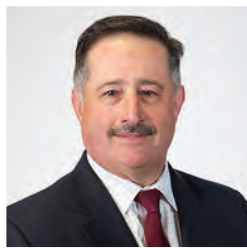


16TH ANNUAL PEOPLE'S AWARD



Paul Criscuolo
BOZZUTO'S INC.



Sam A-Fattah
LOWE'S FOODS



Shawn Hockert
SEACREST FOODS



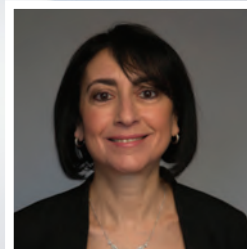
Ryan Kaufmann
SCHNUCK MARKETS



Josh Naughton
ROCHE BROS.
SUPERMARKETS



Wendy Robinson
MARKET HALL
FOODS



Christine Sahadi
Whelan
SAHADI'S

ALSO INSIDE

BREAD
SALADS
DELI MEAT
GUACAMOLE
APPENZELLER CHEESE
CROSS MERCHANDISING
MEDITERRANEAN FOODS



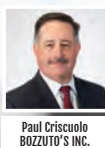
A glass jar filled with a dark, chunky, and textured substance, likely a fermented food like kimchi or sauerkraut, with visible liquid and spices.



LIFE WELL PAIRED®



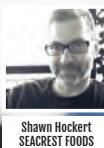
16TH ANNUAL PEOPLE'S AWARD



Paul Criscuolo
BOZZUTO'S INC.



Sam A-Fattah
LOWE'S FOODS



Shawn Hockett
SEACREST FOODS



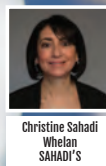
Ryan Kaufmann
SCHNUCK MARKETS



Josh Naughton
ROCHE BROS.
SUPERMARKETS



Wendy Robinson
MARKET HALL
FOODS



Christine Sahadi
WHELAN
SAHADI'S

ALSO INSIDE

BREAD
SALADS
DELI MEAT
GUACAMOLE
APPENZELER CHEESE
CROSS MERCHANDISING
MEDITERRANEAN FOODS

COVER STORY 12

16TH Annual People's Awards

COMMENTARIES

EDITOR'S NOTES

**Specialty Food Sales Suffer
When We're Forced To Stay At Home** 8

PUBLISHER EMERITUS' INSIDER INSIGHTS

Moving to Self Service 10



27

MERCHANDISING REVIEW

**Six Ways to Successfully
Cross Merchandise.....** 19

Simple ways to raise register rings.

Bread Ups Delis' Ante..... 27

Incorporating bread in the department properly can lead to increased register rings.

PROCUREMENT

Mixing it Up with Salads..... 30

Classic, globally-inspired and health-forward salads have become deli staples.

FEATURES

Healthy Foods Stay on Trend..... 35

The Mediterranean foods category remains strong.

The Glory of Guacamole 52

A dip and spread that is on trend and on point.



19

PRESIDENT & EDITOR-IN-CHIEFJAMES E. PREVOR
jprevor@phoenixmedianet.com**PUBLISHING DIRECTOR**KENNETH L. WHITACRE
kwhitacre@phoenixmedianet.com**ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER**MARK GOLD
mgold@phoenixmedianet.com**MANAGING EDITOR**LISA WHITE
lwhite@phoenixmedianet.com**PRODUCTION DIRECTOR**DIANA LEVINE
dlevine@phoenixmedianet.com**ART DIRECTOR**JACKIE TUCKER
jtucker@phoenixmedianet.com**RESEARCH DIRECTOR**

SHARON OLSON

CONTRIBUTING EDITORSCAROL BAREUTHER BOB JOHNSON
KEITH LORIA GIGI RAGLANDSEND INSERTION ORDERS, PAYMENTS, PRESS RELEASES,
PHOTOS, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, ETC., TO:

DELI BUSINESS

P.O. BOX 810217, BOCA RATON, FL 33481-0217

PHONE: 561-994-1118 FAX: 561-994-1610

EMAIL: DELIBUSINESS@PHOENIXMEDIANET.COM

PHOENIX MEDIA NETWORK, INC.CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
JAMES E. PREVOREXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
KENNETH L. WHITACREGENERAL COUNSEL
DEBRA PREVORDELI BUSINESS IS PUBLISHED BY
PHOENIX MEDIA NETWORK, INC.

P.O. BOX 810425,

BOCA RATON, FL 33481-0425

PHONE: 561-994-1118 FAX: 561-994-1610

www.delibusiness.com

ENTIRE CONTENTS © COPYRIGHT 2020

PHOENIX MEDIA NETWORK, INC.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

PUBLICATION AGREEMENT NO. 40047928

RFA Announces Shelf Life Protocol Update

The Refrigerated Foods Association (RFA), Marietta, GA, has announced the release of an updated Shelf Life Protocol, available now to both members and non-members.

The RFA Standardized Protocol for Determining Shelf Life of Refrigerated Foods was originally developed in 2002 and subsequently revised in 2009. The purpose of the standardized protocol was to enable individual manufacturers and/or their customers to determine their product shelf life and compare their stated shelf life with the shelf life of similar products produced by other manufacturers.

Many of the updates to the protocol came in response to an RFA survey of its members, conducted in 2019. RFA members indicated that they use the shelf life protocol for applications, including new product development, and for verification that shelf life and challenge study protocols are meeting industry standards. Members requested updated information on technologies, including high pressure processing (HPP), the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and food safety assessment for *Clostridium botulinum*, *listeria* and *salmonella*. Members also asked that examples of food products used in the protocol be expanded to include products in growth categories, such as coleslaw, potato salad, dips and spreads (hummus, salsa), soups and chicken salad.

The updated report is now available for RFA Members in the password-protected portion of the Refrigerated Foods Association's website, www.refrigeratedfoods.org. Non-members can obtain a free copy of the report by emailing RFA Headquarters at info@refrigeratedfoods.org.

DB

COMING IN AUGUST/SEPTEMBER ISSUE

COVER STORY

Grab & Go

**MERCHANDISING
REVIEWS**

Pizza

DELI MEATS

Prosciutto

FEATURE

Nutritional Labeling

**PROCUREMENT
STRATEGIES**

Holiday Meats

PREPARED FOODS

Meal Kits

CHEESE CORNEROssau Iraty
Wisconsin Cheddars**COMING IN OCT/NOV**

E-COMMERCE

SUBSCRIPTION & READER SERVICE INFO

If you would like to subscribe to Deli Business for the print and/or electronic version, please go to www.delibusiness.com and click on the "Subscribe" button. From there, you can subscribe to the print version of Deli Business or free of charge to the electronic version. In addition, you can read the electronic version and go directly to a company's Web site through our special hot link feature. Best of all, you can download and print any article or advertisement you'd like.



30

IN EVERY ISSUE

DELI WATCH	6
INFORMATION SHOWCASE.....	54
BLAST FROM THE PAST	54

JUN/JUL '20 • VOL.25/NO.3 CONTENTS

CHEESE CORNER

The Cheese with a Secret: Appenzeller Cheese.....41
Switzerland's Appenzeller cheese, one of the most recognized alp varieties, has a long history.

DELI MEATS

A Meaty Situation..... 46
A deli meat update on turkey, ham, roast beef and salami.



35



41

TRANSITION ANNOUNCEMENTS



NGA HIRES COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

The National Grocers Association (NGA), Arlington, VA, has hired Jim Dudlicek as director, communications and external affairs. He most recently served as editorial director at *Progressive Grocer* magazine, where he oversaw daily operations since 2010.

www.nationalgrocers.org



CALIFORNIA MILK ADVISORY BOARD ANNOUNCED

The California Milk Advisory Board, Tracy, CA, has named its 2020 officers. Executive Committee members are vice chairman Tony Louters of Merced; chairman Josh Zonneveld of Laton; treasurer David Vander Schaaf of Stockton; member-at-large Essie Bootsma of Lakeview; secretary Megan Silva of Escalon; member-at-large Kirsten Areias of Los Banos; and member-at-large Renae DeJager of Chowchilla.

www.realcaliforniamilk.com



PLACON SCALES UP FOR FACE SHIELD PRODUCTION

Placon, Madison, WI, has scaled up production in two of its manufacturing facilities to help get plastic PPE to healthcare workers during the pandemic. Placon worked with University of Wisconsin Professor Tim Osswald to donate plastic die-cut sheet to the project and worked to hand-make product. It then automated the process to scale up production.

www.placon.com



FOREVER CHEESE DONATES TO NYC HUNGER RELIEF

Forever Cheese, New York City, has donated cheese to two New York City hunger relief organizations working to serve those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. It donated 2,240 pounds of cheese to City Harvest. The donation will go directly to food pantries and emergency food distribution sites throughout New York City's five boroughs. Forever Cheese has also donated cheese to Rethink Food, which upcycles excess food.

www.forevercheese.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS



NGA LAUNCHES SUPERHEROES CAMPAIGN

The National Grocers Association (NGA), Arlington, VA, thanked independent retail and wholesale grocery associates for their hard work and dedication during the coronavirus outbreak with a campaign built around the hashtag #SuperMarketSuperHeroes. NGA also provided a variety of resources, materials and guidance, as independent grocers throughout the country are handling increased demand.

www.nationalgrocers.org



CALIFORNIA DAIRY FARMERS EARN U.S. DAIRY SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB), Tracy, CA, earned a U.S. Dairy Sustainability Award. In an announcement by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, the partners—De Jager and McRee Dairies of Chowchilla, CA, along with Sustainable Conservation, Netafim and Western United Dairies—were recognized for their work to field test and demonstrate the viability of a sub-surface drip irrigation system used to grow feed crops for dairy cows.

www.realcaliforniamilk.com



HORMEL TEAMS UP WITH NON-PROFIT

Hormel Foods, Austin, MN, announced additional support for The Birthday Party Project, an organization that brings to life Hormel's Natural Choice brand's Good Feeds Us All purpose. The Dallas-based nonprofit stages birthday parties for at-risk children across the U.S. Hormel joined forces with the project in early 2020, announcing a four-city tour but the outbreak of COVID-19 put this on hold. The nonprofit amended its operation to social distancing and shelter-in-place guidelines.

www.hormelfoods.com

NEW PRODUCTS



SINGLE SERVE SAVORY LINE

DePalo Foods, Belmont, NC has introduced single-serve Italian savory items filled with freshly shredded cheeses and sliced meats. The line features aged dough that creates a flavorful crispy crust. From classic Italian flavors to new American food trends, items are portable and merchandise well in grab-and-go refrigerated deli cases.

www.depalofoods.com

NEW PRODUCTS



FLATBREADS WITH FINE INGREDIENTS

Venus Wafers, Hingham, MA, has launched Mariner Organic Flatbreads, which are baked with the finest ingredients. The flatbreads are Certified Organic, non-GMO, Vegan Verified and Kosher Approved. Three flavors are available, including Sea Salt Multigrain, Rosemary and Ancient Grains.

www.venuswafers.com



PLANT-BASED LIDS

World Centric, Petaluma, CA, has unveiled new Leaf fiber lids made from unbleached plant fiber. When paired with the company's NoTree or FSC-certified paper cups and bowls, the lids provide a 100 percent compostable solution. The line requires less energy to manufacture and compost within two to four months in a commercial composting facility.

www.worldcentric.org



THREE CHEESES DEBUT

Lactalis American Group, Buffalo, NY, has announced three cheeses and snacking products have launched under its President line. Creamy Brie with Truffles combines simple ingredients with high-quality milk and cream in the Old World tradition. French Pairing Plates and Snacking Cups combine accoutrements for the cheeses in one package, making it easy to enjoy a quick snack on the go.

www.presidentcheese.com



EQUIPMENT SOLUTIONS FOR RETAIL

Alto-Shaam, Menomonee Falls, WI, offers a packaged solution of equipment and culinary support. This includes Vector Multi-Cook Ovens, which provide up to four ovens in one and Combitherm ovens, which not only cook multiple menu options, but also use 80 percent less water with a boilerless design. New rotisserie ovens are self-cleaning, and hot holding solutions include cabinets, drawers, merchandisers and Cook & Hold Ovens. QuickChiller blast chillers chill prepared food for cold take-home meals.

www.alto-shaam.com

NEW PRODUCTS



BAKED CHICKPEA SNACKS

34 Degrees, Denver, has launched Snaps, a line of baked chickpea snacking thins. Available in three flavors, including Sea Salt, Everything and Umami, the line is gluten free. Each crisp is lightly coated with seasoning on the outside and has 3g of protein per serving.

www.34-degrees.com



SWEET AND SAVORY CRISPS

Angelic Bakehouse, Udahy, WI, has introduced 7 Sprouted Whole Grains Crisps made with whole grains. Varieties include Pickled Sweet Onion & Beet, Harissa Green Chile & Sweet Potato, Fig & Tarragon Vinaigrette and Blueberry & Zesty Lemon. Per serving the crisps deliver twice the protein, three times the fiber and nearly 50 percent fewer net carbs than the leading dipping chip.

www.angelicbakehouse.com



CLEAN LABEL VEGETARIAN SIDES

Don's Prepared Foods, Schwenksville, PA, has unveiled a line of clean label, global-inspired gourmet vegetarian sides. The varieties are influenced by flavors and spices from around the globe. Sides include Beets with Tahini; Braised Italian White Beans; Carrots & Chickpeas with Chermoula; Coconut Rice & Lentils; and Korean BBQ Green Beans.

www.donspreparedfoods.com



PLANT-BASED FROM ITALY

Maestri d'Italia Inc., Lakewood, NJ, has introduced Mia plant-based meats from Italy. Perfect for charcuterie boards, sandwiches, wraps, as a pizza topping and more, the artisanal line uses the time-honored method of curing based on the Italian heritage. The soy-free deli slices are made with beans and sourdough culture for a rich flavor. Carpaccio, prosciutto, spicy salame, roasted turkey and pepperoni styles are available.

www.miagreenfood.com

Specialty Food Sales Suffer When We're Forced To Stay At Home



By
Jim Prevor
Editor-in-Chief

The American Cheese Society did an industry study that, not very shockingly, revealed that the specialty cheese industry is in a depression. The study reported that, overall, specialty cheese sales are down 58 percent. Not surprisingly, the study finds sales are down in all markets, both foodservice and retail; that 71 percent of respondents have applied for some kind of financial assistance, such as the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP); that 48 percent of respondents have reduced employee hours; and 30 percent have laid off employees.

While 61.5 percent of respondents predict that the “new normal will be very different from the past,” there are some silver linings: The current situation creates an opportunity to pause and improve business operations (73 percent) and to reach out to new customers (73.5 percent).

Though the survey includes nearly 1,000 stakeholders, the accuracy of their reports and the degree to which they constitute a valid representation of the market is uncertain. Still, you don't need perfect research to realize things are tough for a field, such as specialty cheese.

First, these products are relatively expensive food items, so if one is losing a job or is uncertain about the future, buying expensive foods isn't the natural inclination.

Second, specialty cheese often sells better when a consumer gets usage information, say by interacting with a cheesemonger. Yet, current circumstances discourage this kind of interaction.

Third, sampling is often crucial to exposing people to new tastes and flavors. But typical sampling mechanisms — leaving out a bowl of cubed cheese — is simply horrifying to many people now.

Fourth, eating out at restaurants is not only a form of sustenance, it often is a form of celebration. Even as restaurants open, if the clientele is office workers needing lunch or travelers needing sustenance — if social-distancing rules are still in place — the purchasing profile will be very different than if people are celebrating events.

Fifth, eating at home is also changed by current circumstances. Normally, one might have friends over, perhaps a party. Maybe there would be cheese plates out with wine or beer. Summer is approaching, which means barbecues and social invitations. Part of hospitality is variety and abundance, but none of that seems right now.

The truth, however, is that this pandemic brings about changes that go far beyond cheese. We've

seen reports about farmers having to destroy vegetables or milk. Think about this for a moment: right now, almost everyone who has lost a job is getting unemployment... indeed, some are receiving more compensation from unemployment than they were receiving from their job.

Though there are stories of people waiting hours to get free food, and there are certainly some people who are falling through cracks in our system, most people in the workforce either have a job or are eligible for unemployment insurance, which is currently paying \$600 a week more than what it would have otherwise paid.

