



Food Forum



SOUTHEASTERN FOOD PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION

www.sfpafood.org

SPRING 2013

2013 SFPA Convention could be best ever... ...amid the autumn colors of Asheville's Biltmore



A view of Biltmore House from atop the esplanade.

The SFPA brings their very best speakers, sports and fall fun once a year during the association's annual convention. This year's could be the best when members gather October 17-19 at the Doubletree by Hilton at Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC.

Historically, our conventions are held at coastal cities for two consecutive years, followed by a year in the mountains. After stops at Hilton

Head and Charleston in 2011 and 2012, it's time to head for the mountains of North Carolina.

"We've toured the Doubletree at Biltmore Estate and it will be a wonderful venue for our convention," says executive director Anna Ondick. "We have an extremely nice room for our general sessions and the hotel is on the Biltmore Estate property. It's across the street from Biltmore Village shopping and we expect the food to be superb."

Ondick and the SFPA board of directors are making finishing touches to a special off-site event at Biltmore Estate and the line up of speakers for two mornings of general sessions is beginning to be formalized.

"Paul Vilches, Senior Director for Quality, Food Safety and Innovation for Cereal Plants for Kellogg North America, has agreed to speak

continued on page 2

SAVE THESE DATES IN 2013!

**October 17-20th
SFPA CONVENTION
Asheville, NC**

**Visit our web site
and Facebook site
for more details!**

**www.SFPAFood.org /
[www.facebook.com/
MySFPA](https://www.facebook.com/MySFPA)**



The Burghley Ballroom at the Doubletree by Hilton at Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC.



2013 SFPA Convention could be best ever

continued from page 1

at the annual meeting on Regulatory Best Practices,” says SFPA Technical Committee Chairman Dr. Bill Morris.

SFPA members will receive a registration packet on the convention. Be sure to register early to assure you, and your spouse’s, position at what could be the best convention ever.



The Doubletree by Hilton at Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC.

Also, visit www.SFPAFood.org for regular updates on the event.

WELCOME NEW SFPA MEMBERS!

We are happy to welcome three new associate members to our organization. Here’s more information about the members:

Mr. Kendall Miller *VP Sales* 864.380.4702
 Mr. Robert Cotton *Sales Director* 704.910.9200
Epsilon Plastics
 595 John Dodd Rd
 Spartanburg, SC 29303
Products/Services:
 Polyethylene bags & shrink film
www.sigmaplasticsgroup.com

Mr. Richard Segrave-Daly 864.576.9253
Tim Bar Packaging & Display
 1360 Old Georgia Rd
 Roebuck, SC 29376
Products/Services:
 Corrugated packaging solutions
www.timbar.com

Mr Wes Burton 803.325.8129
Siplast
 1533 Blanchard Bend
 Rock Hill SC 29732
Products/Services: Building renovations
www.siplast.com

Tell Us About Your Company

Share your success by sending SFPA your good news. From promotions and new personnel, to plant expansions, new products and new internal corporate initiatives.

The SFPA’s Food Forum newsletter is a great way to share your company’s information with other members and non-members on a regular basis.

Simply e-mail your information to SFPA Executive Director, Anna Ondick, at anna_ondick@earthlink.net and she will pass along your news to our Food Forum staff.

Leavitt Partners offers free webinars on FSMA



The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) is one of the most far reaching Federal laws to impact food processors in decades and Leavitt Partners is offering insights into the impact of the new law via webinars.

From April through August, the events will be held on the last Friday of each month. Past webinars are archived for your review at your convenience.

Leavitt’s Safety Chain software offers real time enforcement of food safety compliance and the free webinars delve into a variety of topics related to FSMA. The webinars can be viewed

live or viewers and participate by listening to archived presentations on the topic. The schedule for the FSMA Fridays is:

July 26: *Supplier verification, supplier/importer program updates.*

August 23: *How should I comply with the proposed rule for recall plans?*

SFPA members and their employees are invited to sign up for any or all of these webinars at <http://www.safetychain.com/fsma-fridays>.



