

Unified naturally

March/April 2011

Spring is the time of year for fresh ideas and new beginnings. March and April bring two exciting annual events that truly inspire me and help set the tone for the remainder of the year.

The first event is the Natural Products Expo West in Anaheim, California. Not only do I get to put on a pair of sandals for the first time in seven months but this show always awakens the passion I have for this industry. I'm amazed at the innovation and the energy behind every product that is showcased.

The next event takes place April 22nd — Earth Day. This is a time to think about how our decisions impact the environment and our future. I'm inspired by my second grade daughter who has been learning about Earth Day and how tuned-in she is to her simple actions that affect our world. Earth Day is also the perfect time to educate our consumers about organics — the two go hand-in-hand.

This April, I encourage you to embrace spring by promoting organic products, celebrating Earth Day in a unique way or implementing a sustainability program at your store. We'd love to showcase your ideas in our next "Retailer Spotlight" article so think outside the box and get inspired!

Janet Sanders
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A Unified Grocers Company

U.S. Department of Agriculture Says Farmers May Grow Engineered Sugar Beets

The Department of Agriculture recently said that American farmers could resume growing genetically engineered sugar beets that had been previously barred by a federal judge. The decision could allow farmers to plant the biotech seeds this spring, avoiding a possible shortage of sugar later on.

"The decision is a win for consumers," said Duane Grant, a beet farmer in Rupert, Idaho, and chairman of the farmer-owned Snake River Sugar Company.

But environmental groups and organic farmers were dismayed by the decision.

In August, in response to a lawsuit filed by environmental groups and organic farmers, a federal district court judge in San Francisco revoked the approval of the beets.

The judge, Jeffrey S. White, said the Agriculture Department had to prepare an environmental impact statement assessing the effects of the biotech crop. His biggest concern was that the genetically engineered trait could spread to organic sugar beet crops or to other crops like Swiss chard and red table beets.

But some farmers said there might not be enough nonengineered seed available to satisfy demand. The government projected a possible 20 percent reduction in American sugar production.



As a result, the Agriculture Department was under pressure to allow the genetically engineered beets to be grown — and to do so in time for the spring planting season — even though it did not expect to finish the environmental impact statement until May 2012.

The solution was an interim "partial deregulation" of the beets that will hold until the impact statement is done and a final decision made. The partial deregulation was requested by the two companies that developed the crop, Monsanto and KWS, a German seed company.

Farmer-owned sugar processing companies will enter into compliance agreements with the government covering their growers. For seed production, growers will need permits and will be kept from growing such seeds within four miles of other sugar beet, table beet or chard seed fields.

Sugar beets are a fairly small crop, planted on a little over one million acres, mainly in northern states, and worth approximately \$1 billion. Beets account for roughly half of the American sugar supply, with the rest coming from sugar cane.

Source: Andrew Pollock, *nytimes.com*, 2/4/10



Berried Treasure — Meet the new “superfruits”



Maqui Berry — This berry has the potential to become the next acai. In fact, it's said to contain several times the antioxidants of acai. Maqui comes from the Patagonia region of Chile and has been used traditionally for general vitality, endurance and immunity.

Capuacu — This fruit comes from the Amazon rain forest and is rich in vitamins A, B, C, niacin and polyphenols. The seed has a sweet and sour taste that is pleasant and unique. It can also be used topically as a skin emollient and has a variety of potential applications in skincare.

Yumberry — This red berry from China looks a little like a raspberry and has a sour taste that is similar to cranberry. Yumberrys are loaded with oligomeric proanthocyanidins (OPC), antioxidants that give the berries their vibrant red color. OPCs are thought to fight free radicals and protect the heart by reducing high blood pressure and cholesterol.

Source: SPINS Content Development Group, spins.com, 2/2011

What in the is it?

Umami

Umami (IPA: [u: ma: mi]), is the scientifically proven “fifth taste” and literally means “savory deliciousness” in Japanese. Umami receptors sit on the tongue alongside those for sweet, sour, bitter and salty.

Umami was identified in 1908 by a scientist from Tokyo Imperial University. Umami taste is most notably in fish, cured meats, vegetables (e.g., mushrooms and ripe tomatoes) or green tea, and fermented and aged products.

Source: umamiinfo.com

industry buzz

Clorox Giving More Details on Product Ingredients



Clorox Company is giving customers more details on what ingredients go into its cleaning, disinfecting and laundry products.