So the issue is not that everyone is impoverished and can't buy food. The issue is that staying at home changes consumption patterns.

At school or at work, a cheeseburger is likely to come with a slice of tomato, a piece of lettuce and the option for a slice of onion. Almost certainly there is some kind of side, such as fries, cole slaw or potato salad. Very often, there is some kind of appetizer or soup or salad. Yet, a hungry teen looking to grab lunch may make a burger, squeeze some ketchup on it and call it a day as he runs back to his room to do a Zoom class for high school.

We don't have good data, but it doesn't seem insane to think that many people might use this interlude as the time to go on a diet. They figure they are sacrificing less than when their friends are inviting them to dinner, although it is also possible that more people are depressed and snacking away.

Retailers respond to consumption patterns, so at first they may have de-listed items so they could carry more hand sanitizer and masks. But as normal inventorying returns, we can expect many items to remain de-listed because they no longer match current consumption patterns. To put it in simple terms: many of the “normal” food items are not selling.

We can certainly act to support producers we want to see succeed, and the American Cheese Society is pushing those efforts. The country is gradually reopening, but the real question will be whether the country is prepared to stay open if there is a rebound in virus cases. This rebound is likely as social interactions reengage. Will people find a rebound in COVID-19 cases a price they are willing to pay? Or will they want to see the country shut down once again? On this question everything hangs.

DB

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James B. Prevor".



Freshen Up
Your Cheese Case with

FRESH MOZZARELLA

Made with fresh, local Wisconsin milk, BelGioioso Fresh Mozzarella's consistent quality has made it "America's Favorite" brand choice. Customers searching for both convenience and quality will be looking for BelGioioso in your specialty cheese case, so keep it fresh with the variety, convenience and quality BelGioioso offers.

At BelGioioso, every cheese is a specialty.



rBST Free* | Gluten Free | Vegetarian | Award-Winning

*No significant difference has been found in milk from cows treated with artificial hormones.



BELGIOIOSO

belgioioso.com f i p y

Moving to Self Service



By
Lee Smith
Publisher Emeritus

There are few, if any, long term predictions that can be made, given the current state of the coronavirus. Usually, we would be looking at new products being shown at the IDDBA and the Fancy Food Shows because this is the time for new products to be introduced—just before summer vacations and well before the fall selling season. Obviously, this will not be the case this year.

Deli departments have been put on the back burner due to other retailing issues. Working on supply chains to keep staples such as meat, frozen food and products that have never been in short supply on shelves has been a major undertaking. Store employees are heroes, working under extreme conditions. There is not enough time and, often, not enough employees because some people don't want to work due to their contact with hundreds of customers. Others are at home sick or taking care of family members.

In-store delis are facing the same obstacles, and many deli counters are closed. Lights are off, and customers are skipping that section of the store. They also are missing many self-serve products typically in the deli, such as potato salad, pre-sliced specialty meats, olives and refrigerated soups. There is talk, given the labor expense and high shrink of deli departments, that some may never recover. There is one major operator that is planning on closing all full-service delis.

Self-service was an on-trend opportunity well before COVID-19. Technology has caught up to where specialty meats can be thinly sliced, and packaged, while also providing a long enough shelf life to be exported from Europe and still arrive in the U.S. in prime condition. Salads, prepared foods and specialty cheeses are available pre-packaged, as well. Nutritional information and cooking and handling directions are easier to communicate with packaged goods. For manufacturers, pre-packaged products offer better opportunities for brand marketing and customer loyalty programs.

There are many reasons to develop more pre-packaged opportunities. Unfortunately, investing in the equipment, software and technology as well as the additional space required are significant expenditures. Since most manufacturers are seeing horrific sales declines on the foodservice side, capital money is at an all-time low. To predict the future and differentiate between short-term changes and long-term consequences is very difficult, if not impossible.

Will there be long term changes in personal behaviors? Yes. The longer it takes to conquer the beast and to find a vaccine and effective treatments,

the more long-term consequences we will see. Will restaurants return to before COVID-19 success or will there be a clear line of delineation between before and after the pandemic? These are serious questions that impact everyone.

At risk are salad and soup bars, olive and Mediterranean islands and cut-to-order cheese departments. Will people get more comfortable with take-out options? There are enormous opportunities for retailers if take-out becomes more the norm. Will pick-up windows like those in fast food restaurants become a must have?

There is one area that is more of a guarantee than any other, and it is manufacturer pre-packed fresh options. Packed under scrupulous hygienic conditions with longer shelf lives and low labor needs answers many of today's customers' needs.

The ability to pick up a wide variety of fresh olives, grape leaves, grain salads and pickles will be key. Traditional salads, such as potato, mac and slaw, have been moving in that direction for a long time. For many specialty meats, manufacturer pre-sliced products have allowed customers who are not near specialty shops to indulge in these delicacies. There is no doubt availability has driven sales.

The difference is customers may no longer want to wait in line; in fact, they may dread it to the point of sacrifice and avoidance. Customers may also have long term hesitations about allowing store clerks, regardless of how well trained, to handle their food. Even more disturbing to some may be self-service food bars, where anyone can sneeze or cough over the products. Sneeze guards are no longer seen as a panacea when it comes to food safety.

What can retailers do? Quickly develop less than perfect solutions to self-serve. If you have an olive bar, ask your suppliers if they have a pre-pack option. Otherwise, pre-pack at the store level using existing cup options. You may have to look in the boneyards of used equipment to replace the salad/olive/soup bar with refrigerated upright cases or coffin cases. Yes, you will need a bit of a breather to do even that, but it will be important.

Ask meat suppliers if they pre-pack. Many do, and they could provide unrealized opportunities. Most of all, get creative. Even in times of great stress, we need creative thinkers as well as doers. Ten-to-one, necessary creative ideas are ready for the picking and found within your own ranks.

Good luck to all, and thank you to everyone who is working to provide the American people with a rich tapestry of tasty foods at an affordable price.

DB

ICONS *of* EUROPEAN TASTE

love proudly. eat classically.
live deliciously.

When you choose **Prosciutto di San Daniele PDO**, **Grana Padano PDO** and **Prosciutto di Parma PDO**, you show a passion for the Italian way of life that includes incomparably delicious, natural food that's never mass-produced or processed. Each of these products carries the Protected Designation of Origin seal, the European Union's guarantee of quality and authenticity, so you know they are from a specific geographical region in Italy and are created using traditional techniques that have set the standard of culinary excellence for generations.

Learn more about these icons of European
taste at iconsofeuropeantaste.eu



The content of this promotion campaign represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission and the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFAEA) do not accept any responsibility for any use that may be made of the information it contains.



CAMPAIGN FINANCED
WITH AID FROM THE
EUROPEAN UNION.

THE EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORTS
CAMPAIGNS THAT PROMOTE HIGH
QUALITY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.



16TH ANNUAL

PEOPLE'S AWARDS

Deli Business honors individuals who have made a significant contribution to the industry, their company and their community.

Q. How has your career evolved over the years?

A. I started out in the restaurant/catering business and had an opportunity to work on the wholesale side of the business as a deli/bakery retail counselor. My main responsibilities were developing in-store prepared food and bakery programs for independent retailers. I then became the deli/bakery merchandising manager, writing retail ad plans and developing new programs for wholesale distribution. I am currently the director of deli/bakery.

Q. What is your leadership philosophy?

A. My business leadership philosophy is to create and maintain a team of dedicated people that are committed to outstanding customer service. The goal of our team is to build strong customer confidence and vendor relations. The combination of this philosophy will provide mutual success and profitability in both the retail and wholesale channels of our business.

Q. What is the best advice you ever received and why?

A. "Try to be something to everybody and you will end up being nothing to nobody." Within our industry, failure occurs when you don't have focus. What is the message you want to offer the consumer? Are you premium, middle of the road or dis-



Paul Criscuolo

Director of Deli/Bakery
Bozzuto's Inc., Cheshire, CT

count? Any way you perceive the business model, it has to have consistency in order to draw success based on that message.

Q. How do you balance your work and personal life?

A. In both work and personally, it's about relationships. My wife Mary is extremely supportive of our family and my work ethic. You've heard others say it's important to have a strong foundation, and it's true!

Q. What deli retail trends have impacted the industry most over the last year?

A. I think the biggest change has been the increased

demand for pre-sliced cold cuts and grab-and-go items. Customers are looking for the convenience without sacrificing quality. I believe the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic will change the way we merchandise the deli department.

Q. What technology or technical tools are indispensable to you in the workplace and why?

A. Our company's business information technologies "Merlin" is our most useful tool. It's an internet-based system that gives us real time information about our business. It is a business tool supporting sales, operations and business managers.

Q. What have been the biggest changes in the deli industry over the course of your career?

A. Case continuity. Early in my career, there were many brands of products in the service deli. Today, most accounts carry a premium, private label and a few regional brands. The quality of products has improved, and customers are more ingredient-conscious. Grab-and-go is a growing category and will now have more forefront in the deli as we look at consumer health and safety in packages versus the service deli.

Q. What is the biggest challenge you've had to overcome on the job?

A. Probably the biggest challenge I had to overcome was dealing with associates who were reluctant to change. It came at a time when the company was experiencing rapid growth. We needed to look for ways to use new technologies in order to become more efficient. Eventually, the people who were adaptable made the changes and were much more proficient at what they did.

Q. What hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

A. I enjoy skiing, sporting clays, hunting and fishing.

Q. Are you married? If so, how long? How many children?

A. I am married with three children—a son and two daughters.

Q. How has your career evolved over the years?

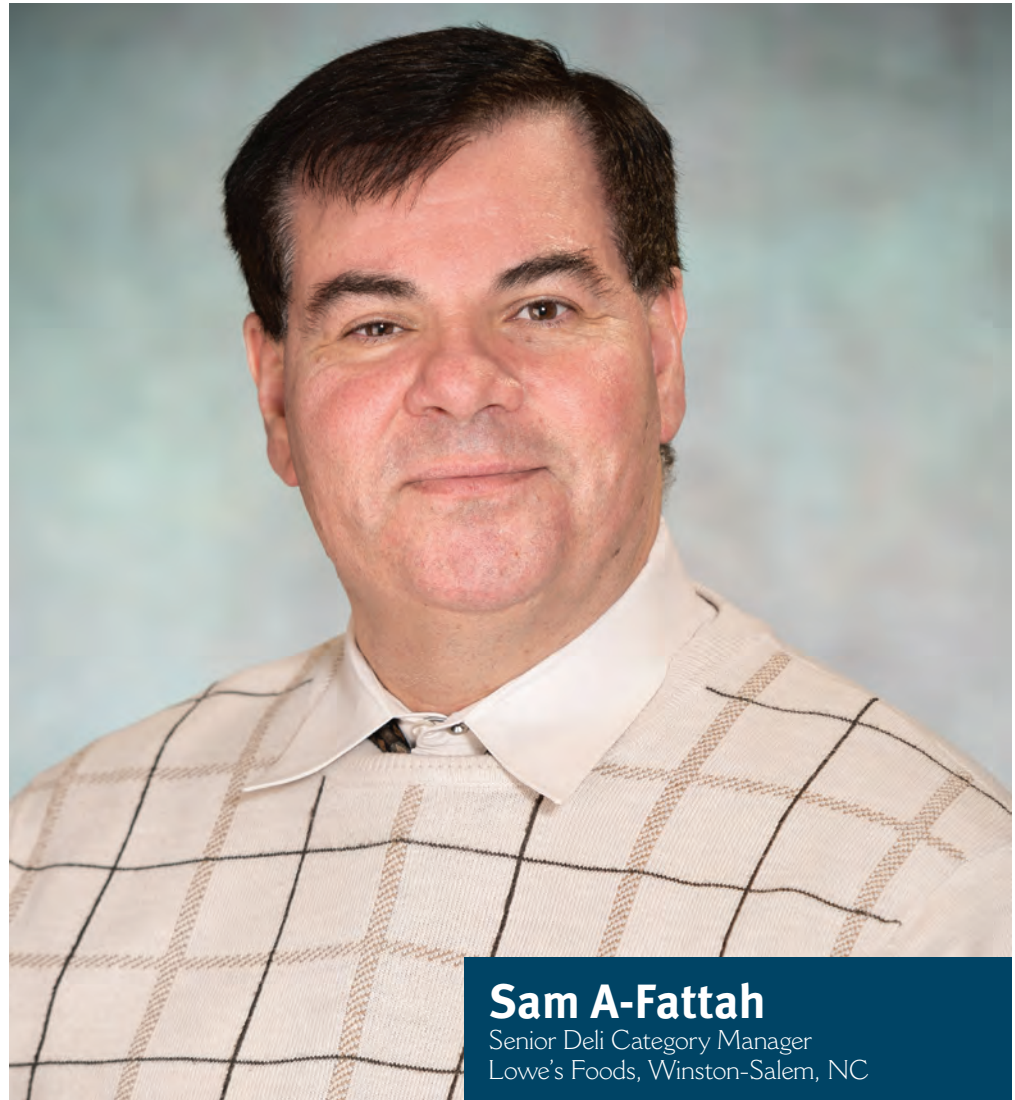
A. Born in Amman, Jordan to Samiha and Helmi, I am the middle child of four sisters and two brothers. I arrived in the U.S. while in high school. After college, I took a job with Skaggs Alpha Beta in Austin, TX. I started first on the front end, then, as my customer skills were recognized, I was moved to the deli. Just short of a year later, I was in the deli manager training program. After completing this training, I spent the next three years as a deli manager before being tapped for a merchandiser role in Dallas/Fort Worth, followed by Albuquerque, NM. After Skaggs divested these stores, I moved to Furr's Supermarkets as a category manager/buyer. Seven years later, I was recruited to the Carolinas to a family-owned, local supermarket known as Lowes Foods. Over the next 20 years with Lowes Foods, I held the positions of merchandiser and category manager. I developed Lowes Food's cheese training program in partnership with GFI through their Institute Du Fromage. I am currently studying for the American Cheese Society accreditation.

Q. What's the best part of your job?

A. Without a doubt, the team that I work with. I am so fortunate to be part of a team that manages to make every day productive as well as enjoyable, making us excel at what we do and be stronger as a team.

Q. What inspires your leadership approach?

A. Our company culture, which is a powerful element that shapes my work enjoyment, my work relationships and my work processes to always deliver the best for our guests.



Sam A-Fattah

Senior Deli Category Manager
Lowe's Foods, Winston-Salem, NC

Q. What is something you cherish most about being a part of the grocery business?

A. The freedom to innovate and create an extraordinary and unique shopping experience for guests.

Q. What deli retail trends have impacted the industry most over the last year?

A. Snacking, food on the go or handy eats are results of consumer demand for convenience. Charcuterie and cheese boards are driving record growth in the category and creating a buzz in social media. Wholesome components, from clean labeling and organic to nutritious ingredi-

ents, satisfy multitude forms of health and wellness.

Q: What technology or technical tools are indispensable to you in the workplace and why?

A. Cloud-based platforms allow us to work conveniently and collaboratively from anywhere. Communication tools, platforms such as Skype or Zoom with quality microphones and video conferencing features are used collaboratively.

Q: What have been the biggest changes in the deli industry over the course of your career?

A. Inclusivity, including global foods, dietary options and socially conducive ambience. Customization and unique

offerings. Sustainability, transparency and local sourcing. Value for the dollar in food and convenience.

Q: What is the biggest challenge you've had to overcome on the job?

A. Keeping abreast of all the information on trends and innovation to stay relevant and deliver the best value for our guests.

Q: What hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

A. Reading and traveling.

Q: Are you married? If so, how long? How many children?

A. I'm divorced with two wonderful daughters—Tarah and Norah.

Q. How has your career evolved over the years?

A. When I was just out of college in 1995, I began an apprenticeship at Westfield Farm, a goat farm and dairy in central Massachusetts. After a year on the farm, I spent some time in retail, where I learned about different types of cheeses and specialty foods and the basic principles of cheese retailing.

In my time here, I have endeavored to learn as many aspects of perishables distribution as I can.

Several years ago, I was offered partial ownership in the business. As an owner, I have been able to learn about strategic planning, human resources, insurance and finance. I feel extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn so many aspects of a business in which I have invested so much of my time and passion.

Q. What positions have you held in industry associations?

A. Guilde du Fromage, American Cheese Society Certified Cheese Professional, member of the Cheese Importers Association of America, The Massachusetts Cheese Guild and Oldways Coalition.