President's Message



Marion Swink
SFPA President
President, McCall Farms, Inc.

2013 Is A Whirlwind Year!

Is your year flying by as it is for me? It seems as if our SFPA Convention in Charleston was only a few weeks ago, and now we are halfway through 2013 and looking forward to our next convention in Asheville.

I want to thank Stan Carroll, who recently retired from TW Garner Food Company for his contributions, and the many of TW Garner, for their service to the SFPA. His retirement meant an earlier than expected position as President. I am honored to serve you and other members of our 76 year-old organization.

I am happy to report that our SFPA University was productive and well attended, and we will soon announce the winners of our SFPA college scholarships for 2013. I wish to thank

our technical and scholarship committees for their hard work in both of these major annual milestones.

As President, I ask two things of you as a member. If you know someone in the food industry, ask him or her to join our organization and support our many valuable opportunities to participate. Secondly, mark your calendars now for our next convention at the beautiful Biltmore Doubletree in Asheville Oct. 17-19th. You will be receiving information on reservations soon from our executive, Anna Ondick, in the next month or so.

At the rate this year is going, I will see you at the convention sooner than you think.

The secret to success is to deliver the right snacks for almost every consumer craving for healthy flavor

The Tropical Foods story

According to a recent report, there is a decided growth trend towards bolder, more flavorful snack mixes. Consumers have become accustomed to ethnically inspired cuisines that tend toward complex flavor combinations. This taste for spicy fare has apparently spilled over into the snack food category.

Offering bolder, unusual flavor combinations and fun textures continues to keep consumers engaged and indulged. In recent years, people's taste buds have become bolder, and younger consumers are expected to look for spicier and more ethnic flavors in their snacks and snack mixes.

Consumers always want flavors they know and they will enjoy. Tropical Foods, a leading distributor in bulk snacks and wholesale nuts,

already has many products on the market to entice consumer palates. The company provides all products in bulk format so they are perfect for large gatherings, social events, and restaurants. Their variety of bulk nuts, candies, and specialty foods are also geared towards the needs within Healthcare, Education and Travel & Leisure channels.

Tropical Foods specializes in premium snack mixes, raw and freshly roasted nuts and seeds, dried fruit, and hundreds of bulk and packaged candies, spices, grains and specialty foods. Tropical Foods has an extensive line of retail branded products, including Grabeez[®], Buffalo Nuts[®] and ReCharge[®].

The company was founded in 1977 with an original product line of 100 items that has grown to include more than 3000 today. Privately-owned, the company is headquartered in Charlotte, NC, with additional operating centers in Orlando, Atlanta, Memphis, Washington DC and Dallas.

For more information on Tropical Nut and Fruit, visit www.TropicalFoods.com, or contact SFPA member Tony Lahnston, at (407) 992-0715 or via e-mail at tlahnston@TropicalFoods.com.





2013 SFPA University holds class in Raleigh, NC



Jodi Phillips with Chilton Consulting Group speaking on plant and worker safety.



Dr. P. C. Vasavada, FDA-ORISE, coordinator of the Food Safety Preventive Control Alliance (FSPCA) and the Food Modernization Act

It was the fourth year of adding extra value to your membership. The fourth SFPA University brought one-of-a-kind training for plant personnel, March 19-20, in cooperation with North Carolina State University (NCSU).

“This year’s event was very successful,” explains SFPA Technical Committee Chairman Dr. Bill Morris. “We had 62 participants representing 14 companies. Of the group, 49 attendees were employees of SFPA members who received a discount on tuition costs based on their membership. This year’s list of speakers covered a variety of topics including FSMA, BRC, Six Sigma, safety in the work place, best practices for regulatory inspections and environmental sampling”.

“We owe a special thank you to Dr. Arritt Fletcher and Lisa Gordon at NCSU for their assistance in hosting the workshop and in the many details involved. We also want to thank members of the SFPA University Technical Committee in helping to put this program together”. That committee has already met to discuss topics for next year’s SFPA University to be held at another university.

