

August 2009

Ag-food US News

Alberta Exporters' Source for News Headlines and Events

International Marketing Division Agriculture and Rural Development

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Did You Know?

The FDA is allowing non-barley beers to be labeled as gluten-free after they are tested and confirmed

Events

Fresh Summit
International
October 2-5, 2009
Anaheim, California

National Frozen &
Refrigeration Annual
Convention
October 17-20, 2009
Washington, DC

America's Food and
Beverage Show
November 9-10, 2009
Miami Beach, Florida

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POLICY / REGULATIONS NEWS

Health care bill would require menu labeling - A draft of the health care reform bill would require restaurants with 20 or more locations to post calorie counts and a statement about how many calories people should consume each day.
Aug-24-09 <http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/52905>

Food firms fret over potential impact of climate bill - A coalition plans to draw attention to concerns that legislation could lead to higher food prices. A group of agriculture giants including Cargill Inc., along with meat company Tyson Foods Inc. and food maker General Mills Inc., is concerned the companies might bear a disproportionate share of the costs of such legislation.
Aug-13-09 http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125012590566427831.html?mod=dist_smartbrief

U.S. climate bill threatens Canada - If Canada does not have a system at least as stringent as that in the United States, ACESA (American Clean Energy and Security Act) envisages tariffs on imports to equalize and offset differences. President Obama wants ACESA to be consistent with US international obligations. However, a recent WTO-United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report suggests that the WTO thinking is shifting, and such eco-tariffs may be WTO consistent.
Jul-3-09 <http://www.financialpost.com/news-sectors/mining/Story.html?id=1754133>

Food Safety Bill to reform FDA regulations - The Food Safety Enhancement Act will increase the FDA's authority in food production inspections, developing new enforcement measures and tracking food recalls.
Aug 5-09 <http://www.gourmetretailer.com/>

Prior Notice changes - The FDA recently issued a revised Compliance Policy Guide.
Jun1-09 http://international.ups.com/2009/06/prior_notice_of_imported_food.html

USDA Revises Regulations to Include COOL of Honey - USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service is establishing a new regulation addressing country of origin labeling for packed honey bearing any official USDA mark or statement.

RETAIL

Safeway lowers prices to lure frugal shoppers - cost of staples cut by as much as 25% - Safeway's decision to reduce prices comes after it spent several years upgrading the perimeter of its stores, where meats and produce are sold. The strategy was designed to help the chain compete with upscale grocers, such as Whole Foods, that were increasing their market share.
Aug-12-09 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>

The Smart Choices Program (Uniform Front-of-Package Nutrition Labeling System) - will appear on approximately 500 products in supermarkets and other retail outlets across the country this summer. Manufacturers including ConAgra Foods, General Mills, Kellogg Company, Kraft Foods, PepsiCo, Sun-Maid, Tyson and Unilever already qualified for the Smart Choices Program designation in 19 categories.
Aug-5-09 <http://www.businesswire.com/>

In-store sampling inspires repeat purchases - Sampling programs can get people to try and occasionally purchase an item. However, new research shows that such free giveaways can also help drive long-term sales and increase purchases of other items from the product line.
Aug-11-09 <http://www.gourmetretailer.com/gourmetretailer/>

Publix shelf tags make organic and natural foods easier to find - Publix has introduced tan-colored shelf tags that highlight natural, organic and earth-friendly products. The tags indicate whether the food is organic; contains organic ingredients; or is natural or earth-friendly, meaning it is minimally processed and does not contain artificial colors, preservatives, flavors or sweeteners.
Aug-24-09 <http://www.progressivegrocer.com/>

SUPERVALU selling Albertsons stores in Utah - SUPERVALU is selling 36 Albertsons locations in Utah to Associated Food Stores, a grocery wholesaler serving about 500 stores in Western states. Associated Food says it will rename the stores and provide a greater focus on fresh products.
Jul-28-09 <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/705319690/36-Utah-Albertsons-sold.html>

FOOD SERVICE

Portland, OR-based Burgerville - is printing out nutritional values of ordered items on receipts. The pilot program could be expanded to other stores in September. "Guests order and ask for different things: different buns, different cheeses, different sauces, different everything," stated Jeff Harvey, president and CEO for Burgerville. "So to put a label on the menu is not going to resolve that challenge."
Aug-18-09 <http://www.katu.com/news/local/53602187.html>

Restaurant operators feeling the pain - The majority of the restaurant industry continues to report declining traffic and same-store sales and is less optimistic about future sales growth, according to the latest National Restaurant Association survey of operators.
Jul-31-09 <http://www.nrn.com/article.aspx?id=370704>

The changing world of takeout - Many consumers are cutting back on spending by ordering food to eat at home instead of heading out to a restaurant. When ordering takeout or delivery customers are thinking beyond pizza and Chinese food and opting for fancier fare. As a result, some upscale restaurants are joining online databases such as SeamlessWeb.
Aug-12-09 http://www.nj.com/business/index.ssf/2009/08/budgetminded_diners_opt_to_ord.html