Q. How do you balance your work and personal life?

A. I worked long hours for many years before we decided to have a family. When we did, I made a commitment to myself to reduce my work time to be able to spend time with my family. I've been modestly successful at honoring that commitment.

Q: What deli retail trends have impacted the industry most over the last year?

A. There are substantial shifts taking place in our



Shawn Hockert

Co-owner
Seacrest Foods, Lynn, MA

niche of the deli industry right now, more so than in any other time in my career. While specialty cheese has finally arrived, maturing to a point that many people are aware of the category, it has also lost some ground at the very high end and in the local category. Plant-based proteins, functional foods and foods that satisfy the requirements of specific diets have taken some of the wind out of the sales of those specialty cheeses and meats that found favor in their tradition, joy of discovery and incredible flavors.

Q: What technology or technical tools are indispensable to you in the workplace and why?

A. As a supplier of specialty products, we rely heavily on product knowledge and customer interaction. This precludes the use of a lot of automation. I do rely heavily on analytics to make purchasing decisions and have been very impressed with the rich-

ness of the data that can be produced now versus 10 years ago. I am able to compare many metrics in a short amount of time, giving me at least the sense that I can make informed decisions. Recently, in order to reduce the amount of emails my teams are producing internally, we moved to using Microsoft Teams for as much internal communication as we can. This transition happened as we were getting staff to work from home during the coronavirus. I have found it to be invaluable for communicating with my team.

Q: What have been the biggest changes in the deli industry over the course of your career?

A. First, let me define our niche of the deli industry. Seacrest primarily works with specialty producers with cheese, charcuterie and antipasti being our largest categories. We also have a focus on specialty dry goods and accoutrements. The big-

gest changes have been those associated with the growth and maturation of our niche. What started with small producers and importers working hard to educate consumers has become a well-developed industry. Along with the mainstream acceptance of specialty products into the conventional market has come a tightening of food safety regulations. In the past decade, we have seen food safety regulations become increasingly demanding in terms of time and resources. This has greatly increased the cost of starting and running a dairy or charcuterie operation. As a result of these forces, the overall quality of products has increased, along with the barrier to entry for smaller operations. We are seeing fewer small producers opt into distribution, but rather try to make a living with farmer's markets and direct sales.

As specialty foods have become more well-known and smaller producers have found it difficult to compete, we have seen the larger producers create products to satisfy the demand. This has allowed supermarkets to increase their offerings considerably, bringing specialty foods to a larger audience. At the same time, this has hurt many of the smaller, specialty stores.

Q: What hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

A. Who has time for hobbies? When I have time, I love to cook, garden and spend time with family and friends.

Q: Are you married? If so, how long? How many children?

A. Yes, I am married to my wonderful wife, Miranda. We have been married for 12 years, but together for almost twice that. We have two children, Andrew, who is eight, and Niveen, who is five.

Q. How has your career evolved over the years?

A. I started in the retail grocery industry as a bagger when I was 16 years old. Being with Schnucks for over 20 years, I have spent time in marketing, merchandising, finance, procurement and now category management. Being a part of so many different departments has really helped me understand the entire scope of our business and how one small change can have an impact on multiple areas of the business.

Q. What is your leadership philosophy?

A. Heavily relying on our team is one of the biggest things that leads to our overall success. I always work on empowering my team to make the right decisions without micromanaging their day-to-day duties. We are always generating open conversations about how we can collectively serve our customers and teammates better.

Q. What is the best advice you ever received and why?

A. Take risks and fail fast. Over the past few years, we have taken a few leaps of faith and had a lot of success with new product launches and identifying new signature items. On the flipside, we have tried other new products that did not resonate with our customers. Having a strategic plan for both scenarios is essential. In many instances, there are more learnings from the unsuccessful product launches that help drive future decisions for our department.

Q. How do you balance your work and personal life?

A. My wife and I both say we work hard but play harder. While at work, I try to be as efficient as possible so I can get home and spend time with my



Ryan Kaufmann

Category Manager Deli/Prepared Foods
Schnuck Markets, St. Louis

family. Trying to simplify the day-to-day processes and has been key in helping maintain this balance. I am always seeking new ways of working more efficiently in order to streamline our business. Identifying and prioritizing blue chips helps relieve some of the pressure of not getting to lower priority projects.

Q: What deli retail trends have impacted the industry most over the last year?

A. Grab-and-go has been a major focus for our deli over the past year. Working through labor shortages is requiring us to go to market differently than ever before. Time is one thing that a lot of people don't have enough of. We are constantly

evaluating more pre-packaged items to eliminate wait times in our full-service areas of the business. We need to find offerings that help expedite the shopping experience for those who don't have an abundance of extra time.

Q: What technology or technical tools are indispensable to you in the workplace and why?

A. We currently have a variety of data and analytic tools to provide us with insights to make category decisions. I was a data analyst for two years in our finance department and still use these tools daily in order to make key decisions that will help drive sales and reduce shrink. As time goes on, I see this

becoming even more critical to our business. With our Schnucks Rewards program, we will be able to evaluate shopping patterns and get a better understanding of loyalty to specific items, brands and categories.

Q: What have been the biggest changes in the deli industry over the course of your career?

A. Our customers and the product they want is evolving quicker than ever before. Customers are wanting quick and easy meal solutions that taste great and don't break the bank. We need to maintain our focus on our core products while continuing to evolve and offer new on trend products, such as ethnic and vegan foods. My philosophy has always been that I want to sell great tasting food at a good price. Our culinary team is constantly creating new products and finding new suppliers to ensure we are offering the best food possible.

Q: What is the biggest challenge you've had to overcome on the job?

A. The unknown is always the thing that challenges me the most in any new job I have started. The uncertainty of if I will be able to adapt and succeed fast is always in the back of my mind.

Q: What hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

A. I am a huge foodie and love travelling. Anytime I go out of town, I am looking to where I can have a great meal and cocktail. Luckily, St. Louis has an amazing food and beer scene that we take advantage of all the time.

Q: Are you married? If so, how long? How many children?

A. Yes, my amazing wife Lacee and I have been married for 13 years, and have a four-year-old, Lincoln, and a one-year-old, Eloise.

Q. How has your career evolved over the years?

A. As a high school student in need of money in the summer of 1988, I started at Roche Bros. as a part-time deli/prep foods clerk. After a few years, we opened a new store, and I had the opportunity to go full-time. Knowing the prospective longevity of the food business, I started to rise through the ranks of the deli department as an assistant deli manager followed by deli manager in 1995. I became excited for the future and my career path. After 17 years, I was promoted to deli/seafood merchandiser in 2012. I became the deli/seafood buyer in 2017 and assumed my current position of director of deli, seafood, bakery and specialty cheese in 2018.

Q. What positions have you held in industry associations?

A. I am member of the IDDBA's management forum, a member of the Massachusetts Cheese Guild and Massachusetts' Food Association's category focus sub-committee.

Q. What is your leadership philosophy?

A. I am always fair and consistent in the principles that guide my decision making. While there may be those who disagree with my decisions, consistency with those decisions brings respect. I am a big proponent of developing my team to their fullest and preparing them for their career development. I will always lead from the front and give my team the credit when everything is going great and will always bear the weight of criticism when it's not so great. I believe coaching people and letting them be creative and make decisions on their own is invaluable to the team as a whole while giving others con-



Josh Naughton

Director of Deli, Seafood, Bakery and Specialty Cheese
Roche Bros. Supermarkets Inc., Wellesley, MA

fidence in their own abilities.

Q. What is the best advice you ever received and why?

A. Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and take on new tasks and responsibilities that you may think are beyond your scope. Always do more than what's expected and always help when you see a person or department in need.

Q. How do you balance your work and personal life?

A. I balance my work and personal life by setting time aside every night and weekend for family, friends, exercise, etc. It is important to decompress, put away your cell phone and spend that time with those most important to you.

Q. What deli retail

trends have impacted the industry most over the last year?

A. The biggest surging trend this past year was the continued emergence with the plant-based food category. Leading that trend was the Beyond Meat Co., along with plant-based dairy, beverages, spreads, dips and sauces. We have seen double digit growth year over year in this category. Is it a fad? Still unknown, but retailers are dedicating a lot of frozen and fresh square footage to this category.

Q. What technology or technical tools are indispensable to you in the workplace and why?

A. IRI/Nielsen data has been an excellent tool, providing drilled down market data information. From pricing,

market share and competitive sales volumes, it is a good tool to aid in decision making.

Q. What have been the biggest changes in the deli industry over the course of your career?

A. I have seen many changes over the course of my career but what stands out is the consumer demand for grab-and-go items, healthier nitrate/nitrite free and non GMO items and how private label has evolved into a high-quality, trusted product on par with any national brand in most retail locations.

Q. What is the biggest challenge you've had to overcome on the job?

A. The biggest challenge I had to overcome was when I was promoted to director of deli, seafood, bakery and specialty cheese. I had all the experience and confidence in deli, seafood and specialty cheese but never worked a day in the bakery department. I thought flour was flour! Not being a baker had its own set of challenges, but I had the best support staff and best bakers in the industry to help guide me along. At the end of the day, the business model was the same, be it a cupcake or honey ham. I needed to do the same thing with both—offer the highest quality product and sell it!

Q. What hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

A. Outside of work, I love to spend time with my family and German Shepherds. I spend a lot of time fishing, eating at great restaurants, working in the yard and traveling.

Q. Are you married? If so, how long? How many children?

A. I've been married to my wife Karen since 1996, and we have two kids—Keely, 17 and Kenny, 13.

Q. How has your career evolved over the years?

A. My love and passion for cooking and curiosity around food has really shaped the evolution of my career. I started in the food industry as a server and worked my way into a kitchen. Then I quickly found myself going to school for the culinary arts in an agriculturally rich area of North Carolina. After working in restaurants and graduating from culinary school, I started yearning for my home state of California and the rich, established food movement in the Bay Area. Upon my return, I found myself drawn to the world of cheese. This was my first introduction to the specialty food industry. I fell in love, and I started the next phase of my education and career. As time went on, I was intrigued by the agricultural side of cheese and soon left the cheese counter to work on a dairy goat farm back in North Carolina. Soon, I was running a kitchen in the Pisgah National Forest for an outdoor school where I planted and cultivated vegetables for meals. After I managed kitchens, I found myself in Salt Lake City where I managed a specialty foods store, Liberty Heights Fresh, and worked on the Slow Food board. I wanted then to go into buying as a career. I ended up running into someone here at Market Hall Foods almost four years ago. There was a position opening, and I took it to be groomed to be a senior buyer. I was handed an incredible opportunity to be head of the charcuterie program, and now I oversee our import program, purchasing, produce and everything that is grocery and charcuterie related. I also work with our sister companies for procuring product, as well.



Wendy Robinson

Senior/Import Buyer
Market Hall Foods, Oakland, CA

Q. What positions have you held in industry associations?

A. Board of SLC Slow Food Chapter, Good Food Foundation Member and Trend Spotting for the Specialty Food Association.

Q. What is your leadership philosophy?

A. It's really important to me to identify strengths of the people I work with and utilize and grow those strengths. We work as a team, and everyone feels supported in their careers and shares the general philosophy of food and protecting our food system.

Q. What is the best advice you ever received and why?

A. Go after what you want to do, even if you're terrified and only know a part of the

job. I came upon the advice, fail harder and faster, in a book I picked up several years ago at a point in my life where I was struggling with what my next step was going to be in the industry. At that time, I felt like I had failed everything so reading this changed my perspective on failure. Instead of fearing failure, I started to embrace it and take chances on myself. My life started to reshape itself, and now they are words I try to live by every day.

Q. How do you balance your work and personal life?

A. I think this is a challenge for a lot of people currently in our world. Technology has really given us such great advantages, but it also robs us of a little bit of peace and

quiet. Every day, I try to do something for myself. It can be meditation, walking, hiking, stretching or just talking with a friend. I always am checking in with myself and my mental health to make sure I am taking the time I need to nourish myself.

Q: What deli retail trends have impacted the industry most over the last year?

A. I think the biggest trends are grab-and-go and prepackaged items. We're seeing an increase in producers providing that and, in turn, customers wanting a quick option. People want to get in and out of places versus waiting in line.

Q: What have been the biggest changes in the deli industry over the course of your career?

A. One change is accessibility to specialty products across the country. Over the past 20 years I've worked in this industry, people now have more access to specialty products either at their local grocer or online.

Q: What is the biggest challenge you've had to overcome on the job?

A. I would say merging current technology into the workplace. I think small businesses in general are facing a new phase of technological options to operate their business, and there is a challenge to incorporate the old with the new. It can be difficult to find what is most efficient and the best use for your return. We're always talking with other companies to find out how they're incorporating technology to better manage inventory.

Q: What hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

A. Gardening, hiking, cooking, traveling and creating art.

Q. How has your career evolved over the years?

A. In the 35 years I have been doing this, I have held every position in our company, from customer service to head of HR to my current role. Rotating through the entire business has given me a unique perspective on the company and a clear understanding of the roles I am expecting my team to fill.

Q. What positions have you held in industry associations?

A. I have served on the executive board of the AABID and held the position of vice chair. I was also an original member of the St. Francis Center for Entrepreneurship Advisory Board.

Q. What is your leadership philosophy?

A. Lead by example. Since I have rotated throughout our entire organization, I hope that my leadership and work ethic show people what I hope they bring to our team.

Q. What is the best advice you ever received and why?

A. Leadership is top down. Be the leader and mentor you always wished to have. In retail, we are only as good as our team, so it's up to us to cultivate, motivate and develop a winning culture.

Q. How do you balance your work and personal life?

A. Work/life balance is hard for everyone. I am lucky that my husband Pat and my brother Ron are my partners, and we have a great team. We do a few work trips yearly, and my husband and I always try to go together and then tack a few days on to enjoy a few amazing meals and see the local markets.

Q: What deli retail trends have impacted the



Christine Sahadi Whelan

Managing Director
Sahadi's, Brooklyn, NY

industry most over the last year?

A. In today's no-touch environment, the deli industry is completely different than if you had asked me a year ago. Back then, the trends were beautiful bulk displays of prepared foods, which deli staff then custom packaged for our clients. Today, this is a different business. Packaged grab-and-go in sustainable packaging with minimal handling has become what our deli area is now. I don't know how long this trend is going to take hold or if it will ever go back to the way we were last year. I am not sure anyone in our industry could have pre-

dicted where we are now.

Q: What technology or technical tools are indispensable to you in the workplace and why?

A. My phone apps allow my office phone to travel with me; my tablet is crucial in the era of paperless office; and of course, my smartphone in general. No matter which office I am in—home office or the back office at either of our stores, or at our warehouse—I just need a dock for my tablet, and I am up and working. It is as easy for me to work while at an overseas food show as it is in Brooklyn.

Q: What have been

the biggest changes in the deli industry over the course of your career?

A. Prior to this year, I would have said the movement away from cooking at home to customers' desire for restaurant-quality prepared foods in the store. Until a few months ago, I was predicting that even more of our sales would be coming from our prepared foods case.

Q: What is the biggest challenge you've had to overcome on the job?

A. Without a doubt, these past few months have been among the most challenging ones of my career. This pandemic has fundamentally changed the industry in New York City and the world. We went from being a specialty grocery and café with 70 percent prepared food and wine/beer sales to online delivery of commodities becoming 80 percent of our business overnight. This coupled with the general fear and "social distancing" has been a daily challenge both for staffing and crowd control.

Q: What hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

A. I do yoga religiously for exercise and stress relief. I love to spend time with my husband and adult children over a great meal. I also love to travel and walk on the beach with my husband.

Q: Are you married? If so, how long? How many children?

A. I have been married for over 30 years and have two adult children. My son Michael is coming into the business next month after law school graduation, and my daughter Caitlin just recently started working with us after rotating through front of house management positions in top New York City locations.

DB

Six ways TO SUCCESSFULLY CROSS merchandise

Simple ways to raise
register rings.