The company said that it will now provide the specific identity of preservatives and dyes in its U.S. and Canadian versions of those products, adding to their existing lists of active ingredients.

Clorox will also give the fragrance ingredients used in U.S. and Canadian cleaning, disinfecting and laundry products. These ingredients will be given in numerical and alphabetical order.

In addition, the Oakland, California company is adding a notice on all product labels that says, “A list of this product’s ingredients is available at www.CloroxCSR.com.”

“We know how important it is to help people make informed choices about the products they use in and around their homes,” Clorox Chairman and CEO Don Knauss said in a recent statement.

Clorox started listing ingredients on its household and commercial cleaning, disinfecting and laundry products in the U.S. and Canada on its corporate website in January 2009.

Clorox, whose other products include Fresh Step cat litter and Hidden Valley Ranch salad dressing, reported that its second-quarter net income fell on softer sales and a charge to write down the value of its Burt’s Bees business.

Source: Associated Press, bloomberg.com, 2/8/10

Organic Trade Association Deeply Disappointed with Failure to Protect Farmer and Consumer Choice

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced plans to allow commercial planting of Forage Genetics International’s (FGI) Glyphosate-Tolerant Alfalfa genetically engineered to tolerate St. Louis-based Monsanto’s Roundup herbicide without any federal requirements to prevent contamination of the rest of alfalfa seed and plantings. The genetically engineered technology is licensed exclusively to the seed maker FGI by Monsanto.



The expected impact of this decision is far reaching, particularly to organic farmers. “This creates a perplexing situation when the market calls for a supply of crops free of genetic engineering. The organic standards prohibit the use of genetic engineering, and consumers will not tolerate the accidental presence of genetically engineered materials in organic products yet GE crops continue to proliferate unchecked,” said Christine Bushway, Executive Director and CEO of the Organic Trade Association (OTA).

The USDA organic program is the only federal food label that prohibits the use of GE crops or materials. Under current USDA policy, the organic sector bears the burden created by unchecked release of GE crops.

Source: Barbara Haumann, organicnewsroom.com, 1/27/10



the green paper

What's So Great About LED Lights?

LED lighting has many advantages over fluorescents.

- They use less energy because of much lower wattages.
- They don't produce the heat which makes refrigeration systems work harder.
- They last longer — as much as ten times as long as florescent lighting.
- They don't use ballasts that have to be replaced.
- They don't contain mercury and don't require protective covers.
- They produce more even and consistent light for superior merchandising.

What's not to like?

LED lighting is a booming business with many manufacturers and there are a large variety of products available.

Please contact Mike Sandberg if you'd like to discuss your options.



Green Stars

In each issue of our newsletter, we'll focus on a different area where energy can be saved and we'll profile a specific Unified store or store group that has benefited from these installations.

This time West Seattle Thriftway is spotlighted. Paul Kapioski has been very active in his efforts to reduce energy use in his store. He has installed a variety of efficiency measures with the latest being replacement of all his fluorescent case lights with LEDs.

West Seattle Thriftway is one of the first stores in the Northwest to do this. The lights look great and Paul is saving a substantial amount on his monthly power bill.

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Ask Mike!

A quick Q & A with
Mike Sandberg

Mike Sandberg of PECEI, helps bring energy efficiency to independent grocers throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Hey Mike, what can you tell us about saving money on lighting?

After refrigeration, lighting is the biggest component of a store's electrical bill. Most utilities have generous programs that will pay up to 70 percent of a project cost to replace overhead T-12 fluorescent lighting with T-8s. A variety of incentives are also available to replace fluorescent case lights with LEDs.

What's this I hear about T-12 fluorescents being discontinued?

As of July 1, 2012, T-12 fluorescent bulbs will no longer be manufactured in the U.S. Magnetic ballasts have already been discontinued. If you have T-12 lighting, now is the time to think about replacing them before current incentives disappear.

Is there a better solution for my track lighting?

You probably have MR16 Halogen lights in your tracks. These are 50-watt bulbs that last about four months. You can replace them with 7-watt LEDs that give you more consistent light, produce no heat, save energy and last about five years.

Grocer: West Seattle Thriftway

Owner: Paul Kapioski

Location: Seattle, Washington

Participating Stores: One

Project timeline:

Refrigeration measures from 2009 to December 2010. LED lighting completed December 2010.

