percent.

"Satisfying consumers each and every day is the key to improving financial performance," said FMI President and CEO Tim Hammonds. "Retailers are serving consumers with the right mix of products, keeping items in stock and controlling inventories."

"Retailers are driving down costs with the speed and efficiency of e-commerce," he said. "They can focus on providing optimum service to the American consumer, saving time and money through faster, more accurate inventory management and fewer errors on electronic invoices and orders."

"Also noteworthy," he added, "is that the industry achieved these gains before food inflation began to rise in mid-2007. In addition, the majority of retailers absorbed energy cost increases over the past two years." This report found that 56 percent did not pass along these energy cost increases to consumers in 2006, and 57 percent did not do so in 2005.

The industry's financial performance was strong across many key measures:

- ▶ **Return on assets (ROA)** increased for the fifth straight year to 5.85 percent, up from 4.62 percent in 2005-2006.
- ▶ **Return on equity (ROE)** reached a four-year high at 16.79 percent, from 14.55 percent.
- ▶ **Inventory as a percentage of assets** declined to 18.32 percent, from 19.62 percent, a seven-year low.
- ▶ **Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA)** increased to 4.80 percent, up from 4.29 percent, the highest mark in four years.
- ▶ **Interest expenses** dropped to 0.66 percent of sales, from 0.87 percent, the lowest level in two decades.

ENERGY COSTS DEAL COMPANIES A TRIPLE BLOW

The relentless rise in energy costs hit the industry hard in three areas: transportation, warehousing and operations. Retailers spent an average of 1.7 percent of sales on energy in 2006, and nearly nine in 10 (87.3 percent) reported cost increases, the same as the previous year. Energy costs increased by double digits in all three areas:

Store Operations — The increase averaged 11.9 percent among retailers that reported a rise. This figure is up from 9.5 percent in 2005. Stores use energy in heating, air conditioning, lighting and refrigeration systems.

Transportation — 14.6 percent, down slightly from 15.4 percent in 2005.

Warehousing — 10.9 percent, up significantly from 4.6 percent.

Companies are taking many measures to reduce energy costs, led by:

- ▶ Minimize leaks in refrigeration systems, 96.0 percent.
- ▶ Adjust store temperature to reduce heating and cooling costs, 82.6 percent.
- ▶ Lower store lighting costs such as using LED fixtures or reducing light levels, 81.6 percent.
- ▶ Create a more energy-efficient store when remodeling or building a new one, 70.2 percent.
- ▶ Reengineer store delivery frequency, 56.3 percent.

SMALLER COMPANIES PREVAIL AMONG THE PROFIT LEADERS

The report's review of the top 25 percent net profit performers found that retailers with sales below \$100 million reported the best results across key measures. For example, they:

- ▶ Achieved net income averaging 2.78 percent, compared with 2.69 percent for retailers with higher sales.
- ▶ Exercised tighter inventory controls with their inventory valued at 11.51 percent of assets, compared with 14.41 percent for larger retailers.
- ▶ Held down interest expenses to 0.45 percent of sales, compared with 0.66 percent.

FUTURE OUTLOOK POSITIVE

The industry remains resilient in a high-cost, extremely competitive environment. Nearly nine in 10 retailers (86 percent) are optimistic about their profit outlook for fiscal year 2007-2008. The report did find some hedging: the number of executives who are "very optimistic" declined to 30 percent, compared with 39 percent the previous year, and those "somewhat optimistic" increased to 56 percent, from 50 percent.

Victory Lap Celebration



■ PVGP President & Race Director Mike Connolly, Lou Krebs of Shop 'n Save, Allegheny Valley School Ambassador Brandon Fisher, Bill Lipsky of Shop 'n Save, Autism Society Ambassador Anita Iyengar, Allegheny Valley School President & CEO Regis Champ.

Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix Raises the Bar for the Third Consecutive Year

2007 was another exciting year for the Grand Prix and its two charities. Through sponsorship, merchandise sales, donations and driver entries the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix, presented by Shop 'n Save, set a new annual donation record of \$170,000 – the largest single donation in its 25-year history. The funds will be split equally between the Autism Society of Pittsburgh and Allegheny Valley School. This now brings the Grand Prix's total donations to \$2,250,000 since 1983 and marks the third consecutive year that a new donation record was set.