BY CAROL M. BAREUTHER



Sunday dinner from The Fresh Market is simple, savory and stress free for customers of the 159-store chain headquartered in Greensboro, NC. The menu starts with a plump juicy rotisserie chicken. Then, countertop signage offers a choice of two sides. Shoppers can opt for traditional dishes, such as creamy macaroni and cheese, coleslaw, a baked potato salad or something trendier like Brussel sprouts with bacon, broccoli cranberry slaw with almonds or an edamame chickpea medley. Plus, for an extra 50 cents per side, customers can upscale to one of the deli's bistro-style sides like lemon orzo salad or a crisp pear and broccoli salad with walnuts.

The Fresh Market rounds out the meal with a side of sweet cornbread and offers it all for a \$12.99 deal, or \$13.99 with two bistro sides. Thus, the customer who came in for a single item—a rotisserie chicken, now walks out with an entire meal solution and the retail deli has upped its ring by 62 to 75 percent. This is the beauty of cross merchandising.

"Cross merchandising is the most important marketing to achieve incremental sales in your deli," says Giuliana Pozzuto, market-

ing director for the George DeLallo Co., a Jeanette, PA-based manufacturer of Italian and Mediterranean foods. "In the same way that consumers are influenced by the creative and eye-catching food photos on social media, your deli has the same power to directly influence a purchase in-store."

There are three overarching elements to assure that cross merchandising in general is successful, according to the Madison,

WI-headquartered International Dairy Deli Bakery Association's (IDDBA) 2012-published handout *Merchandising – Successful Cross Merchandising*. These are creating combinations that take care of customers' needs, make for a timely experience and partake of deli employees' knowledge to inform and suggest. More recently, according to the IDDBA's *What's In Store 2020*, 74.2 percent of shoppers surveyed viewed cross merchandising as an extremely/very important feature at food retail, second only to the offering of prepared foods.

The placement of two or more items next to each other is indeed cross merchandising.

However, the more creative deli operators are in utilizing this sales strategy, the better the result. Here are six strategies to get started.

1. CREATE PERFECT PAIRINGS.

Pickles and ice cream might be a logical combination to pregnant women. However, this pairing won't inspire most shoppers to put both foods in their basket. The sweet spot about the deli is that the department is full of products that do indeed make lip-smacking, impulse-enticing buys.

"There are natural pairings, such as lunchmeat, condiments and breads," says Tom Orlando, national sales director for Conroy Foods, a Pittsburgh, PA-based maker of Beano's-brand condiments. "Sometimes, the simplest pairings and cross merchandising techniques work best. For example, when the retailer's deli is advertising a sale on roast beef, make sure our Beano's Horse Radish Sauce is close by and prominently featured. It is amazing when products appear to be in sync with one another on a merchandising and promotional level versus hundreds of products autonomously residing in their own space."

Cross merchandising, or building combo meals, is a good way for supermarket deli operators to take a bite out of foodservice sales.

"Restaurants have been doing this for years, and most importantly they do it every day," says Bob Sewall, executive vice president of sales and marketing for Fall River, MA-headquartered soup and sides maker, Blount Fine Foods. Just look at the quick serve arena. You drive through and order a combo meal by its





See you in Houston
for the 2021 IDDBA!
We missed you this year!



CUSTOM SHIPPERS FOR EVERY SEASON

If you have the sandwich, we have the sauce.. and a shipper for every season! Increase deli sales with a Beano's custom made shipper program tailored to your customer's needs.

FLAVORS AVAILABLE

Honey Mustard | Pineapple Honey Mustard | Deli Mustard | Jalapeno Mustard | Cranberry Honey Mustard | Sriracha
Original Sub Dressing | Balsamic Sub Dressing | Olive Oil Sub Dressing | Chicken Wing Sauce | Peach Habanera
All American Sandwich Spread | Buffalo | Horse Radish | Wasabi | Roasted Chipotle | Southwest | Sweet Chili Pepper



48 - 8oz
bottles
4 trays
of 12



Uniquely crafted,
Perfectly paired



lesley stowe
raincoast crisps®





Help your customers elevate their *stay-at-home* snacking occasions for their entire family. Pair their favorite cheeses and toppings with raincoast crisps® and La Panzanella® artisan crackers.



Find them both in the deli.

www.lapanzanella.com www.lesleystowe.com





number. Delis have all the fixings to do the same thing, too. And because of the variety offered at retail, probably do an even better job with more variations. Just think, the average deli has four to five sandwiches, four to five salads and four to five soups. Putting even two of these together in a combo meal can result in a 25 to 50 percent life. Plus, this variety means there's a huge ability to mix and match and come up with different combinations every day or every week."

Newer products include the company's Hatch Chile Mac & Cheese that pairs well with fried chicken; Cheesy Polenta that menus with ribs and coleslaw; and Riced Cauliflower as a side for baked salmon. Among the best-sellers is Blount's Broccoli and Cheddar Macaroni and Cheese.

2. BUILD ALL-IN-ONE DISPLAYS.

Some retailers practice merchandising according to an internal category hierarchy, while those who are most successful execute their merchandising practices on par with how the consumer shops, says Conroy Food's Orlando. "Can you have all the breads, rolls and condiment options right next to the deli? No, but you can provide simple, creative and quite possibly unique product pairings to fit the consumer demand."

To do this, create secondary in-store displays.

"Putting dips or spreads near the Pressels or Wicked Crisps or vice versa work well in terms of secondary displays," says Jeff Canner, vice president of CRG, LLC, a marketing company based in Andover, MA, that manages both brands. "But it falls down when it's a treasure hunt. You need the items together. If people can find these products together in a secondary display, the cross merchandising will be highly effective."

Protein Pressels are the latest variation of the thin, crispy and popular pretzel chips, and are made with red lentils, white beans and green peas and available in BBQ and Sea Salt flavors. A 1-ounce serving provides 5 grams of protein and 3 grams of fiber.

Use store signage to make a clear snack, meal or usage connection between the products cross merchandised in the display, recommends Krystle Turnbull, product manager for the artisan line at Litehouse, Inc., in Sandpoint, ID. "Plus, offer enticing price promotions. A buy-one-get-one incentive, whether for a free or discounted product, is a great way to connect new product trial with a best-selling product that customers already know and love. Research has shown that by using sec-

ondary displays, stores typically see an additional 200 percent unit lift during this type of cross merchandising promotion."

3. DEMO TWO OR MORE PRODUCTS. The try-it, you'll like-it and buy-it approach works well when cross merchandising as part of a manned demo.

"When a shopper tries a sample featuring our cheese spread with a specific cracker, it may give them an idea of a pairing they hadn't thought of before or remind them of something they wanted or needed that wasn't necessarily on their list, and they will buy both products," says Brittany Requejo, marketing manager for Pine River Pre-Pack, Inc., Newton, WI-based makers of cheese spreads. "This is especially true when the deli staff and demo person work well together to prepare the samples and set up an appealing display. It is the difference between a shopper stopping and sampling or walking away."

Early this year, Pine River released a new and improved line of shelf-stable gourmet snack cheese spreads. The company achieved this by adding more aged Wisconsin Cheddar to the recipe and limiting the use of other non-dairy ingredients to achieve a flavor more consistent with the traditional cold pack, but with the convenience of not requiring refrigera-



FROM SAVORY TO SWEET TO LAYERED & SPICY, AND EVEN, SEAWORTHY.

LAKEVIEW FARMS HAS DIPS FOR EVERY OCCASION AND EVERY CONSUMER.

Lakeview Farms crafts fresh refrigerated dips, spreads, hummus and salsa designed to delight the most discerning taste buds while providing exceptional value. Not to mention consistent performance for those who stock them. Discover what partnering with Lakeview Farms can do for you at LakeviewFarms.com or contact your Lakeview Farms representative.



 **LAKEVIEW FARMS**
Creating a World of Fresh, Delightful Foods!

tion. Pine River also recently introduced its first clean label Cheddar-based, cold pack cheese food to the market in five varieties: Sharp Cheddar, Port Wine, Garlic & Herb, Hot Habanero and Spicy Beer.

Cheese and cracker cross merchandising has also proved a win for the Venus Wafer Co., in Hingham, MA, manufacturers of over 20 types of crackers and flatbreads.

"In the past when we demo our crackers and/or flatbreads and cheese or hummus or dips that are on promotion together, we have noticed increased sales," says James Anderko, vice president of sales and marketing.

Mariner-brand Stoned Wheat Bite Size crackers and Mariner Lavasch are the company's two best-selling products and both complement a variety of deli products such as cheese, meats, dips, soups and salads. Recently, Venus has introduced offerings under its classic Mariner brand. These include Organic Saltines, Organic Thin Wheat and Organic Clubhouse crackers.

4. PROVIDE READY RECIPE SUGGESTIONS. Recipes, conveyed via grouped product displays, signage or even recipe cards, are a great way to show customers other ways to use cheese spread that they may not have thought

about, suggests Pine River's Requejo. "For example, an easy recipe would be cheese spread on a slice of ham or salami and then rolled up. Or, serving our Sharp Cheddar with Elbow Macaroni for an easy mac 'n cheese dish or mixing our Jalapeño Cheese Spread with salsa and serving with tortilla chips."

Similarly, bagels and cream cheese are often thought of breakfast bakery staples. But there's opportunities for lunch and dinners from the deli, too.

"One of our newest flavors is Horseradish & Cheddar," says Carl Cappelli, senior vice president of sales and business development for Don's Prepared Foods, in Schwenksville, PA, which makes and markets its 17-item line of Melanie's Medleys brand flavored cream cheeses. "The supermarket deli can use this as a dip or market it as a premade sandwich or as fixings for a hot roast beef sandwich on Lavash or a tortilla."

5. KEEP IT FRESH WITH THEMES.

Seasons and holidays are all good hooks for a cross merchandising theme.

"My tip for spurring creativity is to take all of the seasonal inputs into account. What I define as seasonal is what sporting events are taking place. Think wings during March Madness with Beano's Honey Mustard or Buffalo sauce. For

calendar holiday pairings, think after Thanksgiving turkey sandwiches with Beano's Cranberry Honey Mustard, or weather-related seasonal fruits paired with a Beano's Balsamic vinegar dressing. Know when the graduations occur at the local level and be in touch with your shoppers' reality," says Orlando.

For football season, Litehouse created a cross merchandising promotion with its blue cheese dressing and deli chicken wings to call out the dressing as the perfect condiment for dunking, says Turnbull. "We created strong in-store signage to support the promotion and tied the two items together as a must-have for watching football."

Cheeseboards and charcuterie platters are on-trend right now and ideal for holiday and entertaining in general.

"A 'Make-Your-Own Cheeseboard' display featuring our cheese spreads, as well as a few other cheeses and meats from the deli, and even a cutting board and napkins, would be a great way to incorporate many brands into one promo display and draw the attention of a shopper," suggests Pine River's Requejo.

DeLallo's newest product, an all-natural Italian Tomato Bruschetta available in a 9.8-ounce jar, pairs up perfectly with fresh Mozzarella, specialty cheeses, focaccia toasts and other charcuterie complements, according to Pozzuto. "We are also launching it in a bulk format, as well, so that retailers can sell it on olive bars and for repack programs."

6. GO STORE WIDE. Consider cross merchandising across different departments, which can be an effective way to grow consumer basket size across the store, says Litehouse's Turnbull. "For example, during our summer barbecue promotion, we featured new and fun burger recipes incorporating our delicious line of Simply Artisan Cheese Crumbles. Cross merchandising, our product next to the meat department wasn't an option, but we strategically placed similar signage in the meat and deli departments, which helped consumers make the connection between products while navigating through the store. If consumers were picking up meat in the meat department, a sign with a juicy burger and blue cheese crumbles would tap into their desire for our Cheese Crumbles and direct them to the deli department to find our product."

DB



Bread Ups Delis' Ante



Incorporating bread in the department properly can lead to increased register rings.

BY LISA WHITE

Today's delis may be missing out on a key category that can bring a lot to the mix—bread. Although not without its challenges, it is a natural fit for sandwich fixings, as a meal component and can even be positioned as a snack with spreads, meat and cheeses.

According to the Madison, WI-based International Dairy Deli Bakery Association's (IDDBA) 2019 *What's in Store* report, bagels and muffins, in particular, experienced sales growth recently.

While bread with clean labels has come to the forefront, so has the prevalence of cross merchandising in the deli, according to the report.

There are definite staples in the deli versus other areas of the store.

"The most common breads have always been your sandwich staples—white, wheat and rye," says Paul Baker, co-founder of UK-based St. Pierre Groupe Ltd. "However, in recent years, there has been a growing demand for expanded options like artisanal rolls, sourdough, brioche, different kinds of seeded breads as well as options that appeal to the health-conscious consumer like gluten-free breads and wraps."

There's no disputing that selling bread in the deli encourages impulse purchases.

"It offers the shopper the added convenience of having everything in one place, so they can pick up their deli meats, bread and condiments without running around the store," says Baker. "As a brand, we've seen a major uplift in sales if a retailer stocks us in both the bakery area and the deli. It expands opportunity for awareness and impulse purchases."

Deli vs. Bakery

Ethnic breads, including pita, flatbreads, wraps and naan/tandoori, have become popular deli items.

"Like deli meats, cheeses and specialty items sold in the deli department, the breads in the deli are perceived as fresher and more exciting than those sold in the grocery aisle," says Karen Toufayan, vice president of marketing and sales at Toufayan Bakeries, based in Ridgefield, NJ. "They tend to appeal to a more discriminating group, since many healthier breads, such as organic, gluten free, sprouted grains, etc., can be found there, as well."

Many breads in the deli cannot be found in the grocery aisle in most stores.

"I see a lot of panini, pita, long and round rolls and specialty bread like rye and pumpernickel, in the deli department," says Warren Stoll, marketing director at Kontos Foods, Inc., located in Paterson, NJ. "When dealing with most retail accounts, buying departments have exclusivity, because retailers get a higher margin in the perimeter of the store."

Although the majority of Kontos' breads are found in the grocery aisle, retailers can put a free-standing unit in the deli to get a premium price."

"But you can't just decide to bring grocery items to the deli," he says. "Once it's set up, you're locked, and they're set up differently."

The deli also is the place to find a blend of utilitarian staples, such as kaiser rolls and sub rolls, demi loaves and club rolls, along with more ethnic varieties. "It is a great area to test new items," says James Viti, vice president, sales/marketing/product development, Delorio Foods, Inc., Utica, NY. "Successful deli introductions not really found in the bread aisle include naan, ciabatta, gluten free rolls, etc."

In addition, this area of the store provides the potential for higher bread rings.

"I think consumers tend to explore more in the deli area, mixing and matching meal ideas," says Viti. "This lends itself to increased impulse purchases. Like a good bakery area, the surroundings go a long way in enticing new ideas for consumers walking through to purchase their standard items."

Today's Trends

Today's consumers have come to expect a variety of options when it comes to supermarket deli bread.

"Trends like artisanal sourdough, brioche, fancy seeded breads, ciabatta, rolls, wraps and gluten-free options are becoming more popular in the supermarket deli," says Baker at St. Pierre Groupe. "Simple labels and natural ingredients have also become the go-to choices for many shoppers today."

Cleaner ingredients have been one of the biggest influencers in bread. "Consumers want to know their bread is natural and free of artificial ingredients," says Baker. "More and more consumers read labels and look for buzzwords like 'gluten-free,' 'non-GMO,' 'natural' and 'zero trans fat.'"

Due to growing popularity and health conscious consumers, gluten-free bread and wraps are more commonly available.

St. Pierre Groupe is planning to launch new product brioche products, like Sesame Seed Brioche Burger Buns and Brioche Sub Rolls, later in the year.

In addition to more ethnic breads coming online in delis, there has been an increase in specialty health breads that are gluten free, organic or made with sprouted grains.

"The broad appeal of gluten free has actually allowed the segment to grow, providing consumers with a bread option they can feel good about eating," says Toufayan. "For example, Toufayan's gluten free wraps are one of our most popular products, leading our strong growth in the category. We also find it as one of the most sought after products in our e-tailing efforts."

In addition to healthy entries like its gluten free line, and Low Carb Smart Pockets, which combine the convenience of the company's Smart Pockets pita bread with the benefits of a low carb product, Toufayan Bakeries has seen much success with its new ethnic breads like naan- and tandoori-style flatbreads.

"Supermarket deli sections are like walking into a classic, traditional deli," says Stoll at Kontos Foods. "Not only can consumers purchase meat by the pound, but they also

can buy ready-made sandwiches, and the service is similar to a typical restaurant deli."