“As we see other costs increase this is something you go in and make a big dent in the operating costs,” Kapioski said. “You have to turn the lights on no matter how much you sell. Power is one of the fixed costs you have no matter what. That goes directly to the bottom line.”



The History of a Movement

Each year, Earth Day — April 22 — marks the anniversary of what many consider the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

The idea came to Gaylord Nelson, then a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, after witnessing the ravages of the 1969 massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California. He realized that if he could tap into the emerging public consciousness about air and water pollution, it would force environmental protection onto the national political agenda. This led to the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts.

Source: earthday.org

green paper *case study*

Seattle City Light is helping grocers like West Seattle Thriftway install energy efficient lighting, refrigeration and other improvements so they can reduce their electricity consumption and save money.

Energy efficiency installations include the following:

Refrigeration

- Gaskets on reach-in doors
- Compressor controls
- Anti-sweat heater controls
- Efficient motors in walk-ins
- Efficient motors in cases
- Night covers on open cases



Lighting

- Fluorescent T-12 to LED (reach-in cases)
- Fluorescent T-12 to LED (open cases)
- Halogen track lights to LED track lights
- Fluorescent T-8 to LED (exterior canopy)
- Fluorescent T-8, 32 watt to T-8, 28 watt (overhead lighting)

Total savings = 660,000 kWh, 300 tons of greenhouse gases and over \$40,000 per year.

Check out the video on Seattle City Light’s Facebook page.

Will the Food and Drug Administration Ban Triclosan?

If you’ve ever used antibacterial soap, chances are you’ve rubbed the chemical triclosan on your hands. In fact, says the *Washington Post*, triclosan is so common that it’s been found in the urine of 75 percent of the population. *Mother Jones* (nonprofit news organization) reported that it’s also been detected in breast milk and 58 percent of U.S. waterways. The problem: Experts strongly suspect that the chemical disrupts the endocrine system and could contribute to antibiotic resistance.

The good news is that the FDA has finally decided to investigate the health effects of triclosan. Dr. Douglas Throckmorton, an FDA spokesperson told the *Post*, “For triclosan, the science is changing. Based on what we know, we don’t have evidence to suggest this chemical is a threat to human health. However, we have to understand better the health effects and we have to work with other agencies to collect that information and then decide whether or not we need to change how it’s regulated.”

But the soap industry trade group has already fought back. Says Brian Sansoni of the Soap and Detergent Association: “These products and ingredients have been reviewed, regulated and researched for decades,” he said. “We believe the science strongly supports the safety and efficacy of these products. It’s more important than ever that consumers continue to have access to these products. It’s a time of increased threats from disease and germs.”



Source: Kiera Butler, motherjones.com, 4/13/10

Photo: flickr/woodleywonderworks



janet's favorite items

new to the market



Taste Nirvana Coconut Water

Not on the coconut water bandwagon yet? Well, here's one for you. Taste Nirvana Coconut Water from Thailand is available in a 16.2 oz. aluminum can (with or without pulp). A family-owned and operated business since 1949, the plant holds all USDA and EU certificates for human rights, health and sanitation, employs many locals and is solely fueled by stream water. Beautifully packaged, competitively priced.



Taste #5 Umami Paste

Umami — the flavor bomb — will enhance any savory dish and no one does it better than Taste #5. Made with a tomato paste base, Parmesan cheese, porcini mushrooms, balsamic vinegar, black olives, anchovies and garlic, Taste #5 contains no MSG. Use it alone as a condiment or a little squeeze will add depth and flavor to almost any dish. I think “umami” will be a culinary buzzword this year — look for more products using umami on their packages.



Red's All Natural Burritos

Let me just say YUM! More than a meal, these burritos are packed with 11 oz. of veggies, rice, black beans and antibiotic and hormone-free meat. Created by a husband and wife team for “Burrito Tuesdays” at their home, the duo named these amazing burritos after their shelter-adopted dog, Red. And besides the fantastic taste, Red's All Natural Burritos contain an average of 30 g of protein per burrito! ¡Ay carumba!