SFPA University is designed for employees of food processors, both members and potential members of SFPA, to enhance and keep current their knowledge in the various food safety facets of the rapidly changing food processing industry. There is a continued need for education to improve food safety and quality and optimize existing and new processes.

In 2013, SFPA members earned a \$50 per employee discount on tuition for the day-and-a-half training seminar. Non-members paid \$175 per employee that includes dinner on the first day, and lunch and breaks during the period. Companies who send more than seven employees earned additional discounts.

For more information on SFPA University 2014, contact our association’s executive director, Anna Ondick, at anna_ondick@earthlink.net, or give her a call at (407) 365-5661.



Paul Viches, Senior Director of Quality and safety, Kellogg’s, speaking on regulatory inspections and best practices.



Online consumer surveys are easy, affordable ways to gain significant insight

There is a continuous need to understand the buying habits of American consumers for decades. From store intercepts to phone polls and focus groups, the choices as diverse as today's households. New methods for accessing valuable consumer insight have become more affordable and easy with the advent of sophisticated online survey methods.

"We recently completed a consumer survey of moms with children, ages 2-9, for an apple company and the results not only provided insight but will help them sell in a new product to large restaurant chains," says Tony Treadway, President of Creative Energy, an SFPA member.

Online survey companies provide the tools and the consumers who are rewarded for providing their honest opinions on almost topic. For the apple company, the survey was designed to measure the extent of parental involvement in deciding what food their children would eat from a restaurant menu. We learned that a surprising number still let their children order what ever they want from the menu, despite the growing pressure on parents to manage their children's diet.

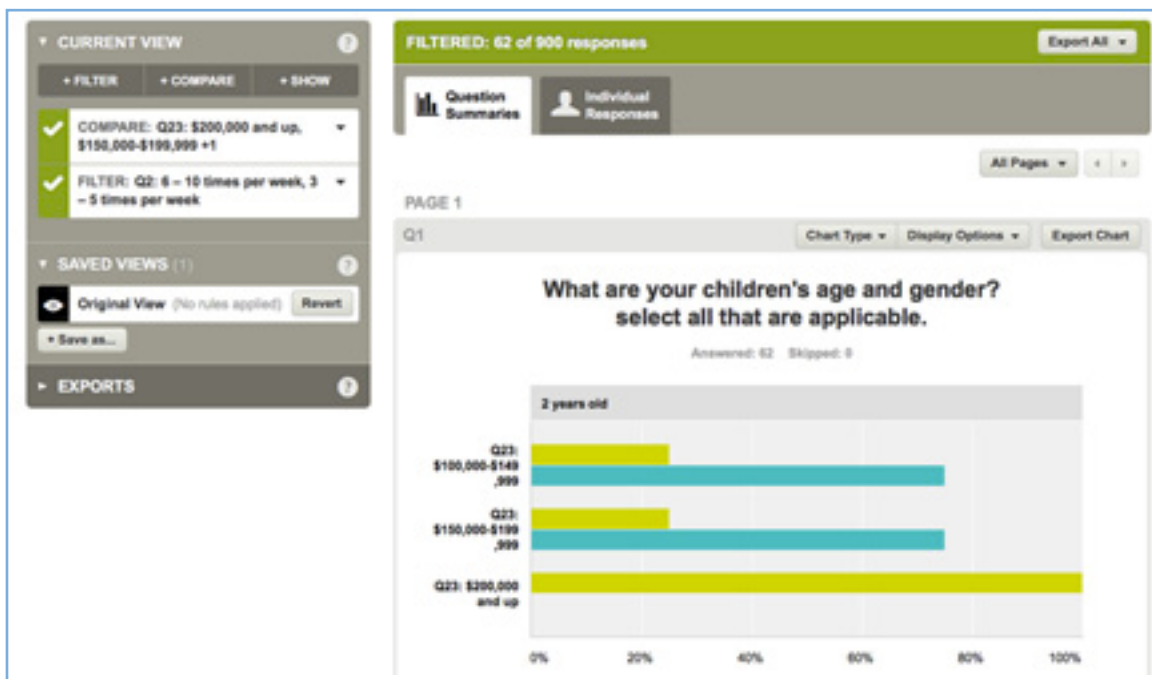
"The survey's real gem was that moms who were the heaviest users of restaurants for feeding their children were also from the highest income households. The new apple

