



Fresh talk

by Richard Turcsik

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Better-dressed crabs

Phillips Foods, Inc., the Baltimore-based leader in blue swimming crab meat, has redesigned the packaging of its fresh and frozen seafood line. The new packaging will begin appearing on store shelves this spring.

H&D Branding (Harvey & Daughters, Inc.), based in Sparks, Md., updated the Phillips logo, a design that was created 50 years ago for the company's first restaurant in Ocean City, Md. The new design retains the logo's original brand equities, such as the Old English font and red-and-black color scheme, but presents a cleaner, brighter look.

Phillips has also redesigned packaging for its frozen food line, encompassing 28 appetizers, soups and entrees. The updated packaging has a sophisticated design to appeal to consumers' eyes and appetites. A primarily black design forms a bold contrast on the shelf that creates brand blocking, making the product easier to spot among the competition. Mouthwatering food photography features close-up shots of Phillips premium seafood products accented by glistening sauces and vivid garnishes.

"Our concept with the new packaging was 'eat with your eyes,'" says Vetry Selvi, creative director for H&D. "We wanted customers to know that the entrée they picked up in the grocery store was made with the same attention to quality, freshness and great flavor as a meal they might order from a Phillips Seafood Restaurant."

For more information, visit www.PhillipsFoods.com, or call 888-234-CRAB.

Linda's perfect lobster

Linda Bean's Perfect Maine lobster and shrimp are sailing into seafood counters nationwide.

Bean, the granddaughter of catalogue magnate L.L. Bean, has established a Port Clyde, Maine-based seafood company that focuses on live native lobsters shipped directly from her mid-coast wharves as well as products developed in her kitchen that feature Maine's wild-caught lobsters and native wild shrimp.

This is the first ever branding of Maine live lobsters, according to the company. All of her live lobsters will be tagged bearing her brand name and the source of those lobsters on a waterproof bracelet. Those coming from Port Clyde will wear a Port Clyde claw bracelet, and those from Vinalhaven, a Vinalhaven bracelet. The lobsters are wild caught by Maine fishermen using

sustainable practices.

Bean estimates her supply this year is 2.2 million pounds, about 10% of the entire supply in Knox County, Maine's leading lobster-supplying area. She hopes her company will revolutionize how lobsters go to market.

"There's a lot of unnecessary forfeiture and waste in the old model of lobstering relationships," Bean says. "Typically lobsters pass through at least five hands before they ever reach a table, and a huge percentage are shipped off to Canada and returned back to us at higher prices. Not a good formula," Bean states.

"Our currents off Port Clyde and Vinalhaven Island are world renowned for their cold waters and rocky terrain," Bean says. "Lobsters bearing my 'Linda Bean's Perfect Maine' brand come from ideal fishing grounds and from fishermen using sustainable practices. It's a perfect combination that needs not be squandered."

Linda Bean's Perfect Maine products consist of live native lobster, lobster meat, lobster stew, lobster rolls and wild caught Maine shrimp, all coming from her own mid-coast wharves.

For more information, visit www.lindabeansperfectmaine.com.

Hand-held chicken parm

Charlotte, N.C.-based Stefano Foods, Inc. has introduced Chicken Parmagiana Stromboli to its line of stuffed breads. The 15-ounce Stromboli is filled with chunks of white meat chicken, along with Stefano's authentic sauce blended with mozzarella, provolone and parmesan cheeses.

Each one is fully baked, packaged and labeled for easy retail handling and effective merchandising. Suggested retail is \$5.99 to \$6.99. Other Stromboli from Stefano include Sausage & Pepperoni, Spinach, Broccoli, Pepperoni and All Natural/Whole Grain Spinach and Broccoli varieties.

For more information, visit www.stefanofoods.com, or call 800-340-4019.

Marvelous meatloaf

Catelli Brothers, the Collingswood, N.J.-based premium veal and lamb purveyor, has added a meatball and meatloaf mix to its Catelli Italian Bistro line of premium, center-of-the-plate entrees that are ready to serve in just minutes.

Made with a custom blend of ground pork, beef and veal, the mix allows consumers to add their own fresh ingredients and seasoning to create homemade meatballs or meatloaf. The mix is available in a 1.25-pound modified-atmosphere package, as well as a 2-pound vacuum-sealed package. The mix will be weighed and priced by the retailer.

“The new mix has the same quality and old-world Italian style that our customers have come to expect from our Italian Bistro line,” says Tony Catelli, president and CEO. “Many people still enjoy making their own meatballs and meatloaf from scratch using an old family recipe, and we believe the new mix will be a real homerun with those consumers.”

For more information, visit www.catellibrothers.com, or call Monica D’Ancona at 856-869-9293, ext. 320.

Sugar-sweet peppers

Enza Zaden is introducing SweetGreen peppers, which it is billing as the sweetest green pepper on the market.

“SweetGreen is surprisingly sweeter than any other red or green bell pepper because of its extremely high natural sugar content,” says Arnold Reijers, business development manager for the firm based in Enkhuizen, The Netherlands. “It provides an interesting new flavor to favorite dishes and will inspire new favorites.”