Koops' Mustard

Okay, I know you're thinking, mustard, big deal. That's what I thought until I came across Koops.' This 125-year old family-owned business is the second-largest mustard manufacturer in the U.S. Their all natural, gluten-free mustard is very competitively priced against similar items in the category, and the yellow mustard gives you a great price and great margin against the good ol' grocery item. Koops' offers a 24 oz. yellow and 12 oz. squeeze varieties.

retailer *spotlight*

In January, Metropolitan Market's uptown store offered shoppers a unique month-long event called “Choose Your Path to Wellness.” Shoppers were treated to a total store shopping experience every Thursday through Sunday, highlighting over 60 vendor demonstrations and educational seminars including a naturopath (treatment of disease using natural agents such as water, air and herbs — not drugs or surgery) and an iridologist (study of the iris of the eye for indications of bodily health and disease).

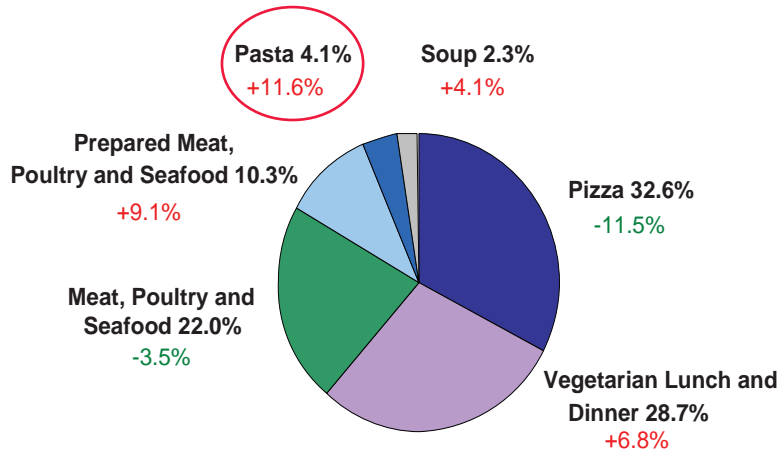
The response from customers was overwhelming, many thanking the Nutrition Products Coordinator, Ricci King, for the opportunity to learn about natural trends and new products. As a result of the wellness fair, customer counts were up significantly. The fair offered Metropolitan Market the opportunity to speak directly with their consumers while showcasing ways to differentiate their store in a highly competitive marketplace.

Contributed by Kim Oswalt,
Market Centre
Account Manager



The Right Frozen Entrées Will Heat Up Your Sales

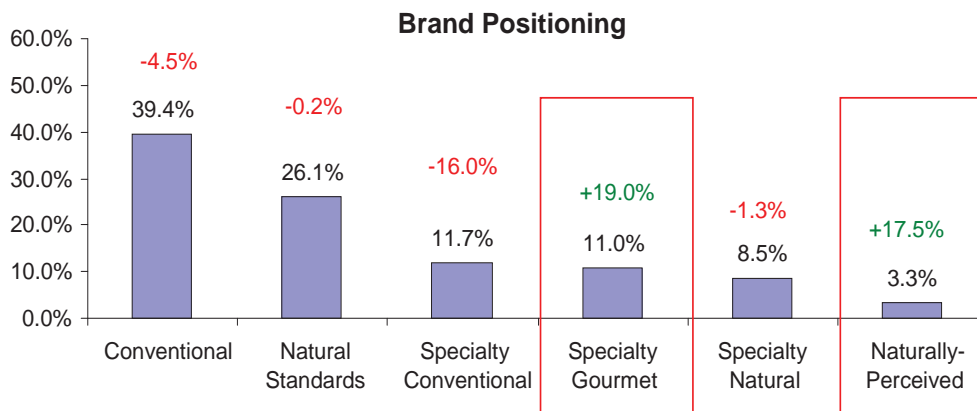
Frozen lunch and dinner entrées are \$13.6 million in sales in Specialty Gourmet Channel West stores. Do you have frozen pasta available to your customers? Frozen pasta is 4.1 percent of total category sales but showing double-digit growth at 11.6 percent. Take time to evaluate frozen pizza UPCs and discontinue underperformers. Frozen pizza is the largest sub-category but is showing 11.5 percent decline.



Did you know?

The 2011 Market Centre category review process is in full swing! Each month your Market Centre representative will be coming to your store with category and item insights!

Conventionally positioned items account for 39.4 percent of total frozen lunch and dinner entrée dollar sales, but are down versus year ago. Focus UPC expansion in specialty gourmet and naturally-perceived items as both are seeing double-digit growth rates.



Source: SPINSscan Specialty Gourmet, West Region, 52 we 12/25/10

If you have any questions or are interested in becoming a SPINS retail partner, please contact Beth Johnson at bjohnson@unifiedgrocers.com.

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