He adds that the prevalence of hand-held food has increased due to its convenience for busy consumers.

Kontos Foods recently introduced a two-piece bread in a bag that can be easily heated in the oven.

"This is similar to the in-home kits from companies like Hello Fresh and Blue Apron," says Stoll. "Stores can take the same type of bread and keep it on a ready-to-eat basis."

With the growth of gluten free, there have been higher quality bread products in recent years.

"Although we don't have a gluten free offering, we do have wraps, and the demand for these is definitely growing," says Stoll. "Our Greek Lifestyle line offers half the carbs and twice the protein with less sugar and calories than the average flatbread, which is a big innovation."

Kontos Foods also launched its Rustics collection artisan bread, which mimics what artisan is. The two pieces of bread are in a heat-sealed bag with a zip lock for reclosing. This provides a 30-day shelf life.

As for innovations, Viti at Delorio Foods says the introduction of cleaner labels that don't sacrifice shelf life have enhanced the bread category.

"Also, there are increased offerings for health conscious consumers who may have formerly passed through the deli," says Viti.

Delorio Foods is focusing on providing plant-based flatbreads and breadsticks that offer unique flavors as well as the health benefits of plant-based nutrition.

Successful Selling

Freshness and shelf-life are always a challenge when it comes to offering a variety of bread.

St Pierre Brioche is frozen when it's shipped to the retailer, thawed and then put on the shelves to ensure optimal freshness and a longer shelf life. Streamlining the options and only offering a few bread choices can also help cut down on waste.

Promoting different breads each week can encourage trial.

"Consider promoting a unique sandwich offering with a different bread and creative fillings each week," says Baker. "There's also the opportunity to merchandise bread near the deli counter with recipes and deli bundle promotions to encourage trial."

The convenience factor continues to

influence purchase behavior, so any kind of promotions and bundle discounts can help drive sales.

"There's an opportunity to bundle deli meat with a loaf of bread for a discounted price or buy one get one free promotion," says Baker. "For example, the promotion could be buy 1 pound of ham and 1 pound of turkey and get a loaf of bread for a dollar."

There's also the opportunity to encourage sales with recipes and shelf danglers that drive sandwich inspiration.

"Seasonality can also be a great way to cross merchandise bread throughout the year," says Baker. "Football season, for example, is a great time to showcase sandwich inspiration and recipes while merchandising bread and condiments next to the deli counter."

Toufayan has an extensive direct store distribution system to insure that fresh product is always on the shelf as well as a freeze/slack program allowing retailers to self-manage the freshness of the product on the shelf based on movement in the stores. While returns have always been part of the business, this has not been a major issue for Toufayan who, along with its retail partners, manages inventory and orders, balancing store needs to minimize out of stock issues.

"If the retailers' sandwich destinations allow consumers to feel it's an up-to-date location for a healthy and adventurous eating experience, it should be successful," says Toufayan. "Thus, including some of the recently introduced healthy breads and some of the newer ethnic bread varieties like naan and tandoori, along with the staple sandwich items, should help drive traffic and increase velocity. In-store signage of these newer items will also help create awareness and stimulate impulse sales."

Stoll at Kontos Foods recommends increasing visibility with glass walls and incorporating bread as part of the deli's meal solutions.

"Customers should be able to walk into the deli and see what's there to put together a whole meal," he says.

With today's carb counting, there's no disputing bread can be one of the more challenging categories, especially in the deli department. Yet, it still remains a staple component to the American diet.

"And while some consumers are choosing to remove bread from their diet altogether, I think the demand for bread isn't going anywhere," says Baker. **DB**



Join the Refrigerated
Foods Association
in our **FIGHT** against Hunger!

National **DeliSalad** Month



www.refrigeratedfoods.org

July is National Deli Salad Month!

Join the RFA as we:

-  Partner with food banks throughout the US
-  Strengthen customer relationships
-  Encourage consumers to enjoy deli salads



*~ Help Combat Hunger and Increase Sales
during National Deli Salad Month ~*



-  **FIGHT HUNGER** in your community with monetary and in-kind donations
-  **USE** the National Deli Salad Month logo and promotional materials
-  **PARTNER** with your customers to create attention-grabbing promotions
-  **PROMOTE** deli salads to consumers to encourage more purchases

*For more details and to download the free Deli Salad Month Logo,
visit www.refrigeratedfoods.org*

Mixing it Up with Salads

**Classic, globally-inspired
and health-forward salads
have become deli staples.**

BY LISA WHITE



As U.S. consumers' palates have become more adventuresome, so have today's deli department salad offerings.

Alongside the traditional potato, mac and slaw—potato salad, macaroni salad and coleslaw—are offerings incorporating ingredients like grains, dried fruit, nuts and innovative spices.

Sales are looking up. In the 52 weeks ending April 18, 2020, salad dollar sales totaled almost \$4.3 billion, a 4.3 percent increase from 2019, according to New York City-based The Nielsen Co. Unit sales were close to 950 million, a 2 percent increase from a year prior.

"Today's consumers are seeking convenience and variety, as much as they are looking for quality and value," says Nathan Roe, senior manager, Deli Strategy & Customer Marketing, Reser's Fine Foods, Beaverton, OR. "Retailers nationwide are mixing up the status quo, from delis that are expanding to demonstrate a retailer's prepared foods expertise, to departments that are moving to packaged-only, freeing up behind-the-glass labor costs."

What's Selling

Classic, comfort foods remain staples in the deli department.

"Traditional, great-tasting deli salads such as potato salad, macaroni salad and coleslaw continue to be our top-selling products," says Roe at Reser's. "We've also seen growth in upscale, prepared salads with ingredients such as turmeric and shrimp as well as single-serve items sold in multipack configurations."

The company also is closely watching the meal kit trend and looking for insight into why some consumers want a minimal amount of preparation, and some prefer a few cooking and heating steps. Consequently, fully-assembled meal kits, as well as those with just a few assembly steps, are on Reser's horizon.

This is because all demographics, from Baby Boomers to Millennials, are looking for convenient options that not only taste good and are of high quality, but also are more sustainable.

"Most folks don't know what to make for dinner; they start thinking [about it] around 3 p.m.," says Carl H. Cappelli, vice president of sales and business development, Don's Prepared Foods, Schwenksville, PA. "They go to retail delis searching for solutions."

Don's Prepared Foods' offerings are following the trends of globally-inspired, clean, edgy, unique, plant-based options.

The company offers protein salads under its Don's Artisan Deli line that have clean labels.

"The current trends being driven by Millennials and Gen Xers are they want to feel good about sourcing delicious food," says Cappelli.

The classic potato salad, coleslaw and macaroni salads remain staples for Winter Gardens Quality Foods, Inc., based in New Oxford, PA.

"These types represent 75 percent of all salad volume with our customers," says John Cummins, Winter Gardens' R&D/culinary sales specialist. "We've definitely seen sales and trends coming down and shifting in other directions."

This includes more healthful choices towards grains and vegetables as well as oil and vinegar-based dressings as opposed to mayonnaise-based.

"We're updating these salads with more healthful ingredients to improve the nutritional value and clean up labels with regard to ingredients," says Cummins. "This means no more shelf stabilizing preservatives, along with a more fresh and healthful presentation."

The Innovations

Reser's Fine Foods works with retailers in several ways—from innovating products within traditional segments, to pushing boundaries with creative line extensions, to opening up new salad segments.

"A focus on a single herb or spice, such as dill, parsley or cilantro, or a primary ingredient like deviled eggs, gives a quick cue to the consumer of what to expect," says Roe. "Our culinary R&D chefs are also introducing appealing ingredients, such as wild rice and pepitas, with creative techniques that include roasting, spiralizing or caramelizing for new and delicious flavor combos."

Consumers are increasingly scanning ingredient statements and want to feel good about what they're eating.

"For the most part, they don't want to sacrifice flavor, taste or convenience, but we think there may be some flexibility on price," says Roe. "There is a perception that fresh deli sides are already 'clean', so in many cases, we see the industry simply catching up with consumer expectations."

Don's Prepared Foods has added 25

clean salads and sides to its roster. The All Natural Deli Salads include Clean Grains, such as wheatberry, mango lime quinoa and roasted corn salad. Other varieties include Seven Grain Salad, Cranberry Grain Salad, Island Grain with Beans and Spicy Black Beans with Corn.

Cummins at Winter Gardens Quality Foods also is seeing more innovation in healthier salads in the deli, along with cleaner labels and ingredients with a higher nutritional value.

"The focus is on health without sacrificing flavor and appearance," says Cummins.

Winter Gardens has several quinoa-based salads and Asian varieties that incorporate sesame oil, soy sauce, coconut, edamame and soybeans. Its 4 Grain salad incorporates nutritious ingredients including brown, white and wild rice and wheat berries with diced vegetables, Parmesan cheese and a vinaigrette dressing.

"The grain category is where we see the most requests for updated recipes and innovation," says Cummins. "Also, seafood is not so much an ingredient but an entire category."

Twists on old favorites are trending. For example, Winter Gardens' popular varieties are Amish-style macaroni salad with shrimp and seafood seasoning. Its classic tuna salad is offered in a Mediterranean style that is mayonnaise free. This includes a lemon flavor with artichoke hearts, kalamata olives and roasted pepper strips.

"Stores came to us to develop a salad that uses seasoned rotisserie chicken for a lighter option that fits in with the trends," says Cummins. "With the prevalence of rotisserie chicken, what used to be a rescue program with leftovers turned into chicken salad."

As a fresh-cut manufacturer and supplier to grocery and deli sections across the Midwest, Pearson Foods Corp. headquartered in Grand Rapids, MI, strives to find the balance between innovation and tradition behind the glass.

"While loyal consumers may pick up the classically loved old-fashioned coleslaw, they may also be drawn to the enticing Blue Cheese Coleslaw, with refreshing bursts of crisp cucumber and creamy blue cheese," says Ruta Pearson, vice president of sales and marketing. "We do this by constantly analyzing food trends and leveraging our high-quality fresh components to create flavors that excite and engage consumers in the deli section of grocery stores."



Green Curry Lentils & Quinoa

THANK YOU
FOR

50 Years

★ OF EATING UP OUR ★
INNOVATIONS
and staying
HUNGRY FOR MORE



Smoky Butter Beans



Artichoke Romesco



Adobo Rice & Beans



Southwestern Black Eyed Peas

PREPARE TO BE
WOWED
BY WHAT'S NEXT:

ALL-NEW GOURMET SIDES

Five new handcrafted vegan and vegetarian creations with zero artificial flavors, colors and preservatives. Here's to another 50 years of creating food your customers crave.

Do Delicious Differently.

ESTD 1970
ARTISAN
DELI



Melanie's
Medleys



888.321.DONS | DonsPreparedFoods.com



Simply Artisan™

Who's ready for a
**BACKYARD
BBQ?**

AGED 100 DAYS
Award-Winning
• RBST FREE •



Find New BBQ Recipes @

www.lighthousefoods.com



*No significant difference has been shown between milk derived from rBST treated & untreated cows



Pearson salad kits are made with the deli buyer, retail associate and consumer in mind. Deli kits come in small one- to two-kit cases to help the deli buyer control inventory and shrink.

"For the associate, there is no preparation required for the salads," says Pearson. "They simply mix all of the pre-cut components provided by Pearson in a mixing bag, set it out in the display case and serve."

Marketing & Merchandising

Salad freshness continues to be a key component within the deli—from the look and appearance of an item, to its preparation and assembly.

Resers' recent successful launch of a turkey recovery dressing kit, which includes separate components for dressing, dried cranberries and mixed nuts, helped solve a deli operator challenge of utilizing extra meat from a deli hot case program.

"Utilizing an existing program also extended the appeal of turkey, creating an efficient deli alternative for consumers outside of the carving station," says Roe. "The cranberries and nuts added visual appeal, with flavors reminiscent of holiday meals."

Marketing salads should focus on flexibility, as these are not only sides, but also components that can complete a meal.

"For this reason, delis should allocate more space to these items," says Cappelli at Don's Prepared Foods. "They also should include plant-based options and meal kits as solutions."

Pearson Foods has been collaborating with deli retailers to meet consumer trends, such as the move toward contact-less service.

"The current consumer climate favors the ever growing fast-paced, ready-to-eat market, and now new public health concerns stem from person to person contact," says Pearson. "With the retailer's dilemma in mind, Pearson Foods has taken the ini-

tiative to develop solutions for ready-to-go salads. This allows the retailer to maintain the private label experience and relationship with their consumer while meeting the consumer need for independence, variety and quality fresh food."

Shelf life should be top of mind when merchandising salads, especially with the move away from preservatives.

"As we move toward cleaner labels and preservative-free products, there does remain a real challenge with shelf life," says Cummins at Winter Gardens Quality Foods. "But for some time, we've been using natural shelf life extenders that are not synthetically made and are considered clean label."

These natural antimicrobials have not only become more affordable, but also more available.

"Classic deli style salads have incorporated antimicrobials for cleaner labels without jeopardizing shelf life," says Cummins. "The performance of these are improving all the time."

He adds that if trends are any indication, delis are moving away from bulk behind the deli counter merchandising to prepacks.

"The initial reason was due to added convenience, but now it's more about safety and security," says Cummins. "Well-merchandised prepacked containers with updated and eco-friendly packaging is what we see customers moving towards."

This includes smaller 5- and 6-ounce containers as well as the larger 1-, 2- and 3-pound sizes.

"We're not only seeing delis request reduced packaging, but also materials that are more eco-friendly," says Cummins. "This includes compostable and recyclable packaging. Although added cost is typically built in for these materials, and there could be resistance for customers, that will decline as this packaging becomes more popular."

DB



Healthy Foods Stay on Trend

The Mediterranean foods category remains strong.

BY BOB JOHNSON

After all these decades, Mediterranean foods continue to be the flagship category in the deli.

But while venerable Mediterranean products remain vibrant and growing, the pandemic and its economic aftermath changed everything about what consumers want in the deli and how they want to purchase it.

The deli traces its roots back to the neighborhood markets that made familiar items available to Italian, Greek, Jewish and Middle Eastern immigrant communities, and continues as a destination for consumers looking for fine foods that fit with a modern healthy lifestyle.

"We're more interested in Mediterranean foods because they align well with the new diets," says Greg Klein, chief marketing

officer at Lakeview Farms, Delphos, OH. "They have relatively simple ingredients and clean labels, and a lot of them are bean based, which is in demand."

Lakeview Farms started offering dips, desserts and specialty items in 1988 and has steadily expanded its ethnic offerings by acquiring Tribe Mediterranean Foods, Inc., Flan Rico Confectionery Inc., Luisa's and Simply Fresh Foods, Inc.



While vegetable-based dips, antipasti and other dishes benefit from the desire to reduce cholesterol and fat, authentic Mediterranean meats and cheeses also continue to increase in popularity and supermarket deli sales.

Dried Italian meats including prosciutto, Genoa salami made from pork, hard salami made from smoked beef, pepperoni and sopressata continue to drive the deli pre-pack meat category, according to the Madison, WI-based International Dairy Deli Bakery Association's (IDDBA) *What's In Store 2020*, as they increased in sales more than \$50 million in the year ending March 24, 2019.

New meat products are also gaining traction as, according to the Associazione Industriale delle Carne e dei Salumi, export sales of mortadella to the U.S. increased nearly 15 percent over the last three years.

"Ethnic Mediterranean foods continue to be on the rise," says Warren Stoll, marketing director at Kontos Foods, Paterson, NJ. "We are a global society; people who have travelled younger and farther have been exposed to many cultures."

Kontos is a premier baker of hand-stretched flatbreads, making 60 varieties of flatbreads in numerous sizes and shapes, with and without grill marks. They also offer loaves or slices of gyro meats, Souvlaki on skewers, and prepared and packaged foodservice trays of Pastichio, a Greek pasta dish with ground meat and béchamel sauce, and Moussaka, an eggplant- or potato-based dish that includes ground meat.

"Mexican food is very popular in the U.S. today, but if you go back 35 years, it was not generally available in fast food; Mediterranean is travelling the same path, but we are a little behind," says Stoll. "You now see fast food chains like McDonald's and Subway offering flatbreads, and that's a trend I think will continue. You see flatbreads in many forms, and I've also seen all kinds of innovative ways people are using Feta."