product was described to them and the heavy user/high income moms were the most likely to prefer the product over all other forms of healthy products," Treadway explains. "We crafted the survey questions so that we could actually determine what percentage of moms would visit a specific restaurant chain more frequently if that chain offered the new product. The survey provided specifics on a variety of restaurant chains that could not only be used for company insight, but a key tool for one-on-one sales pitches to the chain."

"By cross-tabulating the data, an experienced researcher can winnow breakthrough information from these online surveys," says Treadway. "Sure, there is value in focus groups and other forms of consumer research, but few forms of research can be as powerful, quick and easy than online surveys," Treadway concludes.

Costs for online surveys are dependant on the specifics of the desired survey population. In this survey, the goal was to sample females with children within a specific range of ages across the entire U.S. The cost was increased because the survey would exclude males and females with children outside the specified range in ages. The survey would have cost more had the desired survey populations be from a specific geographic region of the country. The cost is based on the desired

Example of an online survey



number of completed surveys.

For more information on online and other forms of consumer research, contact Tony Treadway at (423) 926-9494, ext. 112.



SMART FOOD: Understanding the Nutritional Value of Canned Foods

By Hella Gourven, Marketing Manager, CROWN Food Packaging North America

When it comes to food, consumer tastes may vary, but the qualities they value do not. Freshness, high quality ingredients, convenience and environmental responsibility invariably find their way to the top of consumer demands for their food products and packaging. The can helps brands achieve all of these, but consumers may not always realize this.

Metal cans have been keeping food fresh for over 200 years, ever since Britain's King George III granted Peter Durand a patent for his idea of preserving food in airtight tin containers in 1810. By the end of the 20th century, canned fruits, vegetables, meats and meals had become a standard part of our culture, and could be found on almost every household's shelves. Today, however, while we continue to value canned foods for the convenience they offer, we tend to forget the benefits that drove people like Durand to package foods in metal, namely the health and nutritional advantages that the format affords.

The Importance of Nutrition

The rising rates of obesity in the United States have created an important dialogue surrounding the importance of a nutritious diet. It comes as no surprise that many Americans do not consume the recommended servings of an array of nutritious foods. Notably, the USDA encourages all Americans to increase their intake of fruits and vegetables. Maintaining a healthy diet is a basic human need, and our scientific understanding of the nutritional value of foods continues to grow. A balance of the right proteins, vitamins and minerals is important to repair and sustain our bodies – everything from our muscles to our nervous systems.



As consumers increasingly understand the role that nutritious foods play in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and as they progressively value more health-conscious diets, they continue to demand brand owners provide the most nutritious food options possible.

Some consumers are of the mindset that canned foods are less nutritious than their fresh or frozen counterparts. But in fact, nothing could be further from the truth.

Canned foods are nutritionally on par with fresh and frozen products, and in many cases, they are actually more nutritious. According to a 2012 study by Michigan State University, for example, the retort process employed during canning tomatoes actually improves their B vitamins, vitamin E and carotenoid content. Similarly, fiber, a nutrient of concern in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans becomes more soluble, and therefore more useful in the human body, during canning.

This comes about through the canning process itself, whereby foods are picked at the peak of freshness and immediately transported to the canning facilities, which are strategically located near farms to ensure that fruit and vegetables are canned within hours of being picked. The food is then cooked in the can to destroy bacteria leaving a low oxygen environment that inhibits degradation of the food and its nutrients during the can's shelf life.

