

June 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 CEO of Campbell Soup Company said that the US should switch to a one-agency food-safety system, such as the one in Canada.

Events

Natural Marketplace
2009
July 9-11, 2009
Las Vegas NV

Retail 2020
Aug 4-6, 2009
San Francisco CA

Western Foodservice
and Hospitality Expo
Aug 30-Sep 1, 2009
San Diego CA

Expo Comida Latina
Aug 30-Sep 1, 2009
San Diego CA

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POLICY / REGULATIONS NEWS

F.D.A. Chief lauds Food Safety Bill as the 'Right Direction' – Dr. Hamburg, Commissioner, told the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health that a safety overhaul sponsored by several leading Democrats was "a major step in the right direction," but that her agency would need more money to carry it out.
June 3, 2009.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/04/health/policy/04fda.html?ref=dining>

Senate Group introduces FDA Food Safety Modernization Act – If passed, the Act would affect importers as they will be expected:

- to develop and implement a program to assure that their imports are not adulterated (including allergens);
- to administer effective record-keeping; and
- to do no business with a foreign facility which does not have an effective food safety program in place

March 3, 2009. <http://durbin.senate.gov/showRelease.cfm?releaseId=308982>
http://www.washingtonwatch.com/bills/show/111_HR_875.html#toc1

New USDA requirement – Effective June 22, 2009, the US Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) will require import permits for food products containing small amounts of meat and/or poultry ingredients to gain entry to the US.

For details contact: Claire.citeau@gov.ab.ca

<http://www.barnesrichardson.com/news/overview.aspx?NewsID=325282105>

MEAT

Federal livestock ID debate heats up - Farmers and ranchers gathered in protest during a town-hall meeting hosted by the United States Department of Agriculture to discuss a National Animal Identification System.

June 10, 2009. <http://naturalfoodsmerchandise.com/>

Meat and meat products as functional foods - Research on the disease-preventing, health-promoting benefits of meat and meat products makes them a viable contender in the functional food arena. Enriching meats with fiber, probiotics and omega-3 fatty acids may help consumers to associate meat with a healthy lifestyle. June 20, 2009. <http://www.physorg.com/news163848868.html>

Houston restaurants use halal meat in Western dishes - Restaurants in Houston are serving up more Western dishes prepared with halal meat. A local cafe offers a

hamburger made with halal meat. There is huge market potential because many second-generation Muslims want to eat common Western foods just as much as they want traditional ethnic dishes.

June 12, 2009. <http://www.smartbrief.com/>

Economics Of Animal Welfare Regulations Proposed - The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) seeks to phase out battery cages for Ohio's laying hens, gestation crates for its pregnant pigs, and crates for veal calves in favor of group housing. As the nation's second largest producer of eggs (27 million laying hens) and a major producer of swine and dairy cattle, Ohio agriculture has a major stake in the outcome of this HSUS effort.

June 17, 2009. <http://www.cattlenetwork.com/Content.asp?ContentID=323533>

Related article: California Lawmakers Rally On Animal Welfare Issues

June 1, 2009. <http://www.cattlenetwork.com/Content.asp?ContentID=318926>

FOOD SERVICE

US restaurants focus on value – Deals drive sales at US restaurants ...

June 9, 2009. http://www.brandweek.com/bw/content_display/news-and-features/retail-restaurants/e3i6c932f87e11ed33a00a718bbc5a1b2a5

Agreement to provide nutrition information at chain restaurants - Senators on Senate healthcare committees, numerous public health organizations and the restaurant industry announced an agreement that would require chain restaurants to list calories on their menus and menu boards.

June 10, 2009. <http://harkin.senate.gov/pr/p.cfm?i=314244>

RETAIL

91% of shoppers will keep buying store brands after recession ends – according to a poll conducted by GfK Custom Research North America for the Private Label Manufacturers Association
June 15, 2009. <http://news.prnewswire.com/>

Purchases of premium brands on the rise - Although shoppers have flocked to value brands in hopes of saving money amidst the current recession, the purchase of premium brands has surprisingly increased, new research shows.