The list of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern foods that have become staples in mainstream delis continues to grow.

"About 90 percent of our customers are in the mainstream markets like Meijer and Kroger," says Pierre Chammas, president of Steve's Mediterranean Chef, Madison Heights, MI. "My preference is that the hummus be displayed with the other dips and salsas. It's a more common item; it's not just ethnic."



The coronavirus epidemic rocked the deli, bringing some new trends that will last, as anxious consumers practice social distancing to protect themselves and their communities. Other changes could endure as long as the deep recession that is likely to result from efforts to fight the disease. There may even be a few new developments that could become permanent, as consumers become accustomed to buying food online.

Pandemics and Packaged Deli Foods

While the pandemic has hurt deli sales—they were down more than 25 percent for the year on April 21—there are also opportunities to merchandise packaged goods in innovative ways and to take advantage of the growing trend of internet-based sales.

Packaged Mediterranean products are generally gaining market share in the deli at the expense of the prepared foods cases, and smaller sizes suit the trend toward eating alone or with just immediate family members.

But the changes brought by the pandemic to the marketing landscape are so deep and complex that delis have a need and a right to expect help from their suppliers sorting out the details.

“You have to get as much information as you can to help retailers understand what their customers are thinking,” says Ken Dedic, vice president of sales and marketing at Jaffa Salads, Mundelein, IL.

The IDDBA teamed up with San Antonio, TX-based 210 Analytics to produce weekly analysis of changing trends in the deli and throughout the supermarket

during the pandemic and restrictions on social interaction.

Panic shopping hit supermarkets in late March, with meat sales nearly doubling in the week ending March 22 as consumers filled their freezers and produce sales up 30 percent and dairy sales increasing 60 percent as they filled their refrigerators.

But while sales in those departments have remained high as the restaurant sector collapsed, they have come down to earth as people grew more relaxed about the food supply system.

“Stock-up shopping is likely to taper further, as pantries and freezers are full,” says 210 Analytics president Anne-Marie Roerink in her April 7, 2020 report. “Consumers are settling into new realities of social distancing and are confident there will be ample food.”

Some suppliers of Mediterranean deli foods noticed this pattern of frenzied buying in supermarkets followed by a return to something like normalcy.

“Volume went up sharply at first, as people filled their pantries, and now it’s settled down to normal,” says Klein. “The trend among retailers is to focus on their best-selling items to minimize the complexity in the warehouse and stores. This is done to different degrees by different retailers. Some do it a lot, others a little, and some started doing it a lot and then dialed it back some.”

Total deli sales were down 27 percent for the week ending April 12 compared to a year before, but the decline has been uneven as the bottom dropped out of displays of foods that consumers can look over at close range or even touch, while sales of

packaged items were robust.

“During Easter week, the deli department experienced year-over-year sales increases for cheese, flat results for deli meat and continued deep declines for deli-prepared. Service counters and self-serve areas continued to be closed across many retailers or have shifted to an expanded meat/cheese grab-and-go assortment,” says Roerink.

Some suppliers believe that as consumers practice social distance in response to the virus, the size of the most popular packages has trended smaller.

“The larger size products are probably going to dip,” Dedic says. “A 1-pound product would probably be for a larger number of people. My products are more social experience products. We lost business compared to last year in the week before Easter.”

The Post Pandemic Pantry

Even as the pressure to practice social distancing eases, consumers are likely to continue their cost-conscious food buying ways during what could be lingering difficult economic times.

“We have seen a decrease in branded products, but nothing debilitating,” says Dedic. “I’m still up around 20 percent on the year in volume because we are new, priced competitively, and sometimes it’s good to be small. We’re going to be able to survive this. We are trying to do more promotions; I’m just promoting the hell out of the products.”

Jaffa Salads is a relatively new Midwestern regional supplier of vegan, kosher clean ingredient hummus, baba-ganoush, tahini, guacamole, salsa and Moroccan matbucha, and snack packs that

include guacamole or hummus with vegetables or pita chips.

"People are starting to cook more from scratch, so they are looking for ingredients," says Dedic. "Everyone is going to be shopping differently; my products are a convenience item, and money is going to be more of a value than time."

Analytics specialist Roerink also believes the numbers show more people were cooking at home by early April.

"Shoppers are preparing more home-cooked meals across all meal occasions, from breakfast to dinner," says Roerink. "Additionally, students of all ages are home from school, evening activities are cancelled, and shoppers emphasize healthful meals. At the same time, economic pressure is building."

George E. DeLallo Co. of Jeanette, PA, is featuring numerous make-at-home

Mediterranean meal options.

The company's gnocchi kit includes everything needed to make fresh potato and cheese gnocchi.

For the more adventurous connoisseur of Italian dinners, DeLallo offers a recipe to combine gnocchi with chicken, bacon and spinach.

DeLallo is also featuring the makings and recipes for five different pea and pasta recipes suitable for springtime dinners.

As a sign of the times, even before the pandemic, one of the IDDBA's 19 trends was La Trattoria, Italian-themed eateries that offer the ability to eat a prepared meal at the establishment, buy a hot meal to take home, or buy cold, ready-to-warm or bake items.

Buying online skyrocketed during the pandemic, as consumers sought the safest ways to get their food, and this trend could

be here to stay and offer the supermarket deli new competition.

"Consumers are adopting short-term behaviors during the pandemic that, in some cases, will become permanent, including the transition to online ordering and the purchasing of new brands and food items," says Jeremy Johnson, vice president of education for the IDDBA. "Consumers will emerge from COVID-19 in a new economic reality, which is likely to change grocery decisions even further. We will continue to track purchasing trends in the dairy, deli and bakery departments to try and get a handle on what may be that new normal."

The rise of internet sales creates new opportunities as well as new competition for the deli.

"We have seen an increase in online sales for our retailers offering pickup and delivery options and that also includes olives

OLIVES TAKE SHELTER IN CUPS AND JARS

Nicoise olives are only grown in low yielding orchards in the French Riviera and are largely sold and eaten domestically.

Possibly the only source of these intense black olives with a bitter, nutty flavor in the U.S. is the George E. DeLallo Co., which began as an Italian market serving the working-class neighborhood of Jeannette, PA, and has grown into a major, but still family-owned, importer, producer and distributor of specialty Italian and Mediterranean foods

These days, Nicoise olives, like the 7-ounce pitted olive jubilee, which also includes kalamata and plump green olives, and the blue cheese stuffed green California Sevillian olives, are largely sold in cups, rather than at the olive bar.

"We have been working with our retailer partners to develop ways in which we can continue to offer olives and antipasti to the public," says Giuliana Pozzuto, marketing director at DeLallo. "Because our retailers want to keep up the quality of their offerings and the consistency of consumer shopping habits, they are packaging our bulk product to sell in cups and display on the bar. Along with cupping our bulk product, we offer a pre-packaged line that has over 40 DeLallo Olive & Antipasti items. These items are packaged in our SQF-certified U.S. facilities. We have found that retailers are ready to take full advantage of this robust program, in addition to the bulk bar."

Olives still capture 10 percent of all sales in the deli appetizer category, according to Madison, WI-based International Dairy Deli Bakery Association's (IDDBA) *What's In Store 2020*, even though they have lost some market share over the last three years as egg rolls, jalapeño poppers and tortilla chips increased.

But this mainstay among Mediterranean foods has temporarily largely taken shelter in cups and jars, as many retailers pulled their food and olive and antipasti bars because consumers are anxious about trying foods that other customers have looked over or even touched.

"A deli can create a Mediterranean destination for the con-

sumer by offering a full lineup of pre-packaged olives and antipasti to merchandise along with your specialty cheeses," says Pozzuto. "Specialty cheeses, olives and antipasti are natural complements. You can create a bar right there on the shelves. Merchandise olives and antipasti alongside cured Italian sausages, bruschettas and spreads."

The supermarket deli must find new ways to merchandise the Mediterranean products that were previously sold in self-service food bars.

"During the last week of March, the deli department experienced year-over-year sales increases for cheese and meat, but deep declines for deli-prepared, as many stores had closed or limited operations of made-to-order counters, self-serve buffets, salad bars and hot bars," says 210 Analytics president Anne-Marie Roerink, who is providing a weekly analysis of pandemic and post-pandemic trends through the IDDBA.

It is still possible, however, to merchandise olives and antipasti in locations in the deli close to where consumers found them before the pandemic changed everything.

"One way we are merchandising bar items is to cup, label and place them into the existing olive bar pans," says Pozzuto. "Customers are accustomed to visiting the bar for the items, so we recommend having them available in re-packed cups during this time. We also have been expanding our prepackaged programs."

Even though the pandemic has challenged olive and food bars for the foreseeable future, there are opportunities for progressive retailers to offer bold displays of packaged items.

"Beginning with the olive bar, delis can choose to ramp up their offerings at the bar with complementary cheese spreads, bruschetta varieties, tapenades, focaccia toasts and Italian-style cured salumi," says Pozzuto. "Customers are looking for ways to grow and enhance their charcuterie plates and cheese boards."

DB



NEW!

SINCE 1950
DELALLO

AUTHENTIC ITALIAN

Tomato Bruschetta

WE'RE EXCITED TO INTRODUCE OUR NEWEST ADDITION TO THE DELALLO LINE

Brighten your summer displays with the fresh tomato flavor of our Italian Tomato Bruschetta. Merchandize in the deli and throughout the store with fresh mozzarella, focaccia toasts and fresh bakery breads. Give your consumers a taste of the nation's #1 bruschetta brand.

• Made in Italy • All Natural • Non-GMO • No Artificial Colors or Flavors •



and antipasti,” says Giuliana Pozzuto, marketing director at DeLallo. “Staying in and eating in, consumers are looking for ways to keep things interesting and exciting when it comes to their meals and snacks. With our prepackaged programs, olives and antipasti can be easily purchased using their active UPC codes for pickup and delivery via the retailer’s website.”

One Israeli olive oil maker is among the Mediterranean food producers relying even more heavily these days on internet sales to U.S. consumers.

“Although there has been a complete shutdown in Israel since the end of March, Sindyanna is considered an essential factory due to the fact that we produce and export food,” says Hadas Lahav, CEO at

Sindyanna of Galilee.

Sindyanna sells its prize-winning olive oils, herb mixes and honey made by Arab and Jewish women working together in Israel through Amazon, Fairway Markets and fair-trade groups like Ten Thousand Villages and Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soap.

“You may not be able to go to the stores to pamper your friends and families, but you can stay at home and we’ll come to you,” says Lahav.

The Snack Solution

Some trends that were in motion before the pandemic figure to continue, and an important one is the popularity of healthy dips or spreads that suit the new way of eating many snacks over the course of the

day rather than a few sit-down meals.

Deli sales of hummus and other spreads increased 3.3 percent in the year ending March 24, 2019, according to the IDDBA’s *What’s In Store 2020*, to approach \$1 billion, and other Mediterranean dips and spreads are gaining in popularity.

“Tzatziki and babaganoush and other Mediterranean salads are gaining traction,” says Klein, “Hummus is growing in single digits. It’s not as fast as it was, but it’s still growing. Hummus is our main product in the Mediterranean category, although we do have a tzatziki-style dip.”

Hummus is still rising in an expanding dip or spread category that also includes guacamole and salsa, and some suppliers offer all three.

Lakeview Farms, for example, offers a wide variety of salsas and guacamoles along with its hummus products.

For some suppliers, hummus is the Mediterranean alternative in their portfolio of healthy, plant-based dip and spread products that are predominantly Hispanic.

“We do mostly salsa or guacamole,” says Dedic of Jaffa Salads. “My Mediterranean portion is the weakest part of my business.”

Steve’s Mediterranean Chef has introduced their four traditional hummus flavors: Original, Roasted Red Pepper, Garlic and jalapeño, which can be found in select retailers throughout the Midwest and are in the refrigerated dips of the deli.

“My preference is that the hummus be displayed with other dips and salsa,” says Chammas from Steve’s Mediterranean Foods. “It’s a more common item; it’s not just ethnic.”

Chammas started Steve’s Mediterranean Chef to continue to merchandise the Mediterranean recipes he knows best and has grown up with and derived the line of hummus from his family’s traditional Lebanese recipes.

He believes other dishes and recipes from the region also have the potential to eventually go mainstream.

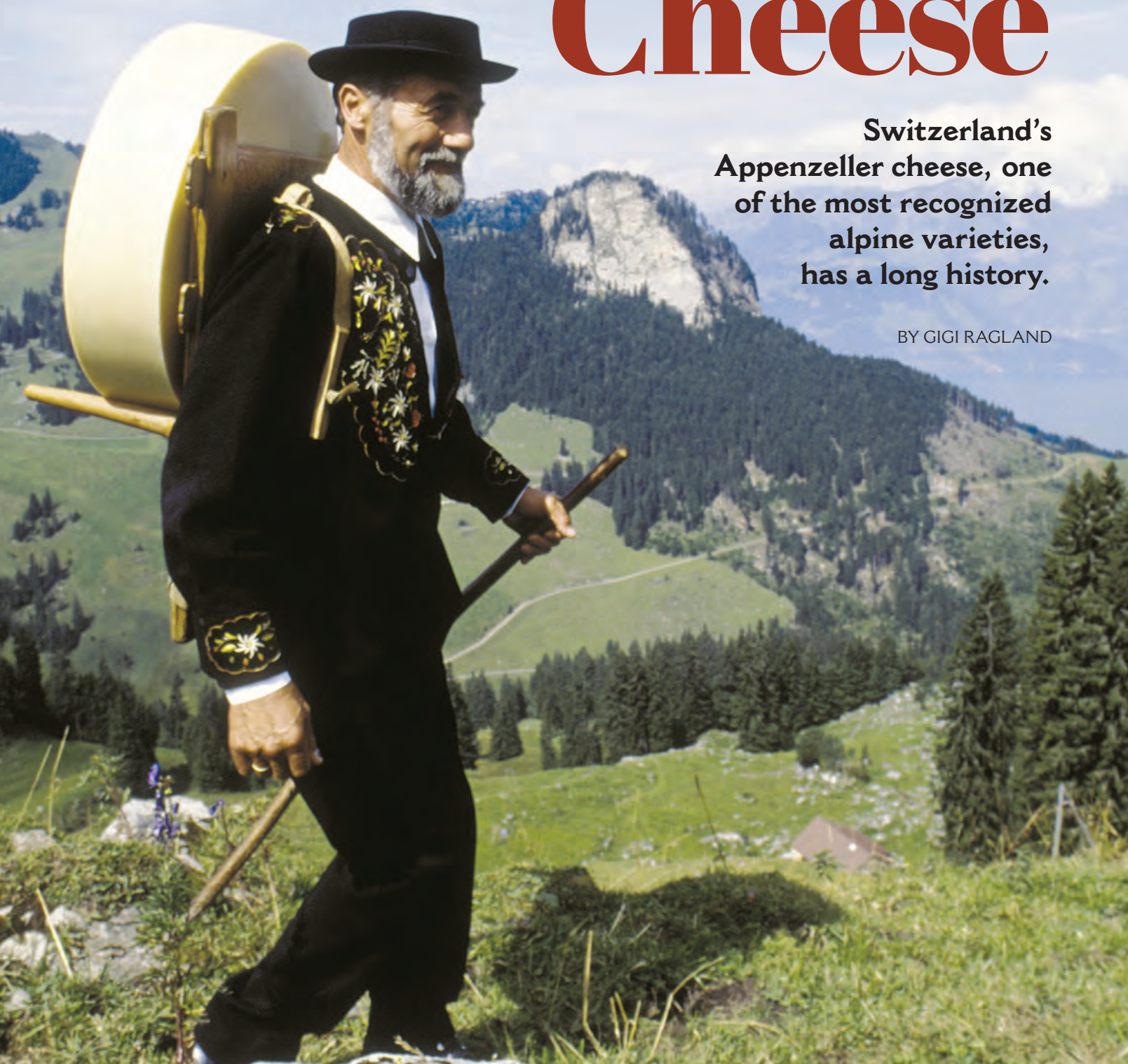
“Unfortunately, Middle Eastern is being defined by just hummus these days,” says Chammas. “It’s a challenge to be in the deli; it has to be fresh. We’re able to preserve hummus; tabouli is popular but it is a challenge because it has such a short [shelf] life. We’re also seeing a big demand for garlic spread; traditionally you eat that with protein like beef and chicken. Our product line is a lot more than hummus; we make kafta and meat pies with ground beef.”

