

BY
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RADICE

Grocery Headquarters' Trailblazer Awards recognize excellence in 19 health and wellness categories.

On the path to *wellness*

Since 2006, **Grocery Headquarters' annual Trailblazer Awards** have honored health and wellness companies that dare to stand apart and are true leaders in innovation.

This year, the staff judged products in 19 categories, considering factors such as taste profile, ingredients, packaging and intrinsic health benefits. Without further ado, the winners in their respective categories are as follows:

* BAKED GOODS

Building on its reputation for making healthy tortillas and wraps, Santa Rosa, Calif.-based La Tortilla Factory introduced a line of authentic handmade-style corn tortillas. A blend of corn and wheat, the tortillas are available in three varieties: Yellow Corn, White Corn and Chipotle. According to company officials, these are the first tortillas available nationally that deliver on taste while eliminating the frustration associated with corn tortillas that can crack when folded or rolled.

The company has a long history of introducing products that appeal to contemporary consumers' ever-changing eating habits, offering Fat Free and Low-Carb/High Fiber lines of tortillas as well as a Smart & Delicious line of soft wraps made with extra virgin olive oil.



"We've managed to incorporate 14 grams of whole grain and incredible flavor using natural ingredients into each of our White Corn, Yellow Corn and Chipotle Hand Made Style Corn Tortillas," says Jan Remak, executive director, sales and marketing for La Tortilla Factory. "They are truly unique and one of the most fun foods on the market. La Tortilla Factory has met an unmet consumer need for those aggravated with traditional corn tortillas that can easily fall apart. Our Hand

Made Style Corn Tortillas have only 90 calories, one gram of fat, no trans fats and the delicious sweet taste of corn. Like our other wraps and tortillas, our Hand Made Style Corn Tortillas are a smart and easy way to create delicious meals that are also better for consumers and their families."

For more information, visit www.latortillafactory.com.



*** BAKING**

Unbleached, all-purpose cake flour is one of the latest offerings from the King Arthur Flour Co. According to officials for the for Norwich, Vt.-based company, it is the first national all-natural, unbleached cake flour on the market, which means consumers can now enjoy tender moist cakes without the chemicals. As experts in the

flour category, company officials spent months testing a variety of flours and carefully selected the right blend to offer the best results for baking cakes that offers a high rise and a medium crumb. The unbleached flour is milled from 100% U.S.-grown wheat.

"We felt there was a need in the marketplace for an unbleached cake flour that fits in with our strong commitment to pure, high-quality flour and from all indications there was a market of people who were waiting for just such a product," says marketing director Tom Payne. "There definitely was an unmet need that we were able to satisfy. It's rare these days that a new product is truly unique."

For more information, visit www.kingarthurfLOUR.com.



*** BEVERAGES**

In a mature and often crowded category such as beverages, standing out is no easy feat. The Switch Beverage Co., based in Darien, Conn., found a way to do that through its line of Switch drinks. In 2001, the company's founder Mike Gilbert, who was unemployed at the time, came up with the idea for the company after he was mixing soda water and juice and accidentally spilled some on his pants. Deciding there had to be a better way

he eventually created the Switch drink. Among the company's unique flavors are watermelon strawberry, kiwi berry, orange tangerine and it's latest flavor, lemon-lime.

Containing 100% sparkling juice, one can of Switch equals two fruit servings as well as 100% of the daily recommended value of vitamin C.

What it doesn't contain is added sugar, corn syrup, artificial sweeteners or bitter taste, according to company officials. "Consumers are migrating toward healthier alternatives, but were frustrated that there were no healthy carbonated options out there. We created our drink to give consumers a nice nutritional bang for their buck," says president Maura Mottolose. "It has the bold taste and nutritional value of a fortified juice, with the carbonated refreshment of a soda. The goal was to make Switch be different and encourage people to make better choices. We are proud that we are one of the only brands offering a carbonated drink with 100% juice and the flavor profile mainstream soda consumers are looking for."

For more information, visit www.switchbev.com.

*** CEREAL**

With its two new Sunrise cereals—Crunchy Maple and Crunchy Vanilla—officials at Nature's Path based in Richmond, B.C., Canada, aspired to create healthy, great-tasting cereals that happen to be gluten-free. These two whole-grain, gluten-free cereals, which consist of an organic blend of corn, rice, flax, quinoa, buckwheat and amaranth, offer



sweet, nutritious options for those avoiding gluten, company officials say.

According to Bonnie Smythe, the lead on research and development for the Sunrise cereal line, the goal was to offer consumers breakfast alternatives that had a better nutritional profile. "Often, gluten-free products are not very tasty and usually are not a powerhouse of nutrition," she says. "We realize that gluten-free consumers want both flavor and function, which we accomplished with some novel ingredients."