Like other peppers, SweetGreens are packed with fiber, vitamin C, thiamine, vitamin B6, beta carotene and folic acid. SweetGreen peppers are greenhouse-grown using sustainable agricultural practices. Harvested by hand when they are most mature and have the highest sugar content, SweetGreen peppers are carefully packed and shipped to maintain their distinctive block shape and deep green color throughout the supply chain.

They keep their distinct green color even into the mature stage. The extreme sweetness and distinct color make SweetGreen perfect in salads or sliced with dip for a snack.

SweetGreen will be available to market in March 2009. As production increases, Enza Zaden expects to see SweetGreen used in the popular “stoplight” packages of red, yellow and green peppers.

For more information, contact Enza Zaden at info@enzazaden.nl.

Mushrooms packed with Vitamin D

Monterey Mushrooms, Inc. is launching its Sun Bella brand, which company official say is the first fresh mushroom line to provide at least 100% of the recommended daily intake (RDI) of Vitamin D in a single, three-ounce serving (about four or five mushrooms) through a natural sun ripening process.

The Sun Bella brand sun ripening process was developed through a collaborative research program with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) by exposing the mushrooms to ultra violet light, thus increasing the stable level of Vitamin D to a minimum of 100% of the level recommended by the FDA. The increase in Vitamin D does not include any additives,

supplements, or chemicals and the vitamin D is stable—maintaining its nutritional value even after cooking or freezing.

Mushrooms are the only fruit or vegetable that naturally contains Vitamin D—obtained through sun exposure the same way humans organically receive the nutrient. But, until now, mushroom growers haven't maximized their Vitamin D benefit, offering very low levels (4% of the daily value) of the pure ingredient.

For more information, visit www.montereymushrooms.com.

Showcasing sustainable produce

Village Farms highlighted its investment in the environment and product improvements for its Sinfully Sweet Campari tomatoes at this year's Produce Marketing Association (PMA) Fresh Summit in Orlando.

Officials for the producers of hydroponic produce say they have the highest Primus Food Safety scores in the industry as well as the tomato production facility with the highest yield achieved without artificial lighting and free of pesticides.

Low in acidity with an exceptionally sweet taste, Campari is known for its firm juicy flavor. The Campari variety is owned and bred by Enza Zaden Seed Company in Holland and distributed in North America through Westgro. Exceptional sales results of Sinfully Sweet Campari have further strengthened and secured Village Farms long term relationship with Westgro and Enza Zaden.

Campari tomatoes are just one of the many eco-friendly hydroponically grown varieties at Village Farms. Village Farms is on the forefront in water conservation, soil and land preservation, and integrated pest management, according to company officials. The grower's Hydroperfect greenhouses eliminate contamination from runoff that can carry E.coli, salmonella, or microorganisms.

For more information visit www.villagefarms.com.

Frequent eater rewards program

Cincinnati-based Chiquita Brands International has launched Fresh Funds—a program that rewards consumers for eating the healthful fresh fruits and vegetables that nutrition professionals recommend.

The direct-to-consumer loyalty program is designed to increase purchase frequency and promote awareness and trial for the company's Chiquita and Fresh Express brands. Targeted at professional women who place a priority on health and wellness, the Fresh Funds: Healthy Rewards for Healthy Living program rewards consumers with points for purchasing Chiquita and

Fresh Express products. Accumulated points, collected in the form of Fresh Fund logos on the backs of bags of Chiquita and Fresh Express healthy snacks and salads, can be used towards merchandise, prizes or charitable contributions.

Fresh Funds also enhances the overall image of the retailer because it creates a natural point of differentiation by offering high-end inspirational items as weekly prizes; the more points consumers earn, the more rewards they can win.

“Fresh Funds is another way we are able to meet the consumers’ need for great taste and good nutrition that delivers real value,” says Brian Kocher, president, North America, at Chiquita. “Consumers earn points that can be used to bid on exciting weekly online auction items, attain prizes or make charitable donations. Fresh Funds rewards customers, drives repeat sales, and brings shoppers to the produce aisle to maintain the healthy lifestyle habit of eating fresh fruits and vegetables daily.”

For more information, visit www.freshfunds.com.

Bring us more Sticky Toffee Pudding

The Sticky Toffee Pudding Company of Austin, Texas, has expanded its line of handmade product offerings to include a family pack.

An English delicacy, sticky toffee pudding is a moist cake made with fresh dates, espresso and vanilla in a buttery toffee sauce.

The family pack is a large 20-ounce pudding that can be cut into slices to feed four to eight people, and retails for \$10.99. “Last year we just had a single serving and lots of retailers were asking for a family pack,” says Tracy Claros, owner.

The company is also introducing Luxury Bread and Butter Puddings available in Brioche and Caramelized Orange and Luxury Chocolate flavors. They retail for \$3.29 to \$3.99 per single 5-ounce serving. The line is merchandised in either the refrigerated bakery case or the chef’s deli case.

For more information, visit www.stickytoffeepuddingcompany.com.

Grocery Headquarters Magazine
Macfadden Communications Group
333 Seventh Ave. 11th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10001
(212) 979-4800
Email: info@groceryheadquarters.com