DB

The Cheese With A Secret: **Appenzeller Cheese**

Switzerland's
Appenzeller cheese, one
of the most recognized
alpine varieties,
has a long history.

BY GIGI RAGLAND



Switzerland produces over 750 varieties of cheeses. That's a lot of production for such a small country, considering one can travel end-to-end by train in less than eight hours. The alpine landscape of Switzerland plays a strong role in the endurance of the cheese industry. So it's no surprise that for every person, there are five cows and that half of the dairy milk production goes into making cheese. Yes, truly it's quite the cheesy country. The architects of this glorious product? Swiss Brown cows can be seen almost everywhere in summer, where they graze on the lush buffet of green grass that covers the alpine meadows from May to October.

One of the Alp's most recognized cheeses, Appenzeller, originates from the Eastern region of Switzerland where alpine herdsmen having been making it for over 700 years. The charming historic village of Appenzell is nestled within the rolling hills of Appenzell Innerrhoden, the smallest canton of Switzerland. The village, with a population of 7,000, is considered to be the cultural center of the canton. Time-honored traditions centered around dairy

farming are still practiced where visitors can attend local events and festivals, such as the cattle drive up to the alpine pastures in May. This is where a procession of decorated dairy cows, with bells, of course, are led by herdsmen wearing traditional festive costumes. Once the cows reach the pastures, the herdsmen sing yodeling songs.

A Storied History

When an abbatial estate was built in 1071, cultivation and settlement began taking place in the mountain valleys, which led to farming on the Alpstein Alps. Farmers tended their alpine green meadows that were mainly situated on the sunny side of hills between 500 and 1,000 meters above sea level. Grazing during the summer, leading the cows to the grasslands of the Alps was a method of protecting the fodder crops in the lower valleys.

The first mention of a hard cow's milk cheese was noted in a document written in 1282, when the people of Appenzell used the cheese they produced as a tithe to the church, thus giving it to the monks at the Abbey of St. Gallen. The cheese was highly regarded for its unique spicy flavor derived



from an herbal brine and rub placed on the rind surface as it aged. Each farmer developed their own distinctive brine based on their environment, passing down the recipe within the family. Cheese was a main staple of food and main source of income, making anything to do with the lifestyle of producing cheese a valuable skill and trade, including management of the pastures.



Saputo

Specialty Cheese

EMBRACE YOUR INNER ARTISAN

Every cheese has a story. However, no one else has a story quite like ours. Our award-winning cheeses are crafted by artisans, ensuring the highest quality that not only meets your expectations, but appeals to the changing tastes of your customers.



SAPUTOSPECIALTY.COM | 1-800-824-3373





TYPES OF APPENZELLER CHEESE

All the hard cheeses are free from preservatives and additives, flavor enhancers, lactose and gluten. They are made with natural organic raw milk without additives. The production area is within the cantons of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Appenzell Ausserrhoden as well as parts of the cantons of St. Gallen and Thurgau.

Appenzeller Mildly Spicy

- Aged for three months
- Shape-size-weight: Round, diameter 11-13 in., height 2.5-3.5 in., average weight 13-15 lbs.
- Fat content: Min. 48% fat (dry weight)
- Cheese color: Ivory to light yellow
- Rind: Natural, yellow to reddish brown, pitted

Appenzeller Strongly Spicy

- Aged for four to five months
- Shape-size-weight: Round, diameter 11-13 in., height 2.5-3.5 in., average weight 13-15 lbs.
- Fat content: Min. 48% fat (dry weight)
- Cheese color: Ivory to light yellow

- Rind: Natural, reddish brown, pitted

Appenzeller Extra Spicy

- Aged: guaranteed six months
- Shape-size-weight: Round, diameter 11-13 in., height 2.5-3.5 in., average weight 13-15 lbs.
- Fat content: Min. 48% fat (dry weight)
- Cheese color: Ivory to light yellow
- Rind: Natural, reddish brown, pitted

IS IT THE REAL DEAL?

Quality mark

The casein mark guarantees the first-class quality of each individual cheese. It contains the cheese dairy number, guarantee of origin, production date and cheese number and enables each piece of Appenzeller cheese with rind to be checked for its authenticity.

Proof of origin

In the same way as a DNA test, the authenticity of even tiny pieces of Appenzeller cheese can now be clearly proven with the aid of lactic acid bacteria samples.

DB

Now, Appenzeller cheese is produced as it was 700 years ago using traditional artisan methods in around 50 local cheese dairies following an original recipe. However, the Appenzeller Schaukäserei (Demonstration Dairy), is where visitors can learn about the process of Appenzeller cheesemaking, yet the secret of the herbal brine remains as cherished today as it was hundreds of years ago. Only a few people know the recipe, and it's still a closely guarded secret.

A Unique Blend

A hint to discovering the herbs, flowers, roots, etc., used in the blend is to visit the Alpstein grassland landscape where cows roam. On the high Alps, years ago, farms dotted the steep meadows where three wooden buildings identified the location of a cheesemaking farm. A three-room alpine hut provided the herdsman living quarters and was where the cheese and butter were made. There was also a cowshed and a small pigsty where pigs finished off the remnants of the cheese and butter process. In these times, herdsman made cheese inside their hut, where a vat (copper tub) hung from the ceiling beams, suspended over an open fire. The herdsman owned his land and his herd of cows, lived with them on these remote mountain pastures and, during winter, drove the cattle from one hay farmer to another in the valleys below.

In Appenzellerland, cheese and butter have always traditionally been made on the mountain range. The products were then picked up by the dairyman, who would visit every one or two weeks with pack horses. He would load two wooden holders with the farmer's butter and cheese, then take them down the valley below to a dairy where the cheese was matured. Afterwards, the mature cheese was brought to market. The cow herdsman and the dairyman worked together, somewhat like partners. One processed the milk and the other took away the dairy products to market. They relied on each other for the success of their livelihood.

A herdsman worked from dawn to dusk milking; feeding the animals; making cheese and butter; trimming hooves; clearing meadows for cows to graze; chopping wood; searching for strays; and more. Now, community pastures are tended by several farmers in Appenzellerland and, instead of milking the cows by hand twice

a day, regional milk processing companies take care of the process and take the milk from the herdsman to the cheesemaking dairies.

The natural organic, raw milk of the legendary Swiss brown cows is undoubtedly the number one key ingredient to making Appenzeller cheese. In the early summer months, the bovines are taken to the highest pastures to dine on the freshest new spring growth of grass, wildflowers and herbs. The flavors of the alpine diet, blended with summer breezes and sunshine, make happy cows, which in turn produce a flavorful enhanced milk for making cheese. Their diet is solely mountain grass fed.

But it wouldn't be Appenzeller cheese without the secret brine. Hike the Alps and visit the alpage, the higher meadows, to scout out herbaceous ingredients that could be included in the brine or visit the Appenzeller Schaukäserei. Showcased in the new demonstration area are clues to what's in the secret mix. A strong scent of dried herbs permeates the air. A large rectangular table with fresh dried herbs in wooden buckets is available for visitors to shake out a few herbs and sniff the aroma.

Each herb is labeled and a small cloth bag is offered to spoon in a mix of your own choosing to take home. Oregano, rosemary, sage and tarragon are just a few of the herbs that could be in the mix.

Nobody knows the exact herbs or measurement to create the brine and rub for the cheese, as it is under lock and key, but we do know that this method and technique produces the flavor and aroma unique to Appenzeller cheese. There's a combination of 25 different herbs, roots, leaves, petals, seeds and bark that is said to make up the herb portion of the secret recipe. A brine is made from the herb mixture and the yeast from the local wines. The liquid brine is then frequently rubbed on the surface of the cheese along the rind during the aging process, which eventually permeates throughout the cheese.

Appenzeller cheese is aged from three to six months. As the cheese ages, it develops a nutty flavor, and the aromas and flavors from the herbal rub become more enhanced, lending to the spicy overtones. A few pea-sized holes dot the cheese. The rind gets thicker as it ages and varies from a brownish to orangish layer. **DB**

CRAVE BROTHERS FARMSTEAD CHEESE

PROUD PRODUCERS OF AWARD-WINNING CHEESE AND GREEN ENERGY

Handcrafted. Tradition. Farmstead.



We produce enough electricity for our farm, our cheese factory and over 300 area homes.



CraveCheese.com



A Meaty Situation

A deli meat update on turkey, ham, roast beef and salami.

BY KEITH LORIA

Deli meat sales are usually strong in the spring. This is when schools are still in session and the weather turns nicer in many parts of the country, allowing for people to plan picnics and outdoor gatherings.

But with the COVID-19 pandemic, and many grocery stores halting live deli workers, replacing them with pre-packaged deli meats available for consumers, there has been an obvious drop-off in 2020.

Eric Richard, education coordinator at the Madison, WI-based International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association (IDDBA), says pre-COVID, the deli department was doing extremely well, and while prepared foods were driving a lot of that, deli meats were also very strong.

“Year over year, turkey meat was up 2 percent, ham was up about 1 percent, and there was steady growth over the whole department, which is something we’ve been seeing over the past few years,” he says. “Since COVID hit, we’re still seeing deli meat sales do okay, but the challenge has become the ease in getting some of

those deli meat products.”

He explains in some instances, retailers have had to shut down their deli departments, limit the number of hours or shift staff to other sections of the store that were falling behind.

“It’s been challenging from what we’ve been hearing from some of our retailers, but of those who have kept their deli departments open—wearing the proper protective gear of gloves, masks and screens to provide a barrier between the people behind the counter and customers, we’ve been hearing good things,” says Richard. “But there are people hesitant to shop because their health is on the line. We believe that’s something that will play itself out but there are so many unknowns right now.”

Still, meats including turkey, ham, roast beef and salami remain popular for lunches among kids and adults alike, and there’s every reason to believe that once things start to get back to normal, sales will return to where they were pre-coronavirus.

Arnez Rodriguez, an industry analyst with Los Angeles-based IBISWorld, which tracks the deli meat category on a regu-

lar basis, notes the category was strong in early 2020, reflecting a trend deli meat has been experiencing since 2015.

“Meats such as turkey, chicken and roast beef have grown in popularity relative to ham due to the high fat content of pork,” says Rodriguez. “As consumers have become more health conscious over the past five years, lean protein sources have become preferable to fatty meats.”

Despite this trend, salami has experienced growth over the past five years to 2020, as the consumption of “party ready” platters has grown during the same period.

Additionally, snack combos containing small amounts of charcuterie are among the fastest growing products in delis. Over the past four years, snack combos are estimated to increase at an annualized rate of 20.7 percent, according to New York City-based Nielsen.

Deanna Depke, marketing manager for Volpi Foods, St. Louis, says when it comes to del meat, overall, the company is seeing consumers migrating to premium products in more convenient formats, with better-for-you options.



COLUMBUS®



YOUR SOLUTION TO BECOMING THE DESTINATION FOR CHARCUTERIE AND ENTERTAINING

Salumi · Deli Meats · Snacking & Entertaining
Grab & Go · Display & Merchandising Solutions



For more information about how your deli can be
THE destination for charcuterie and entertaining, contact your
Hormel Deli Solutions sales manager or 855-566-2800

www.ColumbusCraftMeats.com

"The recent COVID-19 outbreak has people centered on pre-packaged products even more," she says. "They're able to reduce their time in-store, while also limiting the number of people touching that product before it hits their cart."

Furthermore, demand for organic and low sodium products have encouraged delis to expand the variety of products offered. Non-GMO, organic and gluten free products have all become widely available in

delis. In general, health-conscious consumers have increased demand for high-quality deli products, indicated by a 3.2 percent increase in shopper trips to the deli in 2018, according to the IDDBA.

Flavor is King

In response to the recent increase in consumption of poultry, companies have begun increasing the variety of flavors available to consumers. Varieties such as

spicy chipotle chicken, tomato and basil turkey and pineapple turkey have become available to improve the taste of somewhat bland poultry meats.

Megan Dorsch, marketing manager of Nueske's Hillcrest Farm's Meats, headquartered in Wittenberg, WI, says the company's focus has largely been on classic smoke, Applewood and newer smoke varieties, Wild Cherrywood Smoked Bacon, offering both traditionally cured and uncured options for consumers.

"Nueske's has increased our sales of sliced bacon and slab bacon for slicing to custom thicknesses over the past several years," she says. "We've also added to our line-up of traditional, pre-cooked deli meats, which included Applewood Smoked Turkey Breast and Applewood Smoked Ham, by offering a ham with a new flavor profile earlier this spring. Our newest boneless ham is hand-rubbed with black pepper before going into our smokehouse and is a stand-out on sandwiches."

Cibao Meat Products, based in Rockaway, NJ, has been seeing a high demand for meats that include turkey, ham, roast beef and salami.

"Many people don't know this, but we actually have many non-traditional salami brands," says Jaline Isidor Horta, Cibao Meat's digital marketing director. "We have our Pavolami Salami, which is our 100 percent turkey salami. We also have a brand named after our founder, Don Filo. In his honor we have a salami, Don Filo Arenquelami, that contains herring. Being of German descent, this was something he would do during the holidays to give as a gift to family and friends."

The company first offered this as a holiday only item, but due to high demand, it is now available all year.

"We also have our Don Filo Chicken, which is one of our products that is more lean, as well as Don Filo Turkey Ham, which is our smoked turkey salami," she says.

Trending Up

Simone Bocchini, president of Mount Olive, NJ-based Fratelli Beretta, is one of the biggest players in the salami game and has seen a big uplift trend in the consumer who is looking for artisanal and old style formula salamis.

"The trend is to mix old with new, more than in the formula than in the consumer usage method, meaning small, portable

BLACK KASSEL
Pillers

Snack Like Royalty

SALAMI WHIPS
Naturally Wood Smoked Salami
PREPARED BY CIBAO

HATCH CHILE PEPPER

SALAMI WHIPS
Naturally Wood Smoked Salami
PREPARED BY CIBAO

HONEY BOURBON

OLD WORLD CRAFTSMANSHIP. LEGENDARY TASTE.

BLACKKASSEL.COM 1.800.265.2627

- Premium European Salami Meat Snack
- Shelf Stable - Perfect for On-the-Go!
- Limited Time Flavours
- Available in 2 oz. and 3.5 oz.

COLD Wood Smoked



Roll & Go

Italian specialties

FOR ALL OCCASIONS



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR PRODUCTS VISIT US AT

www.fratelliberettausa.com

 [fratelliberettausa](https://www.instagram.com/fratelliberettausa)

packages and smaller format for individual use and grab-and-go applications,” says Bocchini. “With the inclusion of not only salami but other components like dried fruit and nuts, a deli can get a lot out of it.”

Depke notes for years, there’s been a growing popularity of charcuterie items like Volpi’s artisan salami and prosciutto, which are often introduced to the category through transitional products like Roltini (Mozzarella and prosciutto sticks). This leads consumers to try the company’s sliced retail packs of Prosciutto, Genoa Salami, Bresaola, Chorizo and Pepperoni.

“The Shelter At Home orders for COVID-19 sparked a cooking-at-home revolution in the U.S.,” says Depke. “People are experimenting more, playing with new flavor combinations, baking more. We’ve seen our fans submit photos of their salami-studded breads, elevated pasta carbonaras and the like.”

Packaging Perks

Many of the companies supplying deli meat have started to consider different packaging materials and options.

“If you’re not concerned about the

amount of plastic being dumped on the earth, you’re not listening to your consumers,” says Depke. “While simultaneously moving to pre-packaged, small portioned convenience items, we’re also fighting the inherent amount of packaging waste that coincides with that. At Volpi, we’re proud to be the first solution to this issue. We’ve introduced a new packaging material on our line of pre-sliced products that is paper based. This new material uses 70 percent less plastic than traditional deli packs without affecting product integrity or shelf life.”

Last year, Beretta introduced a full set of portable snack options including its salami, prosciutto and several combinations of nuts, dried fruit, crackers, etc. This was done to appease those looking for more of a grab-and-go option.

“We believe it is this form of packaging that will bring some new consumers to the category,” says Bocchini. “We also focus a lot on the protein aspect of these packages.”

This new format was popular both in the supermarket deli and around different locations of the store, where impulse buying regularly occurs.