The October 24th check presentation is called the "Victory Lap", because it was a unique opportunity for everyone involved in this successful event to relax and enjoy the recognition. Presenting Sponsor Shop 'n Save Vice President Lou Krebs summed it up best when he said "Shop 'n Save is proud to present such a successful and long-standing event. The Grand Prix contributes so much in the communities served by our independent retailers." Shop 'n Save has been the presenting sponsor of the nation's largest vintage race event since 2001.

Over 150 people attended the October 24th check presentation at the Wyndham Hotel in Oakland, including Grand Prix volunteers, sponsors and supporters.

Coke Forecasts Solid 2008

Continued from PAGE 1

service," Brock said. "In Europe, we continue to enhance the efficiency of our operations while working with The Coca-Cola Company to broaden our brand portfolio."

"As we look beyond 2007 and ahead to 2008, we already are seeing tangible benefits from our efforts as we transition into a company that consistently delivers against our long-term performance objectives," Brock said.

Consolidated financial results for 2008 will reflect the positive revenue impact of the increased volume and changing mix in North America related to the full-year distribution of glacial, FUZE, and Campbell's. This mix impact and the higher selling price per case of these new brands will drive a high single-digit increase in revenue while additional investment against sparkling brands and operations will partially offset the benefits of this revenue increase. Operating income will increase at the high end of the long-term target range of 5 percent to 6 percent, and earnings per diluted share will be in line with the long-term objective of high single-digit growth.

The company also expects return on invested capital to improve in line with long-term goals, strong free cash flow of more than \$700 million, and cap-

ital expenditures of approximately \$1 billion. The effective tax rate for 2008 is expected to be 29 percent to 30 percent. Guidance excludes items affecting comparability and is foreign currency-neutral.

In North America, the marketplace benefits of the glacial, FUZE, and Campbell's brands, coupled with the impact of sparkling initiatives such as the "Red, Black, Silver" focus on core Coca-Cola trademark brands, will contribute to volume growth in a low to mid single-digit range. Driven by changing mix, pricing per case will increase in a mid single-digit range, while cost of goods per case will increase at a low double-digit rate. Excluding this mix impact, pricing per case would be in a low single-digit range and cost of goods per case would increase in a mid single-digit

range. Core raw material costs will increase less than 2007 rates but remain above historical averages.

In Europe, strong marketing and brand plans will drive 2008 volume growth in a low to mid single-digit range. Pricing per case will increase at a low single-digit rate reflecting a low single-digit increase in cost of goods per case and a moderate commodity cost environment.

"Overall, our operating results have improved, we continue to achieve strong free cash flow, and our continued debt reduction efforts have been successful," Brock said. "This performance, coupled with our outlook for increased growth in 2008, provides us the flexibility to return additional cash to our shareholders. We are evaluating options and will confirm our plans during the first half of 2008."

SABMiller and Molson Coors Sign Joint Venture Agreement

Continued from PAGE 1

deal in mid-2008 and are cooperating fully with the regulatory clearance process."

The closing of the transaction is subject to obtaining clearance from U.S. competition authori-

ties, certain other regulatory clearances and any required third-party consents. The Miller business and the Coors business will continue to be conducted separately and in the ordinary course until completion of the transaction.

Celestial Seasonings and Random House Launch On-line Book Club

Celestial Seasonings is introducing "Adventure at Every Turn," a Web-based book club designed to bring to life the company's new positioning, "Tantalizing Adventures for the Senses." Celestial Seasonings is partnering with Random House, Inc. to feature noteworthy books that take readers on global adventures without leaving home to emphasize the worldly nature of Celestial Seasonings teas and the adventurous spirit of the company.

"Adventure at Every Turn" members gain access to themed

tea selections, recipes using Celestial Seasonings teas as an ingredient, and décor, music and activity tips inspired by the featured book and designed to engage each of the senses. Along with downloadable book discussion guides and e-mail invitations, these features enable members to organize and host memorable, thought-provoking book discussion events.

