



*Sfpa*

# FOOD FORUM

SOUTHEASTERN FOOD PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION

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<http://www.sfpa-food.org>

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## President's Message



Happy New Year everyone! As we enter the New Year it is customary to reflect back on the Association's previous year, and we had a wonderful year that culminated in one of the most successful conventions ever. A special "thank you" goes to our past president, Mike Caminiti, whose leadership and dedication contributed greatly to the success of the Hilton Head convention.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the silent auction and raffle at the Saturday night banquet. Your participation helps to raise dollars that fund scholarships and endowments to Food Science students in universities in the Southeast. Over \$7,500 was raised this year for this worthy cause.

The Hilton Head convention was very successful, with a platform of great speakers and interesting topics. While SFPA is a strong Association with a solid membership and rich heritage, we must continue to focus on building our membership. We ask you to promote the SFPA and to assist us in identifying and contacting new potential members. We are also exploring some exciting new programs, like the Technical Meeting which will be held in the Spring, and Southern Hospitality which will bring more value to our membership.

Join me in welcoming our new board members, Larry Campbell, Joe Smyth, and Tony Treadway. Your Board of Directors met on January 17 & 18 to begin work on speakers and topics for our 2008 convention, which will be held October 23-26 at the Marriott Resort at Grand Dunes in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

I am looking forward to 2008 and the continued growth and success of this Association.

Mike Carter, SFPA President  
Mt. Olive Pickle Company

## **SFPA 34th Annual Conference Myrtle Beach, South Carolina October 23 - 26, 2008**

Mark your calendars now for the 2008 Annual Meeting held at the Marriott Resort at Grand Dunes in Myrtle Beach, S.C. It is never too early to start making plans to attend. This is a beautiful facility situated directly on the beach. Many rooms will be over-looking the ocean, so you will want to get your reservations in early.



## Preparing Dinner in the U.S.

Center on Everyday Lives of Families (CELf) researchers studied 32 Los Angeles families between 2002 and 2004 to better understand how busy families balance work demands with family life. All of the families who volunteered to participate had at least two children, one of them 8–10 years of age. They owned their own homes and had an annual income of at least \$45,000. Both parents in these families each worked at least 30 hours a week, and most worked considerably more. Over the course of the study, we filmed dinner preparation and consumption on two weeknights for each family. Although our observations may well have influenced participant behavior, neither participants nor researchers knew that food preparation would later be studied in detail.

Of 64 weeknight dinners that were filmed, 70% were cooked at home and did not include any food from a restaurant. 19% of the other meals contained take-out food, and the rest were eaten in a restaurant or a relative's house. The following results were based on the 45 home-cooked dinners. What families ate: home cooked dinners almost always contained at least one protein source, one starch, and one vegetable. In 80% of the meals, the protein was meat or poultry. Fruit was also served in 20% of the dinners. The protein, starch, and vegetable components of the meal were often combined, so that a one- or two-dish meal was possible. One-third of weeknight dinners were cooked "from scratch," using primarily raw ingredients. One-fourth of dinners relied almost entirely on convenience foods, such as pre-prepared frozen items or boxed mixes. The other dinners fell somewhere in the middle, incorporating both convenience foods and dishes prepared from raw ingredients.

## Consumers Seeking More Green and Organic Products According to Mambo Sprouts 2008 Buying Trends Survey

Despite a tougher year ahead, consumers are willing to pay more for green environmentally friendly products in 2008. That's according to a recent MamboTrack™ study by Mambo Sprouts Marketing, the leader in natural and organic product marketing and promotions, which surveyed the buying habits of 1,000 natural product consumers and forecasted their expected purchases for the coming year.

With deterioration in the housing market, soaring energy costs, and tight financing ahead,

economists are predicting a decline in consumer spending during 2008. Yet many consumers still see green as a priority. Most natural consumers indicated they would pay more for environmentally friendly products, with seven in 10 consumers willing to pay up to 20% more. Only one in 10 respondents said they were unwilling to pay extra for green products and services.