As a result, food is able to remain stable in a can without the need for any chemical preservatives – an important distinction between canned and fresh foods. Fruit and vegetables begin to lose nutritional value from the first moment they are picked, and canning and freezing facilities are located near farms for that very reason. It can; however, sometimes take weeks to transport fresh produce from the farm to store shelves, during which period many of the valuable nutrients can be lost. For this reason, fresh food is typically treated with preservatives after picking to prevent it from spoiling but also exposing consumers to otherwise unnecessary chemicals. And in the case of frozen foods, while produce is flash frozen immediately to lock in freshness, brands are then faced with high energy costs to maintain vegetables in that frozen state during storage and transportation, whereas canned goods can be transported as-is.

At the same time, additional studies show that canning increases the availability of certain antioxidants in foods and vegetables. Canned beans are typically low in saturated fat and calories while containing high fiber content, which can reduce the risks of heart disease or diabetes. Canned pumpkin, for example, contains a higher concentration of beta carotene than fresh pumpkin, and the absorption in corn of lutein, an antioxidant that has been linked to a reduction in the risks of cataracts and macular degeneration, is also enhanced by heat from the canning process.

The Value of Metal Packaging

The high-temperatures of retort cooking also effectively sterilize the food products in cans, which is critical to maintaining the safety of those foods. Metal cans protect food against any external influence during heat treatment as well as storage because of the hermetic seal formed prior to retorting. According to the Center for Disease Control, at least 128,000 Americans are hospitalized each year with food-borne illnesses, and analyses conclude that canned foods are a safer option thanks in part to the canning process that creates a barrier to microbiological contamination.

This is of particular relevance to the canned meat and vegetable industries, where quality and freshness are of top concern. As metal packaging transfers heat during the retort process to the food more rapidly than alternative materials and allows the heat to completely penetrate to the center of the product, the food is completely cooked and preserved without risk of spoiling during storage. This is essentially the exact same process used in home canning, simply on a larger scale – the food, water and any salt or spices for taste are canned, heated, and then left to cool. With the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations finding that globally, one-third of the food produced for



human consumption is discarded, with consumers in North America and Europe wasting around 209 to 253 pounds of food per person every year, canned fruits and vegetables provide a smart shelf-stable option for families and one that offers valuable savings, both reducing the amount of time required to prepare a meal, and also helping families maintain a healthy lifestyle on a tight budget.

And once the packaging process is complete, it is the metal can that most effectively continues to preserve the quality of the food it contains. Foods typically degrade through extended exposure to air or sunlight, and metal is the only container material that completely prevents light and oxygen from infiltrating the package, offering excellent barrier properties. This is, of course, why products ranging from condensed milk to pet food have traditionally been packaged in metal, as the barrier of the can greatly extends the product's shelf life.

In addition, the metal can speaks strongly to consumers' preferences for environmentally-friendly choices in every aspect of their lives. Metal is 100% recyclable, recycled at high levels and can be continuously reused with absolutely no degradation in performance or quality. Consequently, cans are currently the most recycled food packages in the world, with 66.8% of steel cans being recycled in the United States alone according to the most recent industry data .

Beyond these inherent benefits, cans are also being found to be beneficial to promoting a healthier lifestyle among consumers. Canned products remain the perfect staple foods to stock up on and have on hand at any time and are available year round 24/7, in the process providing an easy means for people to consume the recommended daily amounts and varieties of fruits, vegetables, meats and beans. From ready-meals to sauces, consumers are presented with a variety of products available in cans. Packaging also plays a critical role in limiting portion sizes as brand owners seek to introduce products that help consumers maintain healthier diets.

Single-serve cans, for example, allow consumers to enjoy portion-controlled meals and healthy snacks straight from the package, in the process saving time and effort associated with preparing a separate dish and cleaning up. For this growing trend, CROWN Food Packaging North America's single-serve bowl-shaped cans make it easy to consume healthy packaged foods. Bowls also have a sleek, modern shape that attracts attention on store shelves and helps convey a premium image. When paired with Crown's award-winning Easylift™ easy-open ends and PeelSeam™ peelable ends for quick and easy removal, consumers can enjoy their meals without the need for a can opener. In addition to being easy to open, both ends offer the same unrivaled barrier against light, oxygen and water ingress that the cans themselves do, maintaining the flavor and sterility of foods that are consumed without extra preparation.