The book club features a new book published by Random House, Inc. every other month, and the introductory book selection is The End of the Alphabet by CS Richardson. Members will have access to content related to both currently featured books and past selections at all times through the book club Web site, www.CelestialSeasoningsBookClub.com.

Celestial Seasonings will drive awareness for the book club through an integrated marketing campaign that includes an extensive media relations program, a sales and sampling component and cross-promotional activities with Random House, Inc.

To join, consumers are required to visit the Web site and submit UPC codes from two boxes of Celestial Seasonings tea.

While quantities last, members will receive a book club starter kit designed to complement The End of the Alphabet. The kit features tea pairings and book club information, recipe cards and bookmarks to be shared with club members, and samples of Celestial Seasonings tea. The kit provides everything members need to host their first discussion group.

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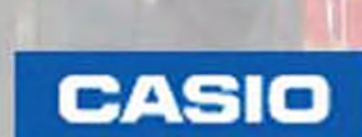
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36 People Places & Things



Stop & Shop Hosts Latke Cook-Off

STOP & SHOP host's first annual Long Island Chanukah Latke cook-off. Teams from the Dix Hills Jewish Center, and Temple Beth Elohim in Old Bethpage took part in the first annual Long Island Chanukah latke cook-off at the Stop & Shop in Woodbury. Gail Jospa (far left) and David Weiss (second left) represented The Dix Hills Jewish Center. Susan Naftol (second from right) and Doris Rosenfeld (far right) represented Temple Beth Elohim. They were joined by Stop & Shop Consumer Advisor, Andrea Astrachan (center). Astrachan prepared sweet potato, chick-pea, kofta, Sephardic Bonuelos, Asian and sorrel latkes.

Just Born Awards National Broker of the Year

Just Born, Inc. recently announced its National and Divisional Broker of the Year awards. Just Born's 2007 "National Broker of the Year" is Golick-Martins, Inc. of Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Golick-Martins was also Broker of the Year in Just Born's Northeast Division. Manny Martins and Joe Lanzilli accepted the award. Golick-Martins is responsible for Just Born sales in Metropolitan New York and Northern New Jersey.

Matt Petronio, Executive Vice President and COO at Just Born, commented, "Just Born's broker selling teams have done a tremendous job in helping build our brands. They have been able to meet the changing needs of our retail customers, and deliver brand-building programs at the point of sale. The Broker of the Year award recognizes truly outstanding market performance. Not only was Golick-Martins presented with the National Broker of the Year, it was also recognized for having been our representative for over 60 years. We are truly proud of our entire broker network and what they have accomplished last year."

Mitchell & Co. of Little Rock,



AWARD WINNERS - Greg Pappariella, Just Born Northeast Division Sales Manager; Art Wagner, Tony Lubrano, Fran Pizzo, Manny Martins and Joe Lanzilli from Golick-Martins; and Keith Von Zup, Just Born Vice President of Global Customer Development.

Arkansas, received the award for Southeast Division Broker of the Year Award. Mitchell is responsible for sales in Arkansas, including Wal-Mart.

Shankman & Associates of Solon, Ohio, received the Broker of the Year Award for Just Born's Central Division. Shankman is responsible for sales in Ohio, including Kroger.

Receiving the Midwest Division Broker of the Year was Harvey-

Winchell Company of Bloomington, Minnesota. Harvey-Winchell is responsible for sales in North and South Dakota and Minnesota, including Target.

The Western Division Broker of the Year Award was presented to Clawson-Hewitt of Denver, Colorado. Clawson-Hewitt is responsible for sales in Colorado, Wyoming and the Nebraska Panhandle.

IGA Names Eight Finalists for 2008 IGA U.S. Retailers of the Year

IGA has chosen from applicants submitted by its licensed distribution companies eight IGA U.S. Retailer of the Year finalists. Of the eight, three will be named IGA U.S. Retailers of the Year and honored at the 2008 IGA Global Summit Awards Banquet held in Carefree, AZ on March 29. During that ceremony one of three will be awarded the additional title of 2008 IGA U.S. International Retailer of the Year for having achieved within the U.S. the superior level of excellence in IGA retailing as judged by IGA's global standards.