June 7, 2009.

http://www.gourmetretailer.com/gourmetretailer/content_display/news/e3i0fe06f39ca1404324cfbfd2a0151a39

Albertsons adjusts prices to fight supercenters - Albertsons announced plans to lower prices on thousands of goods at its California stores. The move, meant to counter consumers' shift toward chain discount retailers like Wal-Mart and Target.

May 21, 2009. http://www.bevnet.com/news/2009/5-21-2009-albertsons_prices

Safeway adds Waterfront BISTRO(TM) to its family of successful private label brands - As measured by sales dollars, approximately 21% of Safeway's private-label merchandise is manufactured in company-owned plants, and the remainder is purchased from third parties.

[2008 Annual Report] March 10, 2009. <http://www.safeway.com> – Investor Relations

Safeway launches campaign to promote locally grown produce – Safeway announced a campaign to significantly increase its focus on locally grown produce.

June 12, 2009. <http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/safeway-launches-campaign-to-promote-locally-grown-produce.859350.shtml>

Supervalu launches labeling program - Several Supervalu-supplied stores are piloting the system that uses green shelf tags to identify healthy attributes based on FDA guidelines. Tags list up to four traits to identify foods that are low-fat, low-cholesterol, low-calorie, low-sodium, organic, a good source of calcium, a good source of fiber, gluten-free, or list whole grains as its first ingredient.

June 15, 2009. http://supermarketnews.com/news/supervalu_label_0615/

Wegmans on Recession - For consumers, the last six months have been the most worrisome time that Danny Wegman can remember. But he said the tough economic climate brought "one of the highest emotional connections I've ever felt with our customers," and the company responded with a series of price reductions that slashed its profit margins to the bone, ultimately costing the company \$12 million. June 14, 2009. <http://www.democratandchronicle.com/>

Independents thriving in the most competitive marketplace in history – Research for a book about the best, most successful independent retailers in America.
June 9, 2009. <http://www.gourmetretailer.com/>

HEALTH & WELLNESS - ORGANICS

USDA promises to increase focus on organics – The deputy secretary of the USDA, said that organics should be integrated across all agencies, and should not be exclusive to the National Organic Program. June 17 is the deadline for the first-ever Organic Production Survey which will provide a better understanding of the amount of organic production taking place and the issues organic farmers are facing.
June 8, 2009 <http://thepacker.com/>

Ethnic foods heading private label and organic opportunities - The future of the US ethnic food market is expected to be increasingly reliant on demand for more private label and organic options, but should survive the challenges posed by the economic downturn, say some industry groups.
April 7, 2009. <http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Financial-Industry/Ethnic-foods-heading-private-label-and-organic-opportunities>

Organic sector increasingly dependent on imports: USDA - The US organic sector has become increasingly dependent on imported ingredients as a supply squeeze continues to limit the sector's growth, according to a new report from the USDA.
June 4, 2009. <http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Financial-Industry/Organic-sector-increasingly-dependent-on-imports-USDA>

Natural Food Market Overview – Data and Analysis 2008 (Nutrition Business Journal) presentation is available. For a copy contact: marcy.oconnor@gov.ab.ca

Consumers confused about functional food - Is "functional food" an antioxidant or an oxymoron? Isn't all food functional? The market says some foods are more functional than others. June 9, 2009.
http://www.mediapost.com/publications/?fa=Articles.showArticle&art_aid=107616

BIOTECHNOLOGY - ENVIRONMENT

New collaboration for GM-free wheat traits - Dow AgroSciences and World Wide Wheat (W3) have teamed up to develop new wheat traits for "advancements in productivity and quality" of crops, without using genetic modification (GM). Controversy surrounding the development of GM wheat traits has been stirred up recently after a group of wheat industry representative organizations from the US, Canada and Australia signed a joint statement vowing to synchronize their efforts to commercialize GM wheat last month.
June 5, 2009. <http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Science-Nutrition/New-collaboration-for-GM-free-wheat-traits>

Implementation of cap-and-trade (CAT) policy – Support for a CAT policy as a means to mitigate the level of greenhouse gas has agricultural producers and landowners have increased their interest in understanding how the CAT policy might affect their operations. June 16, 2009.
<http://www.thedairysite.com/news/27510/noble-insight-on-the-implications-of-capandtrade>

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