“We have seen interesting packaging, especially those that are quick grab-and-go meals,” says Horta. “Cibao Meat hopes to follow that trend.”

Richard says pre-packaged deli meats have been rising in popularity for a while now, and even more so since COVID-19.

“It’s a great option for consumers who don’t want to interact with an in-store deli, or whose deli cases are closed in their store,” he says. “It comes down to convenience, and that was something that was driving the category even before all this happened.”

Marketing Matters

Convenience has become the focus of deli marketing and merchandising, due to recent trends in consumer preferences.

According to Rodriguez, prepared meals and meal kits have increased as a share of revenue for delis, in recent years.

“Many consumers, seeking a healthy alternative to frozen prepared meals have turned to freshly-made meals in delis, and deli meat is a portion of that,” says Rodriguez. “Additionally, revenue generated from meal kit sales is estimated to increase at an annualized 17.7 percent.”

Depke notes charcuterie is ripe for cross merchandising, and a savvy in-store deli department will match up its meats with a wide variety of items for the home or outdoor gathering.

“Really, there’s no better way to add value for the consumer and increase basket ring than to merchandise prosciutto next to fresh produce, specialty cheeses and artisan breads,” she says. “Suggested pairings are on the back of each of our packages, making it easy for consumers and deli associates alike to find the perfect matches.”

Bocchini notes consumers are looking to elevate their experience, and this goes for gathering with other people or just for their daily sandwich.

“We have partnered up with several retailers in developing special combinations of salami, coppa and prosciutto ready to be served in their store-made sandwiches, and it has been a success,” says Bocchini. “The full-serve program is still very traditional in terms of assortment, and few items have found their permanent location inside the full-serve area due to space versus regular mainstream items.”

Dorsch says sandwich programs are where the company has seen the most growth with its deli products but service

CIBAO MEAT PRODUCTS
"Tradición de Calidad"

Enjoy a sandwich with one of our finest meats and cheeses! The perfect combination of flavors between soft and creamy shades. With the quality seal of tradition and quality!

If you don't see our logo from the start, Don't put it in your shopping cart!™

www.CibaoMeat.com

case sales of pre-sliced bacon and custom-thickness sliced-from-slab bacon have also steadily increased over the past five years.

Cibao Meat utilizes its social media platform to show the different ways its products can be prepared, and also as a way to introduce its products in different ways in the deli.

Impact of Plant-Based Demand

Despite the recent trend toward plant-based eating, per capita consumption of meat is expected to increase over the next five years.

"Plant-based consumers tend to prefer meat that is sustainably sourced and memorable," says Rodriguez. "These preferences have helped to bolster demand for deli products, given the variety and quality of products available."

Bocchini believes the plant-based movement has made a very small impact so far in the deli meat category.

"There are some options available, but the level of quality still needs refinement," says Bocchini. "However, cleaner labels are very strong at the moment, Organic

has been popular, and natural and low sodium are really making their way into more mainstream distribution. Better-for-you products are making their way into the retail world."

Looking ahead, Bocchini sees the salami and dry cured deli meats category evolving and growing into an important market for the deli area.

"If we just look back a few years ago, we were not able to find some of the specialty meat that we produce in regular supermarkets; it was only in specialty stores," says Bocchini. "Today, the scenario has changed dramatically, and we can find high-end dry cured items in your everyday supermarket without the need of searching specialty stores for it. The growth in popularity creates a curiosity effect in consumers and the willingness to try something different."

DB



Fiorucci
DAL 1850

**INTRODUCING NEW
DELI PRODUCTS**

100% NATURAL
*NO ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS, COLORS, INGREDIENTS OR PRESERVATIVES

Fiorucci Deli grab & go!
100% NATURAL
UNCURED GENOA SALAMI

Fiorucci Deli grab & go!
100% NATURAL
UNCURED HARD SALAMI

Fiorucci Deli grab & go!
100% NATURAL
UNCURED PEPPERONI

**For more information and pricing, please contact
cfa.marketing@campofriofig.com**

THE GLORY OF GUACAMOLE

A dip and spread that is on trend and on point.

BY HOWARD RIELL



Americans' love of guacamole continues to rise, which means its importance in the deli is—and will remain—greater than ever before.

Guacamole has continued to see space expansion in the deli, says Neha Jikaria Goradia, associate director of marketing for White Plains, NY-based Sabra Dipping Co., as broader avocado consumption in the United States continues to grow. "As packaged guacamole rides the coattails of avocado growth, we see increasing varieties and usage occasions at the shelf—products for daily breakfast, lunch and snacking as well as products for at-home meals and entertaining."

"Authenticity in guacamole has been a major driver of customers' choice on their purchases," notes Ken Dedic, vice president of sales and marketing for Jaffa Salads in Mundelein, IL. "We see that a more 'homestyle' or 'restaurant style' is being preferred. The customers prefer to see chunks of avocado and fresh vegetables—piece identity—of which makes them feel that it's not overly manufactured and more scratch-made."

Indeed, many consumers are getting their first experience of guacamole in restaurants. The Chipotle restaurant chain recently launched "Guac Mode," a promotion that brings the promise of free guacamole and other unnamed extras for anyone who signs up for the Mexican-inspired restaurant's rewards program. "Our fans absolutely love our fresh, hand-made guac, especially when it's not extra," chief marketing officer Chris Brandt said in a release. "It's been an incredible first year of Chipotle Rewards, and initiating Guac Mode, which gives our members free guac in February and extras all year long, is a perfect way to thank our loyal customers."

A Healthy Hand

The health benefits of the fruit itself is a powerful marketing tool that retailers can take advantage of.

Deli, says Dedic, is more than a destination for classic salads. "With healthy alternatives like guacamole, at around 40 calories per serving, the deli can be a great way to focus on healthy dips. And like before, 'Where there are fresh-made chips, there is not a better amigo than guacamole.'"

All of Jaffa's products are vegan, gluten-free, certified CRC kosher and use non-GMO ingredients. They contain no meat, no dairy, no gluten, no fillers and no

artificial colors, just fresh ingredients and spices that make for authentic flavors.

Dedic calls avocado "a great way" to market guacamole. "Health Harvard says it's 'a great source of mono-unsaturated fats, high in fiber and an all-out superfood in regard to other vitamins like B5 and B6, potassium K, vitamin K, vitamin E, vitamin C and folate.'"

This is a product category with a great story to tell about healthy eating.

Innovation

Deli operators are also benefitting from line extensions. Sabra recently launched a Breakfast Avocado Toast, which has introduced a new occasion to the packaged guacamole category. "We're also seeing new flavors," Goradia points out. "Spicy continues to be a major trend executed in different ways, with different types of peppers."

Jaffa's guacamole features chunks of avocado, tomatoes, onions and fresh cilantro. Deli CPG guacamole is a convenience item, Dedic says, and allows wholesalers to have regulated prices year-round, despite the commodity fluctuations of the raw materials—in this case, avocado. Potassium sorbate is added to ensure freshness.

"The avocado market can easily go over double its price at certain times of the year," Dedic points out. "It's convenient because all the work is done, and all you have to do is open and enjoy. It also has an extended shelf-life."

The latest in guacamole development has been its carry-over into salsa, according to Dedic. "There are lots of products available that have avocado added to a base salsa, which creates a more indulgent salsa." Jaffa is currently in development of a guacamole salsa that will be launched later this year.

Pairings

How innovative are Americans getting with guacamole? In a new survey of 2,000 Americans conducted by OnePoll aimed to uncover the most unusual food combinations, one of the combinations that stood out among respondents was cookies dipped in guacamole.

As guacamole usage expands, so do the types of food pairings. Guacamole and avocado-based products "are not just for tortilla chips," Goradia suggests. "Consumers get excited about the many ways you can eat guacamole, beyond just as a dip. Show consumers you can pair it with different cuisines,

top it on your burgers and grilled meat or fish, use it on toast and use it in recipes."

Executives at Sabra favor cross promoting and cross merchandising with partner foods, including but not limited to chips, veggies and bread as well as meal kits and ingredients in popular recipes.

Most American consumers enjoy guacamole with chips, Dedic points out, "and that's great. Now people are starting to enjoy it on eggs for breakfast, as an alternative to mayonnaise on a sandwich or on everyone's favorite 'avocado toast.'"

His company also promotes its Jaffa Guacamole to be used as a topper. A simple way to create a unique dip, the company advises, is to put a dollop of Jaffa Guacamole on top of Jaffa Original Hummus. Says Dedic, "This is a guaranteed winner for any get-together."

Cross Promotion

Another way to stimulate additional sales activity is to cross merchandise, keeping in mind guacamole's popularity as a sandwich spread. "With innovation like 'chipotle chicken breast' as a sliced deli meat item," Dedic says, "what could be better than a creamy spread like guacamole to complete the ultimate sandwich?"

In addition, he continues, more and more delis are frying their own chips "and Jaffa Guacamole coolers love to be surrounded with dozens of fresh bags of chips." Getting the meat department to cross over and promote "Taco Tuesday" is another effective way to cross merchandise.

As guacamole usage continues to expand beyond dipping, says Goradia, retailers should think of ways to make cross promotions bigger, "potentially through cross category displays throughout the year. It's natural to want to elevate guacamole during key moments—for example, Super Bowl and Cinco de Mayo are some of the biggest guacamole consumption moments of the year. But unlike many other indulgent dips like cheese, guacamole has become a popular everyday food, not just a party food. So to become the guacamole destination, think more about cross promoting regularly versus just for special occasions."

The future of guacamole in deli departments appears to be bright. Upward trends in avocado consumption are likely to continue driving guacamole growth, Goradia predicts, "so don't ignore these trends when making space, and support allocation decisions for guacamole."

DB

A Century of Baking

In this 1970's-era photo, Haroutoun and Siranoush Toufayan proudly pose in their successful bakery in West New York, NJ.

When the family opened their first bakery in 1926, they knew they were starting a family business, but never dreamt that their three grandchildren would be baking fresh breads for the entire country almost 100 years later.

From their corporate headquarters and pita plant in Ridgefield, NJ to two bakeries in Orlando and Plant City, FL, the third generation of Toufayans still carefully oversees every step of the manufacturing process, from ingredient sourcing, production and baking to packaging and distribution.

Initially serving local Armenian and other families, the Toufayans' pita was the first to

hit local supermarkets in the United States. Thanks to Harry Toufayan's genius, pita bread found a home nestled among American products.

Over the years, the company's pita operations have expanded. Though pita bread was and remains one of Toufayan Bakeries' main products, their offering now reaches a wider audience with on-trend gluten-free, vegan, non-GMO, kosher, low-carb and organic options as well as new lavash, pita chip, naan and bagel products.

Toufayan is now one of the largest privately held specialty bakeries in the United States, filling lunch bags, toasters and tummies with almost 100 product offerings, including innovations created to meet a variety of specific consumer needs.

DB



Blast From The Past is a regular feature of Deli Business. We welcome submissions of your old photos, labels or advertisements along with a brief description of the photo. Please send material to: Editor, DELI BUSINESS, P.O. Box 810217, Boca Raton, FL 33481-0217 or email DeliBusiness@phoenixmedianet.com. For more information contact us at (561) 994-1118.

GENERAL POLICIES

Advertisers and advertising agencies agree and accept responsibility for all statements and product claims made in their advertisements for themselves or their organizations. The publisher is not responsible, nor does he necessarily agree with any of the opinions or statements expressed in such advertisements. Advertisers and advertising agencies agree to accept responsibility for all content of such advertisements, and agree to assume liability involving any claims arising from such advertising that are made against the publisher. Advertiser and advertising agencies agree to indemnify the publisher and to hold him harmless and to defend him from any such claim or claims, and to be responsible for the payment of any expenses or legal fees incurred by the publisher associated with such legal action or claims. The publisher reserves the right to accept or reject advertising that he believes does not meet the publication's standards. Advertising appearing in editorial format may or may not be accepted by the publisher, and if published will be properly labeled "advertisement." Publisher is not liable for non-delivery or delays, caused by any federal or state agency or association, or by fire, flood, riot, explosion, strike, embargo, either legal or illegal, material or labor shortage, transportation or work interruption or slowdown, or any condition or act of God affecting delivery and beyond the control of the publisher.

INFORMATION SHOWCASE

Receive supplier information fast using the Deli Business Information Showcase.
Here's How: Contact the advertiser directly via the website, email, phone or fax listed in the ad.

COMPANY	PAGE#	CATEGORY	PHONE
BelGioioso Cheese, Inc.	9	Cheese	877-863-2123
Campofrio Food Group America	51	Deli Meats	804-520-7775
Cibao Meat Products	50	Hispanic Deli Meats	718-993-5072
Columbus Foods, Inc.	47	Salami & Deli Meat	510-921-3417
Conroy Foods	21	Condiments	412-781-1446
Crave Bros	45	Farmstead Cheese	920-478-4887
Don's Prepared Foods	32-33	Salads	888-321-3667
European Union	11	Cheese & Prosciutto	646-218-6025
Fratelli Beretta USA	49	Italian Specialties	201-438-0723
George E. DeLallo Co.	39	Olives	800-433-9100
George E. DeLallo Co.	56	Olives	800-433-9100
Lactalis	2	Roquefort Cheese	212-758-6666
Lakeview Farms	25	Dairy Products	419-695-9925
LaPanzanella	22-23	Flatbreads	206-322-6760
Litehouse, Inc.	34	Blue Cheese	800-669-3169
Piller Sausages & Delicatessens Ltd.	48	Deli Meats	800-265-2628
Refrigerated Foods Association	29	Trade Association	770-303-9905
Saputo Cheese USA, Inc.	43	Italian Cheese	800-824-3373



Perishable News.com

Your online source bringing you fresh ideas
for success in the deli department and beyond

← → ↻ 🏠 🔒 https://www.perishablenews.com/category/... 🔍 Search

📧 Outlook Web App 📧 Yahoo Search Result...

ABOUT US CONTACT SUBMIT SUBSCRIBE! 🔍 SEARCH

 **Perishable
News.com**

 **KICK UP YOUR HOT B...**
and INCREASE SALES with
BLOUNT'S FRESH PREPARED FOODS
HOT-TO-GO MEALS
[LEARN MORE](#)

HOME BAKERY DAIRY DELI FLORAL MEAT & POULTRY PRODUCE RETAIL & FOODSERVICE SEAFOOD

HOME > Deli

Deli



Wisconsin Cheesemaker Pivots to Grocery Delivery to Pay Bills

👤 Jane Burns, Voice of America

The COVID-19 pandemic caused Anna Landmark to switch her company's business from making and selling cheese to sell and deliver local goods. It pays the bills, but Landmark worries about its sustainability and what it means for her own business. ...



THE AMBRIOLA COMPANY

A Subsidiary of Auricchio, S.p.A.

Importers of the finest cheeses from Italy... since 1921



Pineland Farms Dairy Donates Thousands of Pounds of Cheese to Feed Maine's Hungry

👤 WABI

"When the pandemic hit, it closed down

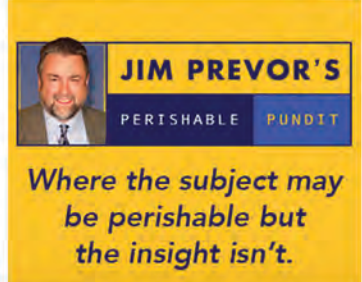


NEW
PARFAIT CUPS
100% RECYCLABLE
MADE USING
75% PCR
ecostar
PLACON
"Single-Serve Packaging"
FLAORIGON® 100341700



THE AMBRIOLA COMPANY
A Subsidiary of Auricchio, S.p.A.

**Importers
of the finest
cheeses
from Italy...
since 1921!**



JIM PREVORA'S
PERISHABLE PUNDIT

*Where the subject may
be perishable but
the insight isn't.*

Subscribe now for instant, daily or weekly e-mail updates

www.perishablenews.com



— INTRODUCING —

OUR PERFECTLY PACKAGED

Charcuterie Collection

- A COLORFUL ASSORTMENT OF BEST-LOVED ANTIPASTI •
- READY TO CREATE AN INSTANT CHARCUTERIE BOARD •

— PERFECT FOR GRAB-N-GO DELI —

- PRODUCED & PACKED IN THE U.S.A. IN OUR STATE-OF-THE-ART SQF III CERTIFIED FACILITIES •