Under IGA's newly revamped Awards of Excellence process, the eight retailers will be visited by IGA executives for a store evaluation, and will also be required to submit a short essay explaining how their stores demonstrate operational excellence in regard to service, branding, marketing and community commitment. Once the store visits are complete and essays have been reviewed, a panel of judges will name the three IGA U.S. Retailers of the Year.

The finalists include:

MIKE CARPER of Mick or Mack IGA - Newcastle, VA, Merchants Distributors, Inc.

JEFF DOWNING of Foothills IGA Market - Marble Hill, GA, Merchants Distributors, Inc.

TIM HENDERSON of Henderson's IGA - Valentine, NE, Affiliated Foods Midwest

GREGORY LUKEMAN of IGA Bohemia Supermarket - Bohemia, NY, Bozzuto's, Inc.

BILL PRICE of McMaken's IGA - Brookville, OH, Laurel Grocery Company, LLC

WAYNE RAY - Houchens Industries - Columbia Hometown IGA - Columbia, KY, Associated Wholesale Grocers, Inc.

HAROLD SHOOK of Lake Region IGA Supermarket - Hawley, PA, Bozzuto's, Inc.

KEVIN YOUNG of Payless Market IGA - Copperopolis, CA, C&S Wholesale Grocers, Inc. - Sacramento Division

According to IGA USA CEO Mark Batenic, the program's more rigorous and challenging standards create a fair and equitable process for retailer recognition. Included in those standards was the stipulation that all candidates have achieved a Five Star rating under IGA's Assessment program.

Imports, Crafts Beers Drive U.S. Sales

Beer drinkers' passion for imported and craft beers continued in 2006, pushing U.S. beer sales back in the black after three years in the doldrums," according to the 2007 Adams Beer Handbook.

Growth among imports increased 12 percent to 397 million cases, making the subcategory responsible for nearly 14 percent of the total U.S. beer market, notes a press release. Craft beers and super-premium brews together grew 6.6 percent in 2006; without the super-premiums added in, craft beers rose 12 percent.

"All segments of imports are up and all crafts — all flavors, styles and seasonals — that's the big headline," said Eric Schmidt, manager of information services for the Adams Beverage Group, which publishes the annual Adams Beer Handbook.

Among imports, Mexican beers lead the way: the seven leading Mexican beers grew a minimum of 9.8 percent each in 2006, with Corona, the leading imported beer, now the sixth best-selling overall in the United States, up 9.8 percent. Other well-known imports — Heineken, Guinness Stout, Newcastle Brown Ale, Labatt Blue Light and Stella Artois — showed impressive growth.

Among domestic premium brews, light beers — the largest segment with now more than a 50 percent share of the U.S. beer market — climbed 2.3 percent. Bud Light increased its lead over the next best seller, Budweiser, by more than 40 million cases, increasing 4.3 percent to top out at 560 million cases last year.

Wolfgang Puck Spends Day in Marshall, Minnesota

World-renown chef and restaurateur Wolfgang Puck spent Tuesday, October 23 in Marshall as a special guest of The Schwan Food Company. Schwan's Consumer Brands North America, Inc., a business unit of The Schwan Food Company, markets and distributes Wolfgang Puck All-Natural pizzas nationwide as part of an exclusive frozen food partnership.

In the evening, Puck was the featured attraction of a special fundraising dinner at the Landmark Bistro in downtown Marshall. The event was a fundraiser for a new Marshall area regional arts center, a collaborative effort between Schwan, Southwest Minnesota State University and members of the Marshall area fine arts community.

The appetizer and dinner menu, prepared by Puck and chefs from Wolfgang Puck Worldwide, Inc., and his Minneapolis restaurant 20.21, showcased Puck's unique flavor combinations and Wolfgang's Eat Love Live WELL culinary philosophy, celebrating local, all-natural and organic ingredients. The dinner also included a special selection of wines. Puck chatted with the guests and autographed copies of his most recent cookbook "Wolfgang Puck Makes It Easy." Proceeds from the event admission and cookbook sales will be donated to the regional arts center.

Earlier in the day, Puck and other members of his culinary team met with officials of Schwan Research & Development, Inc., another business unit of The Schwan Food Company. Puck and the group also toured part of Schwan's manufacturing facilities and taste-tested new products at the R & D center's test kitchens.