For more information, visit naturespath.com.

*** CLEANING/HOUSEHOLD**



When they created their green household paper line, the executives at Marcal Small Steps had a very clear goal in mind—saving trees. Small Steps Paper towels, napkins, facial tissue and bath tissue are made from 100% recycled paper and manufactured without chlorine bleach, plus they are hypoallergenic and nearly lint free. Not only is it helping the environment, Marcal Small Step products are competitively priced

because officials at Marcal think consumers should not have to pay a lot more just to go green.

"Marcal believes that making paper products responsibly and conserving our natural resources can make a difference in the future for all of us," says CEO Tim Spring. "It is awards like these that help to reinforce our mission. We take pride in noting that this goal is one we've been working toward for more than half a decade. Since 1950, Marcal has been making paper from recycled paper not trees. With our new Small Steps line of 100% recycled paper products, we continue to offer consumers what they want—a product that saves money, saves trees and works great."

For more information, visit www.marcal-smallsteps.com.



*** DAIRY**

La Farge, Wis.-based Organic Valley, known for its broad array of organic dairy products, gets a nod for its new, multi-use, pourable organic, low-fat yogurt, available in 32 oz. plain, berry and vanilla flavors. While other yogurts are typically sweetened with cane sugar, Organic Valley's

vanilla and berry flavors are made with agave nectar. In addition, the vanilla yogurt is made with Fair Trade vanilla, while the berry yogurt contains whole berry puree. In addition, the yogurts have no added gums or stabilizers. An excellent source of fiber and calcium, each serving contains two grams of organic inulin, a probiotic from organic Jerusalem artichokes, according to company officials.

"Organic yogurt is the top new item request from our consumers, so we're excited to add bottled yogurt to our lineup," says Tripp Hughes, director of category management for Organic Valley.

For more information, visit www.naturespath.com.



*** FROZEN**

Wellness shoppers might not think of frozen pizza as a healthy option, but Tualatin, Ore.-based Pacific Natural Foods is looking to change that with its all-natural line of artisan-style frozen pizzas. Made with the company's signature fire-baked crust, the pizzas feature an all-natural lineup of ingredients, three cheeses and traditional meat toppings Available in All Natural Uncured Pepperoni, All Natural Supreme, All Natural Uncured Canadian Bacon & Pineapple, All Natural BBQ Chicken and All Natural Herb Garlic Chicken pizza. There are three servings per package and calories range from 250 to 290 per serving.

According to Kevin Tisdale, marketing director at Pacific Natural Foods, the line was created to address the growing need consumers had for a lighter, healthy, convenient, healthy dinner option. "One of the trends we're seeing in the marketplace is that consumers want convenient foods, but they don't want to sacrifice on taste or quality," says Tisdale.

For more information, visit www.pacificnaturalfoods.com.



*** GLUTEN FREE**

With the goal of improving the quality of life for gluten sensitive people, The Hain Celestial Group, based in Melville, N.Y., has created the Gluten Free Café brand, a line of certified gluten-free foods specifically developed for those with gluten intolerance. The company recently expanded its offerings with the addition of two new frozen entrees: Homestyle Chicken and Vegetables and Savory Chicken Pilaf.

Kim McGowan, category group manager-frozen foods, non-dairy beverages, says the goal in creating the line was to offer consumers a dedicated brand of gluten-free choices that are flavorful and nutritious. "This is the only line of gluten-free foods that are certified and fortified with a prebiotic fiber, as well as vitamins and minerals typically lacking in gluten-free diets," she says, adding that it is also the first frozen entrée line to be certified by the Gluten Intolerance Group of America. "Packaged in a single serving tray, the entrées are ready in just minutes in the microwave.

For more information, visit www.myglutenfreecafe.com.



*** HOMEOPATHICS**

Officials at Los Angeles, Calif.-based Hyland's know there's nothing pleasant or convenient about aches and pains, which is why they launched an arnica-based muscle therapy line in three different delivery formats. The line includes Arnica 30X, Muscle Therapy Gel with Arnica and Muscle Therapy Strips with Arnica. Hyland's new products offer relieve from soreness, muscle pain, swelling and bruising resulting from an injury or over exertion.

"Hyland's knows that our customers lead busy, active lifestyles and don't have time to be slowed down by aches and pains from their workouts or other activities," says Amy Fox, director of product innovation and development. "

For more information, visit www.hylands.com.