The result is an extremely convenient packaging format for the consumer, especially when compared to fresh or frozen goods. From vegetables to fruits

to meats, once opened, canned foods are ready to eat. This is a fast and easy process compared to fresh produce, which must be cleaned, chopped, prepared, and then cooked from a raw state, and similarly compared to frozen foods, which must be thawed out before anything else can be done. Canned foods, in contrast, are available for immediate consumption.

Getting the Most from Metal

As consumers increasingly look for healthy food options on store shelves, it is important for brands to understand how to get the most from metal packaging and to partner with a supplier that has the necessary expertise to properly respond to the market opportunities.

Beyond individual technologies, brand owners also need to collaborate with their suppliers wherever possible, working closely with the technical and customer service teams to get the most out of the processes. Strong customer service teams will understand the entire food manufacturing process and can provide a wide range of valuable assistance, from technical support and troubleshooting to ongoing consultation. For example, brand owners that package products in cans need to understand double seaming, which is vital to container integrity and ensuring that food products are properly preserved, and suppliers should be offering regular training in this area. To meet this need, Crown provides double seam guidelines and training that are used as a reference by the FDA, and can be shown to customers' auditors and any other authorities that examine their facilities.

Customer service teams should also be available to troubleshoot any issues that brands may encounter during the production cycle, helping to identify and recommend solutions to any problems. Crown's teams consist of food scientists, design engineers, chemical engineers and even micro-biologists, all of whom have a deep understanding of food processing and the packaging industry. This allows brand owners to be confident that their production lines are optimized and that the final canned food is healthy and nutritious.

Despite misconceptions in the market, foods packaged in metal cans – from vegetables to pet food - are recognized by the industry and relevant bodies as the nutritious and healthy choice. In many cases, they have been proven to be more nutritious than their fresh or frozen counterparts. Understanding how to leverage the inherent benefits of metal packaging to provide nutritional foods for today's health-conscious consumers is of key importance for companies seeking to provide healthy options for their food brands.



Heartland® Brands Announces Sales and Distribution Partnership with Old Mill Kettle Corn®

Heartland® brands today announced a strategic partnership to nationally sell and distribute the products of Old Mill Kettle Corn®.

Heartland® brands, makers of America's original granola cereal, will contribute sales and distribution resources through its natural and specialty foods network, which is a natural fit, according to Nancy Plemons, Heartland® brands national sales manager. "Old Mill Kettle Corn®, besides being free of genetically-modified organisms and gluten, is simply the best tasting kettle corn on the planet," Plemons said. "We are excited to be partnering with a brand that complements our national distribution of Heartland® granola cereals and a company with values that closely align with ours."



Chickamauga, Ga.-based Old Mill Kettle Corn® was established in 2002 popping and selling at festivals and fairs. By 2009, they perfected their recipes and began to sell in stores. Old Mill Kettle Corn® is presently completing a major expansion of their manufacturing facility and hopes to continue to capitalize on American's resurging taste for the sweet and savory popcorn snack.

According to Old Mill Kettle Corn® CEO Mike Proctor, this partnership with Heartland® brands is a new recipe for success. "Three years ago, we at Old Mill started on a mission to make our snack a household name brand,

just like Heartland® brands cereals and Little Debbie® snacks," Proctor said. "Now, with this sales and distribution contract with Heartland® brands, that vision will become a reality."

Like Heartland® brands granola cereals, Old Mill Kettle Corn® comes in a variety of flavors, including Original, Kickin' Korn, Apple Cinnamon and Blue Raspberry, as well as chocolate drizzle and other flavors. Heartland® Brands began producing granola cereals in 1968. Today, cereal varieties include Original, Raisin, Low Fat and Low Fat Raisin. Heartland® brands also produces Granola, Graham and Chocolate Graham varieties of ready-to-use pie crusts.

To learn more about Heartland® brands, go to heartlandbrands.com.

To learn more about Old Mill Kettle Corn®, go to oldmillkettlecorn.com.



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