MASTER CHEF WOLFGANG PUCK prepares a shrimp appetizer at the Landmark Bistro in Marshall, MN on Tuesday October 23.

FMI Seeks Exceptional Store Managers

To be Honored at 2008 FMI Show

The Food Marketing Institute has announced a call for entries in the 2008 FMI Store Manager Awards, an annual program recognizing store managers for their extraordinary achievements in customer and community serv-

ice. The awards program will take place at The FMI Show plus MARKETECHNICS® in Las Vegas, NV, on May 5.

Store managers or their associates are invited to send in stories that demonstrate how a manager created positive growth and customer satisfaction over the past 12-18 months. Entries will be judged on originality, cre-

ativity, impact on store growth, customer satisfaction and community relations.

"The supermarket store manager is critical to integrating the store into the surrounding community and achieving business success," said FMI senior vice president Brian Tully. "FMI recognizes store managers who excel in customer and communi-

ty service with the FMI Store Manager Awards."

Three grand prize winners will be awarded a \$1,000 cash prize at The FMI Show plus MARKETECHNICS. Nine finalists, including the three grand prize winners, will receive two tickets to The FMI Show plus MARKETECHNICS and three nights of hotel accommodations in Las Vegas.

Only store managers from an FMI member company who have been at the same place of business for at least one year are eligible.

Entries will be divided into three categories based on company size. Category A includes small retailers with 1-49 stores, Category B includes medium retailers with 50-199 stores and Category C includes large retailers with 200 or more stores. Judges will select three finalists and one grand prize winner from each category.



Mayor Welcomes Quick Chek To Bloomfield, N.J.

Bloomfield N.J. Mayor Raymond McCarthy (right) cuts the ribbon officially opening Quick Chek's new Bloomfield store along side Quick Chek Store Leader Tina Ogilvie (center) and Quick Chek President and Chief Executive Officer Dean Durling (left) during a special ceremony complete with a Quick Chek Coffee Toast, Monday, November 19, 2007. The new 6,200 sq. ft. store includes a café dining section, large food service and coffee service areas and additional floor space for customers.

Whole Foods Market Provides \$1 Million in Loans to Small-Scale Food Producers

Chain Commits \$10 Million Annually to Long-Term, Low-Interest Loans

Whole Foods Market, Inc. has reached a milestone with its new Local Producer Loan Program by administering more than \$1 million in low-interest loans. Loan recipients include small-scale food producers and growers from 12 states. Among their products are agricultural crops, body care products, and artisan foods including nut butters, ice cream, granolas and cheeses.

"Local food growers and artisans have been vital to the success of Whole Foods Market during our 27 years in business. Today we are proud to emphasize our commitment to producers by announcing our first \$1 million in financial support to 22 program participants," said John Mackey, Whole Foods Market CEO and co-founder. "We believe the Local Producer Loan Program can make a very significant difference in helping local agriculture grow and flourish, and \$1 million in loans represents just the initial phase of our efforts."

The most recent loan recipient is Don

Lunsford of 3L Farms in Durham, N.C. Lunsford worked as a golf course superintendent before deciding to return to his family's farming roots. In operation since 2002, Don is most proud of growing good quality and consistent products; he has dreams of expanding the business to include shiitake mushrooms and tomatoes. Named for the "3 Lunsfords" in the family, 3L Farms will use the loan money to build a greenhouse for hothouse tomatoes.

"I've never been able to obtain the finances to expand my small business until Whole Foods Market started this program," Lunsford said. "With the new greenhouses, my goal is to be into production with tomatoes by May of next year."

Whole Foods Market's Local Producer Loan Program aims to strengthen the company's partnership with independent and small-scale local growers and food artisans. The Company has committed \$10 million annually to these low-interest loans. Loan recipients must meet Whole Foods Market's quality standards, use the funds for expansion, and have a viable business plan. Loan amounts are between \$1,000 and \$100,000 with low, fixed interest rates currently between 5% and 9%.

Lowes Foods Launches New Line of Paws Pet Products

Lowes Foods has debuted a new line of pet products that features hundreds of items including pet food, snacks, toys, collars and leashes.