Survey results showed consumers aren't just scrutinizing the products they buy, but want to support businesses and retail stores that have green sustainable practices. More than 7 in 10 indicated it was important (41%) or very important (32%) to do business with companies that were environmentally responsible. For the coming year, while price was the overriding factor (60%) in their decision of where to shop, 1 in 2 or more consumers also identified the selection of healthy organic products (56%) and availability of organic produce (49%) as key factors as well.

When it comes to grocery spending in particular, natural category consumers indicated they were most likely to choose organic options for produce (60%), dairy products (54%) and child/baby food products (50%). Natural and organic consumers plan to increase their use of environmentally-friendly grocery bags with 63% expected to increase their use of these green reusable bags and 62% expected to decrease their use of disposable plastic bags in 2008.

Green restaurants, hybrid electric cars, eco-clothing and eco-travel/vacations are among the earth-friendly products and services prospect consumers are targeting for 2008. About 7 in 10 or more natural and organic product consumers already use energy saving light bulbs (77%), recycled paper (69%), environmentally friendly cleaning supplies (68%) and energy efficient appliances (64%). Six in ten respondents indicated significant interest in expanding their earth-friendly practices by dining at "green" or eco-friendly restaurants (64%), buying a hybrid/electric car (61%), eco-friendly travel and vacations (60%) and buying clothing made from earth-friendly materials such as organic cotton, bamboo and hemp (61%).

Natural consumers have already checked off the low-lying fruit when it comes to green purchasing and environmental responsibility," says Matthew A. Saline, CEO of Mambo Sprouts Marketing, a multi-faceted direct marketing company that operates exclusively in the health, natural and organic products arena. "Organic dining, hybrid cars and eco-friendly fashion are the logical next step, and there are a growing number of consumers out there ready to take it."

## Why Eat Dairy Products?

First and most importantly, dairy products are your richest source in calcium, which is used by your body to build strong teeth and bones. Also, calcium is used by your nervous system, muscles, and heart to function properly. In addition to the incredible source of protein dairy products give you, you also receive protein, B vitamins, and other important minerals your body needs to function. While whole milk dairy products do contain the benefits of all other dairy products, they are high in fat, most specifically saturated fat, and calories. A healthy alternative to whole milk dairy products is fat-free and low-fat milk products. These products have the same nutritional benefits without the excessive fat and calories. Some dairy products contain probiotics, or good bacteria. This good bacteria may protect you from cancer and high cholesterol.

## Consumers Trust OU to Ensure Highest Standards of Kosher, Food Safety and Cleanliness

Amid the explosive growth of the U.S. kosher food industry in recent years, a new survey has found the OU symbol of the Orthodox Union to be consumers' preferred kosher certification in the packaged goods marketplace. Jewish respondents consistently named OU their top choice for ensuring the food they purchase meets the most stringent kosher certification, while non-Jews perceived the OU to signify the highest level of product safety and cleanliness.

The Kosher Certification Symbol Study was conducted by WAC Survey and Strategic Consulting in late December and early January 2007. The online survey questioned 1730 randomly selected kosher food consumers about their food buying habits and asked them to rate six kosher symbols on multiple attributes such as familiarity, reliability, freshness, quality and taste. Jews and non-Jews participated in the study, including Muslims, lactose intolerant and health conscious individuals, who purchase kosher food on occasion.

### *The Findings: The Power of OU Certification*

Of those surveyed:

- 82% can recognize a kosher certification symbol
- 66% usually choose to buy a product with a kosher certification symbol

- Six of 10 who don't buy store brands would do so if it had a preferred kosher certification symbol.