*** KID FRIENDLY**

At first glance the product's packaging may look like something the astronauts would use, but it is actually a new line of organic toddler food from Brooklyn, N.Y.-based HAPPYBABY. According to company officials, HAPPYTOT is the first and only baby food fortified with Salba, the richest whole food source of Omega-3 fatty acids, which studies have shown are crucial for vision and brain development as well as immune function.

"We are thrilled to offer the only baby food fortified with Salba," says Shazi Visram, CEO and founder of HAPPYBABY. "The super-grain is gluten free and contains so many nutrients in high concentrations—from Omega-3s and antioxidants to calcium, iron, and more—which are key for toddler growth and development making it the ideal application for infant food."

For more information, visit www.happybabyfood.com.



*** MEAL MAKER**

Known for its wide array of dry grocery, organic specialty food, Clinton, Mich.-based Eden Foods recently expanded its organic meal options with the addition of four meatless chilies: Black Bean & Quinoa, Great Northern & Barley, Kidney Bean & Kamut and Pinto Bean & Spelt. In addition to the whole grains, the chilies include Maitake and Shiitake mushrooms imported from Japan, 100% organic vegetables and spices.

According to company officials, the chilies are packed with protein and fiber and contain 50% less sodium than other brands. "Eden Organic Chilies are clearly unique. They are made with family farm organic beans and 100% whole grains, contain no textured vegetable protein, have half the sodium of most brands and are the only chilies available in cans with bisphenol-A free linings," says Sue Becker, manager of the marketing department at Eden Foods.

For more information, visit www.edenfoods.com.



*** NATURAL BEAUTY**

In response to the growing number skin infections, Simi Valley, Calif.-based Derma e Natural Bodycare, one of the pioneers in the development of high-performance, antioxidant skin care solutions, developed the Skinbiotics line of products that offers natural antibacterial, antifungal and antiseptic protection.

According to vice president Linda Miles, Skinbiotics is ideal for those with skin rashes, insect bites, and abrasions because it soothes the skin and stimulates the healing process. "Research shows that these combined ingredients can help address a wide array of organisms that adversely affect the skin," says Miles. "Our goal was to formulate a natural skincare solution to help restore balance and produce healthy skin." With a quarter century of experience, the company produces more than 90 products that are paraben free, cruelty free and 100% vegetarian.

For more information, visit www.dermae.com.



*** NUTRITION/ENERGY BARS**

One glance at its appearance and a bite of the product and it is clear that Everlast Energy Bars stand out among a crowded group of competitors.



Recognizing a new bar would need staying power to survive the competition, the company created a bar that not only focused on taste, it created a bar with an exceptional nutritional profile, company officials note.

According to Andrew Lippman, chief marketing officer for New York -based Ever-Nutrition, each Everlast Energy Bar contains 14g of protein, 4g of fiber, 20 vitamins and minerals (including 200% DV of Vitamin B-12, and 100% DV of Vitamins C & E). For calorie-conscious consumers, each bar is less than 200 calories and contains B-12 and Yerba Mate for added energy, as well as all-natural superfoods for high-quality nutrition. "We wanted to create a product that was in line with our overall company goal—to create serious nutrition for people who are serious about their fitness," notes Lippman.

For more information, visit www.evernutrition.com.

*** ON THE GO**



Family-owned and operated Amy's Kitchen, based in Santa Rosa, Calif., has added two hand-crafted wraps to its lineup. The Breakfast Scramble Wrap

is a combination of tofu, vegetables and cheese in an organic flour tortilla. The Teriyaki Wrap has as sweet and sour flavor, with organic rice, vegetables and marinated tofu.

Steve Warnert, director of sales and marketing for Amy's, says that the wraps were launched to offer variety for people on the go who demand great flavor and nutrition. These two new items join Amy's existing line of wraps and burritos. Amy's products have no trans fats, MSG, preservatives or GMOs. Sold in the freezer case the wraps heat in minutes. "Amy's line of wraps brings together the best of Amy's past and present. For years our customers have loved our Mexican burritos so playing off the success we achieved with our Indian meals we decided to launch a wrap line featuring many of the authentic flavors, spices and wholesome ingredients our customers have come to look for from Amy's in a more convenient format," says Warnert.

For more information, visit www.amys.com.

*** PASTA**



Known for its broad array of all-natural, unrefined whole grain offerings Hodgson Mill based in Effingham, Ill., has recently entered the pasta category with the introduction of its gluten-free pastas made from whole grain brown rice. An alternative to traditional white pasta, Hodgson Mill's gluten-free version is the only one featuring the addition

of milled flax seed, a rich source of Omega-3s. Aside from being wheat and gluten free, the pasta is also dairy and egg free. In addition, the pastas meet the requirements of allergy-sensitive consumers—

crafted with the highest quality in a strictly maintained gluten-free manufacturing facility. Available in five varieties: Angel Hair, Spaghetti, Penne, Linguini and Elbow.