"Lowes Foods understands the special bond that people have with their pets. That's why we've introduced this quality line of products that meets the needs of both pets and their owners," said Kristy Alexander, category manager for Lowes Foods. "Paws is a premium line of products that offers an affordable alternative to national brand products."



■ MICHAEL ROTELLE

Acosta Names Michael Rotelle Exec. V.P. of Human Resources

Michael W. Rotelle has joined Acosta Sales and Marketing Company as Executive Vice President of Human Resources. Rotelle will be responsible for all Human Resources operations and will ensure that all HR functions align with and support Acosta's business strategy. He will be located at Acosta's headquarters in Jacksonville, FL, and as a member of the Executive Team, will report directly to President and Chief Operating Officer Robert Hill.

"The Human Resources Department is responsible for the people dimension of our business – the attraction, preservation and development of high caliber associates who provide us with the leading edge in our industry – and, therefore, has an impact on a wide range of our business activities," said Hill. "As Acosta grows, it is important that our HR functions support and enhance our business strategies. We are confident that Michael will be a great addition to the Acosta leadership team."

Rotelle brings to Acosta a unique combination of operations and HR experience in the CPG industry. Most recently, he was senior vice president of human resources with Tree of Life Inc. where he coached and motivated a team of HR professionals to deliver outstanding results. Before Tree of Life, Rotelle was vice president of human resources for the Eastern Region of SUPERVALU Inc. and before that, VP/general manager of Richfood West Point Division.

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

5-8

N.G.A. 2008 ANNUAL CONVENTION & SUPERMARKET SYNERGY SHOWCASE [S3] – Convention & Concept Show – Paris Las Vegas Hotel, Las Vegas, NV. For more information, Tel. 703-516-0700 or visit www.NationalGrocers.org.

21-22

ASSOCIATED GROCERS OF FLORIDA SPRING BUYING SHOW – Sheraton Mart Hotel & Expo Center, Miami, FL. For additional information contact: John Weal at Tel: 954-876-3005.

21-24

SOUTH BEACH WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL, MIAMI, FLORIDA. For additional information, or to purchase tickets, call 877-762-3933.

23-27

AMERICAN FROZEN FOOD INSTITUTION [AFFI] 40th Anniversary Convention. Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina, San Diego, CA. www.affi.com/afficon.

24-26

2008 26TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL BOSTON SEAFOOD SHOW (IBSS) AND THE 4TH ANNUAL SEAFOOD PROCESSING AMERICA (SPA) at Boston Convention & Exhibition Center (BCEC), 415 Summer Street, Boston, MA. For additional information, visit: www.bostonseafood.com.

29

SOUTHEAST WHOLESALE FOODS – Casino Mardi Gras Night. Annual Spring Buying and Customer Appreciation Event at Sofitel Miami, 5800 Blue Lagoon Drive, Miami, FL 33126. For additional information, contact Kevin Darcy at 305-883-1198, ext. 104, or Mary Lopez on ext. 114.

APRIL

8

LOUISIANA RETAILERS EDUCATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT. 9:00 Shotgun Start, The Lakes at Pelican Point. Contact Brandi to register: 1-800-572-2378 or brandi@laretail.org

23-25

SIAL MONTREAL, "THE NORTH AMERICAN FOOD MARKET PLACE." For additional information, contact: IMEX Management, tel: 704-365-0041, fax: 704-365-8426.

26-29

ORGANIC TRADE ASSN. ALL THINGS ORGANIC CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW – "Expect the Unexpected" – McCormick Place, Chicago, IL. For more information, Tel: 413-774-7511.

MAY

4-7

FMI SHOW PLUS MARKETECHNICS® SHOW at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. For more information, visit www.fmiishow.com.

JULY

28-30

ALABAMA GROCERS ASSN. ANNUAL CONVENTION – Sandestin Beach Resort, Destin, FL. For further information: Tel: 205-823-5498, Fax: 205-823-5146, or website www.Alabamagrocers.org.