### *When OU was compared with other kosher symbols:*

- OU was the best known and most widely recognized kosher certification symbol by a wide margin among Jewish and non-Jewish respondents.
- OU is the symbol most often on the food purchased by respondents by a 3 to 1 margin.
- Respondents named OU as the symbol they would select as their first choice to purchase by a margin of more than 2 to 1.
- Consumers' overall opinion of OU certification is significantly higher than for all other certification symbols.
- By a 2 to 1 margin, OU is the symbol that comes to mind when a respondent is asked to think of kosher certification.
- Kosher-observant Jews perceive OU to be "the standard" of kosher certification, and purchase OU-certified products over products with other certifications by a 4 to 1 margin.
- "This study confirms the tremendous value of kosher certification in general, and of OU certification in particular," said Rabbi Moshe Elefant, Executive Rabbinic Coordinator of the OU.

## Culinary Shocker: Cooking Can Preserve, Boost, Nutrient Content of Vegetables

Taken from the Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry.

In a finding that defies conventional culinary wisdom, researchers in Italy report that cooking vegetables can preserve or even boost their nutritional value in comparison to their raw counterparts, depending on the cooking method used. Their study was scheduled for the Dec. 26 issue of ACS' Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry, a bi-weekly publication.

Nicoletta Pellegrini and colleagues note that although many people maintain that eating raw vegetables is more nutritious than eating cooked ones, a small but growing number of studies suggest that cooking may actually increase the release of some nutrients. However, scientists are seeking more

complete data on the nutritional properties of cooked vegetables, the researchers say.

In the new study, the researchers evaluated the effects of three commonly used Italian cooking practices — boiling, steaming, and frying — on the nutritional content of carrots, zucchini and broccoli. Boiling and steaming maintained the antioxidant compounds of the vegetables, whereas frying caused a significantly higher loss of antioxidants in comparison to the water-based cooking methods, they say. For broccoli, steaming actually increased its content of glucosinolates, a group of plant compounds touted for their cancer-fighting abilities. The findings suggest that it may be possible to select a cooking method for each vegetable that can best preserve or improve its nutritional quality.



## SFPA Scholarship Awardees

- Clemson - Saka Kolodzaike and Ruby Poon
- University of Georgia - Ali McDaniel
- NC State University - Rachel E. Campbell and Jonathon R. Layfield
- University of Tennessee - Thomas Smith



## 2007 Annual Conference Statistics

The 2007 annual conference was a great success, with 105 people in attendance and 19 of those being new members. Through the enormous generosity of our members, we generated over \$7500 in scholarship money. As you know, providing scholarship money for Food Science majors at The University of Florida, North Carolina University, The University of Tennessee, Clemson University, Virginia Technological University and the University of Georgia continues to be one of the major goals for our Association.

## New Era Canning Recall

New Era Canning Company of New Era, MI recently voluntarily recalled 171 cases/6 cans per case of 6 lbs, 5 oz GFS Fancy Blue Lake Cut Green Beans, because they may have been contaminated with *Clostridium botulinum*, a bacterium which can cause life-threatening illness or death from botulism. Consumers were warned not to use the product even if it does not look or smell spoiled.

The canned green beans were distributed to foodservice customers in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia and sold through GFS Marketplace stores in Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The canned green beans are packaged in 6 lbs, 5 oz cans under the GFS brand (GFS reorder #118737; UPC 93901 11873) with lot code 19H7FL printed on the end of the can. No other reorder numbers or lots are included in this recall.

No illnesses have been reported to date in connection with this problem.

The potential contamination of the product was found through testing by the Food and Drug Administration. New Era Canning in conjunction with the US Food and Drug Administration and the Michigan Department of Agriculture is thoroughly evaluating all processes and procedures to determine the cause of the problem.

## Bakery Seeds on the Rise

**Sesame seed is on fire.** The Indian market is now at a 30 year high thanks to strong demand from Korea and China which had a crop failure with yields down about 60%. Some supplier defaults have been reported. Central American and Mexican seed priced even higher.

**Caraway is also very strong.** Canada and Finland were affected by shrinking acreage. Throughout the Canadian prairies, land for food crops has been outbid by ethanol converters. Prices escalated further as the Canadian dollar hits new highs against the US greenback. European production was severely curtailed by drought and heat this past summer.