Restaurants notice decreased sodium consumption - Americans are monitoring their sodium intake more than ever, according to a new study from market-research company Mintel. The National Restaurant Association hosted The Nutrient Essentials: Sodium and the Healthy Plate conference last month to educate its members about the trend, giving restaurants an opportunity to learn about low-sodium options for consumers.
Aug-12-09 <http://www.fastcasual.com/article.php?id=15485&na=1&s=2>

MEAT

The National Pork Producers Council – The Council asked USDA for \$250 million in assistance to help producers, who since September 2007 have lost an average of more than \$21 on each hog marketed. Aug 17-09 <http://www.nppc.org/News/PressRelease.aspx?DocumentID=25252>

Burgerville receives 70% of its ingredients from local suppliers - The company receives some 35,000 to 40,000-lbs. of hamburger a week from the beef cooperative Country Natural Beef. To facilitate a better understanding of the market, ranchers periodically work in Burgerville's restaurants.
Aug-5-09 <http://www.reuters.com/article/reutersComService4/idUSTRE5743KJ20090805?sp=true>

US Beef Slump Continues - The lingering global economic slump and low prices for domestic beef products in key export markets contributed to declines in US exports in June, according to statistics compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).
Aug-14-09 <http://www.thebeefsite.com/news/28178/us-beef-slump-continues>

Massive beef recall linked to antibiotic-resistant salmonella outbreak - California firm Beef Packers Inc has recalled over 800,000 pounds of ground beef linked to an outbreak of antibiotic-resistant salmonella that has sickened people across nine states.
Aug-6-09 <http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/>

PRIVATE LABEL

Private label brands 'hotbeds of creativity' - Private label products are anything but cheap imitations of brand-name items, according to a new report. The Chicago-based retail consultancy Mintel GNPD finds that manufacturers of private label food products are staying up on current food trends, including the use of premium and healthy ingredients as well as convenient packaging.

Jul-26-09 <http://www.progressivegrocer.com/>

SUPERVALU - Supervalu calls for private-label innovation - SUPERVALU's Andrew Abraham, vice president of own brands, is seeking innovation in the private-brand sector. Some areas for opportunity include packaging for efficiency, differentiation and mainstreaming sustainability, brand positioning and effective communication.

Aug-24-09 <http://www.just-food.com/article.aspx?id=107712>

Store brands are experiencing growth in organics - Store-brand organic products account for 22.7% of organic food sales, up from 13.6% for the same 52-week period in 2007. As the trend grows, Safeway has begun selling its organic products to other retailers, and SUPERVALU expanded its Wild Harvest organic brand to 312 items, from 150 last spring.

Jul-27-09 http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124865207118182453.html?mod=dist_smartbrief

NICHE MARKETS - ORGANICS

Consumers skeptical of organic, all-natural claims but still buy - When it comes to all-natural and organic foods, today's consumers are wiser to the differences than most marketers might think and eager to purchase them if the price is right. More than three-quarters of respondents in a recent survey said they'd prefer to purchase organic and all-natural goods if those items were comparably priced with other leading brands.

Aug-20-09 <http://www.progressivegrocer.com/progressivegrocer/>

Procurement and contracting by organic handlers database - contains select results from the 2004 and 2007 Nationwide Surveys of Organic Manufacturers, Processors, and Distributors.

Aug-7-09 <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/OrganicHandlers/>

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The American Heart Association recommends reduced intake of added sugars - The AHA urges Americans to significantly reduce sugar intake from foods such as cookies, ice cream and soft drinks. The guidelines do not apply to naturally occurring sugars in fruit, vegetables and dairy products.

Aug-24-09 <http://americanheart.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=43&item=800>

Food makers are packing more products with high amounts of fiber - Products with fiber claims were one of the fastest growing categories in the U.S. last year after increasing in unit sales by 10.2% annually.

Aug-19-09 <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204044204574360792553585028.html>

MARKET INFORMATION

U.S. food import patterns 1998-2007 - Using import data from the U.S. Census Bureau, this study examines patterns of U.S. food imports for fiscal years 1998-2007. Results indicate faster import growth trends for consumer-ready foods, such as fruit, vegetables, meats, seafood, and processed food products.

Aug-6-09 <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/FAU/2009/08Aug/FAU125/>

U.S. food imports - U.S. consumers demand variety, quality, and convenience in the foods they consume. As Americans have become wealthier and more ethnically diverse, the American food basket reflects a growing share of tropical products, spices, and imported gourmet products.

Aug-6-09 <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FoodImports/>

ALSO AVAILABLE

Webinar – How to Sell to Supermarkets

Article – Creative Ways to Market Meat

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