To have your function included in this column, send complete information at least 90 days in advance. Please send to:
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dennismkane@todaysgrocer.com



Cadena de mercado de víveres de nuevo formato

Continúa la expansión de Freshco

Tienda de 30 mil pies abre en Kissimmee

Freshco International Supermarket prosigue con su rápido crecimiento en el Estado del Sol. "Primeros en Frescura, Calidad, Servicio y Ahorros" es el lema de la nueva cadena de tiendas de víveres que acaba de entrar recientemente a la escena del ramo en el centro de la Florida. La unidad abanderada debutó el pasado 30 de agosto, a una media de hora de distancia al norte de Orlando, pero ahora la compañía ya abrió su tercera tienda: la Freshco #3, inaugurada el 6 de diciembre en el 2600 Boggy Creek Road, en Kissimmee.

El flamante establecimiento, de 30 mil pies cuadrados de extensión, está en el espacio que otrora ocupara un Winn-Dixie que fuera adquirido por el propietario y operador de Freshco, César Ramírez. La tienda sufrió un intenso y extenso trabajo de renovación y reajuste de mercancía antes de llegar a su inauguración bajo el letrero de Freshco.

Ramírez reveló en exclusiva a TODAY'S GROCER que su nueva tienda atiende a la diversa base de clientes de la Florida, enfatizando una selección total de productos internacionales, servicio completo de carnes, vegetales frescos, un deli completo y una panadería dulcería de sabor cosmopolita que incluye desayunos y especiales para el almuerzo, así como productos del mar frescos, un surtido súper amplio de víveres congelados, y el "Pasillo del Ahorro" con excelentes compras, y un magnífico mostrador de Servicio al Cliente. La nueva tienda cuenta con el más moderno equipamiento electrónico operativo provisto por ISE Corp. de Miami, FL. Michael Verdes conduce el equipo de aproximadamente 50 asociados.

El staff de manejo del nuevo Freshco comprende la economía del presente y cuán importante es mantener el precio justo, la frescura y la calidad de los productos, así como garantizar la limpieza de la tienda.

"Conocer las necesidades de nuestra clientela internacional nos ayudará a servirlos mejor. Freshco escucha a nuestros clientes y constantemente cambia para ajustarse a sus necesidades" explicó César Ramírez.

Ramírez igualmente reveló a TODAY'S GROCER que: "Estamos muy agradecidos de los clientes del Centro y el Sur de la Florida por acogernos en su hogares. Con este nuevo Freshco International Supermarket, hemos hallado la vía para retribuirles con el servicio, la calidad, la frescura y los precios justos que ellos se merecen".

Para apoyar la gran apertura, la nueva tienda corrió publicidad en los medios impresos locales al igual que en las estaciones de radio del área. El día de la inauguración la nueva Freshco ofreció a los niños una casa inflable para saltar y una orquesta de mariachis. La próxima Freshco en abrir lo hará más tarde este mes en Port St. Lucie, a la que seguirán aperturas adicionales en febrero en el área central de Orlando.



■ FRESHCO continúa su rápido crecimiento en el centro de la Florida con la reciente inauguración el pasado 6 de diciembre de una nueva unidad de 30 mil pies en el 2600 Boggy Creek Road en Kissimmee.



■ César Ramírez (a la derecha), propietario y operador de FRESHCO recibe las felicitaciones de apertura de parte del equipo del abastecedor SUPERVALU, integrado por Tom Habblett, Jim Dunn y Anne Huntsinger.



■ Marino Abreu [al centro] y César Ramírez, con el grupo de Sun International: Benny Carmona, Dennis Ledesma y Ira Bernhard [der.].



■ TEL EQUIPO DE GOYA: Ángel Iglesias; Juan Alfaro, Peter Negrón, Enrique Fernández, y Francisco Vázquez.



■ Michael Verdes (al centro), Manager de Establecimiento de la nueva Freshco, con David Hernández, Sales & Marketing Account Manager de ISE Corp., y Jorge Mulet, Project Manager de la misma compañía.



■ César Ramírez, Presidente de FRESHCO recibe un estrechón de manos de parte David Hernández, de ISE Corp.



■ Santiago Marto, Supervisor de Distrito de Ventas de Sunny Florida Dairy, con Sandra Schiradi, Coordinadora de Precios de Freshco.



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