**Poppy is also much higher.** The seeds were severely hurt by the summer European heat wave. Farmers are hoarding product as prices have more than doubled since last year. Australia is sold out for their February 2008 crop, leaving no other supply options until mid 2008.

## **Mediterranean Oregano Both Short and Shorter**

The 2007 Turkish oregano harvest is over and was more than 50% short as compared to last year. "Short" is also a good description of the actual plants as lack of rain stunted their growth. Accordingly, they yielded many fewer leaves than a normal healthy plant.

With zero carryover either at source, in the U.S. or anywhere around the world, prices rose to levels never seen before. Current offers are more than double the price last spring and up to five times higher than a year ago. These levels seem to be holding firm. There is a long way until the next crop in the Summer of 2008.

There are numerous reports of adulteration with various other herbs such as Mersin and olive leaves. End users looking to maintain quality should be prepared to pay up for real oregano with the right volatile oil levels. For good quality, prices have more than tripled over last year.

## **Health Conscious Consumers Affect Beverage Business**

A consumer shift toward healthier eating has place focus on the beverage business. Based on Simmons NCS and population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of people trying to eat healthier grew by 30 million between 2002 and 2006. Moreover, consumers are heeding the proliferation of news linking food and beverage consumption with health. In 2005, the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture released a study revealing that the diet of 93% of Americans lacks the recommended amounts of essential vitamin E. Additionally, some 30% of Americans are deficient in vitamin C, some 44% do not take enough vitamin A, and 50% do not get an adequate intake of magnesium. Of the consumers who purchase functional beverages, 43% do so to make up for sometimes less than healthy eating and 34% do so to supplement already healthy eating habits. Unsurprisingly, brands featuring essential vitamins and minerals have found a favorable consumer response among a population looking to supplement its eating. Moreover, the number of new functional beverage products claiming vitamin/mineral benefits steadily increased between 2002 and 2006.

Consumers are paying attention to their growing waistlines as well. The incidence of obesity among adults age 18 and older increased from 56% in 1994 to 66.3% in 2004, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Empty calories consumed in the form of beverages may be partially responsible for this trend, as Americans consume 22% of all calories from beverage. Most of these calories come from a combination of regular soft drinks, fruit drinks, and presweetened teas, which all add calories but do not contribute significantly to the daily requirement of essential nutrients. Faced with the adverse consequences of obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes consumers are getting motivated to choose beverages that aid in weight loss and management. Of those who buy functional drinks, one in four do so to avoid consuming empty calories and one in three make that decision to lose or maintain weight.

## **How Much Do the Elderly Spend on Food?**

The United States food industry is facing remarkable challenges in the coming decades coinciding with the rise in the number of elderly citizens. Not only do elderly people eat less than active young adults, but they also tend to dine out less often. If America's elderly citizens meet their growth expectations, growth in food expenditures is likely to fester. According to a review by J. Michael Harris and Noel Blisard, in 1997 households with members ages 65-74 spent \$5.23 more on food per week than households with members ages 75+ and less than households with members ages 45-64. Citizens ages 75+ spent more money on nonalcoholic beverages and fruit than any other age group while citizens ages 65-74 spent more money on processed vegetables, poultry, cereal products, and dairy products. Similarly, the age group 65-74 spent \$13.04 less than all age groups. The U.S. bureau of the Census projects that the number of citizens ages 65+ will grow over 50% within the next fifteen years compared to only 17% growth in the total U.S. population. The increasing elderly population makes the growth of the U.S. food industry look grim.

## Selected Photos from the 2007 Annual Meeting



The new President and spouse



Down from Michigan and enjoying Southern warmth



The "Boss" and spouse!



Golf Champs!



Lucky Winner!



Tennis Champ!



Golf Winners



Changing of the Guard

For more photos of the 2007 meeting, check the web site at [www.sfpa-food.org](http://www.sfpa-food.org).



<http://www.sfpa-food.org>

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