"Based on the success Hodgson Mill has experienced with our gluten-free baking and ingredient products, we are confident our new pasta line will be a great hit category," says executive vice president Paul Kirby. "We worked hard to make it just as delicious as our other popular pastas, so it would appeal to people seeking out gluten-free foods their whole family could enjoy."

For more information, visit www.hodgesonmill.com.

*** PET**



Known for its line of natural wheat litter products, Swheat Scoop has introduced a variety of litter designed specifically for people with more than one cat. With a focus on clumping faster and firmer, Multi-Cat Swheat Scoop also features outstanding deodorizing power, notes Mark Hughes,

general manager for Swheat Scoop, based in Detroit Lakes, Minn.

Hughes says that traditional clumping litters tend to contain chemical and fragrance additives and when poured send clouds of dust into the air. "Wheat contains enzymes that naturally address odor issues while the wheat starches work to form solid clumps when exposed to moisture," he says. "What's more, low dust means less tracking. All these features and more make wheat ideal for all litter boxes, including the automatic ones," he explains, adding that Multi-Cat Swheat Scoop is also 100% biodegradable and certified flushable.

For more information, visit www.swheatscoop.com.

*** PRODUCT REFORMULATION**



When Swanson set out to reformulate its broth it went with a less is more approach. Today, Swanson's 100% Natural Chicken Broth contains no artificial ingredients or preservatives, which according to company officials makes it the only 100% natural canned chicken broth with no MSG added, when compared to other major brands. One thing that hasn't changed is the taste—the broth is made from a combination of simmered chicken broth, garden vegetables and sun-drenched herbs.

"According to our research, broth users consider '100% natural' and 'No MSG' to be extremely important product attributes when deciding to buy broth or stock," says Chris McGown, brand manager for Swanson Broth and Stock, a division of Camden, N.J.-based Campbell Soup Co. "The introduction of 100% Natural Swanson Chicken broth is meant to satisfy the needs of today's health conscious broth users and because it contains no added MSG, it stands out among other major brands of broth."

For more information, visit www.swansonbroth.com.

*** SNACKS**

Known for its selection of natural Asian foods, Annie Chun's recently entered the snack category with the addition of its new Roasted Seaweed



Snacks. Available in two flavors, Sesame and Wasabi, the Seaweed Snacks have just 30 calories and 2.5 grams of fat per serving, making them a great alternative to conventional snack options. Similar to the Japanese nori used for sushi, Seaweed Snacks are crispier and seasoned with salt. Both varieties are free of MSG and other preservatives and are vegan, gluten-free and low fat.

"Roasted Seaweed has long been a favorite choice for snacking in Asia and we want to introduce Americans to this great product," says Diana Wang, director of marketing for the San Rafael, Calif.-based company. "Our dried seaweed is roasted with a flavorful sesame oil and then lightly salted to create a crispy, delicious, but light snack. Seaweed is high in vitamins and minerals, but very low in fat, which makes it a great, healthy snack. Annie Chun's is excited about introducing a delicious yet very healthy snack alternative to the market. And kids love it!"

For more information, visit www.anniechun.com.

* SOUP

When it comes to a staple such as soup, it's not always easy to create something new and innovative, let alone natural and homemade tasting. Chelsea, Mass.-based Kettle Cuisine recently managed to do just



that with the addition of its Reuben Soup, which puts a new twist on the classic comfort food. The Reuben Soup has corned beef, Swiss cheese and sauerkraut, just like the famous sandwich. This is just one of six new soups Kettle debuted this year, bringing the company's total soup offerings to more than 50.

The company's motto is "We make soup the right way, with no short cuts and nothing artificial." According to company officials, Kettle uses only all-natural ingredients in its soups—from chicken raised on a vegetarian diet without antibiotics and beef raised without the use of any growth promoting hormones or antibiotics to cream sourced from local New England dairies that pledge to not use artificial growth hormones. "Our goal is to always cook soups with ingredient statements that read like recipes rather than chemistry experiments and that only contain easily identifiable real food ingredients," says Levon Kurkjian, managing director of marketing for Kettle. "With the interest in comfort foods with a twist on the rise, we have seen some of our more indulgent soups like Loaded Potato and Buffalo Chicken perform well for our retail customers so we wanted to give them another variety to help meet this growing demand and the Reuben just felt right."

For more information, visit www.kettlecuisine.com.

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