

## NEWS BITES

### Business Milestones

**Aurora Organic Dairy** has entered into an agreement to lease High Plains Organic Dairy in Kersey, CO, to produce organic milk for its private-label customers. Aurora's plans for the 800-acre High Plains Organic Dairy include handling 3,200 milking cows in free stall barns, milking parlors and pastures so that all animals, including lactating cows, have year-round daily access to organic pasture and outdoor exercise. Production of certified organic milk is planned by the third quarter of 2006.

Charter Baking Company, a portfolio company of **Charterhouse Group, Inc.**, has completed the merger of **Rudi's Organic Bakery** with the operations of The Vermont Bread Company and the Adams Baking Corporation.

Meadowbrook Lane Capital has purchased the controlling interest of **CSRwire** from SRI World Group.

**Dagoba Chocolate's** 14,000-square-foot chocolate factory in Rogue Valley, Oregon, now features a retail store onsite. The company produces approximately 750,000 pounds of chocolate in its manufacturing and wholesale operation; its products include 15 chocolate bars, a new line of single-origin chocolates from one country or farm, drinking chocolates, chocolate baking powder, cacao nibs, chocolate covered beans, and syrup.

**Diversified Business Communications** Canada branch has acquired Storage Networking-The SAN/NAS Summits, a series of five Canadian exhibitions and conferences, from Toronto-based MediumRare Ltd.

**Earth Fare** opened a store in Chapel Hill earlier this year, and another in Chapel Hill, NC, in August, bringing its total to 13 stores.

**Earthbound Farm** has opened two new distribution centers: one at Indianapolis Fruit Inc. and a second at Captrans Logistics LLC, both refrigerated food distributors.

**French Meadow Bakery** has set up a French Meadow Bakery & Café at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport in Minnesota. The bakery and café offers a variety of natural and organic foods from 5:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. daily. In other company news, French Meadow Bakery marked its 20th anniversary this fall.

**The Hain Celestial Group, Inc.**, in

August signed an agreement to buy **Spectrum Organic Products Inc.**

**H.E. Butt Grocery Co.** opened a one-stop shopping center in San Antonio in late October. The 170,000-square-foot facility includes food and non-food items. Features include an expanded meat and produce section, with more than 120 organic items offered.

Funk Ventures Capital Partners has invested in **Organic Holding Company, Inc.** Raising \$2.5 million in new capital in its Series B round, Organic Holding Company will use the funding primarily to accelerate its Organic To Go expansion in California and Washington.

**Roundy's Supermarkets, Inc.**, agreed to sell its grocery distribution business for approximately 50 independent retailer locations to **Supervalu, Inc.**

**SunOpta, Inc.**, has completed the transfer of its three organic and specialty food distributors into its 135,000-square-foot state-of-the-art distribution center in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

**Whole Foods Market** opened a store in Baton Rouge, LA, in July, an additional store in Denver, CO, in September, and plans to open a store in Lakewood, CO, in December. In addition, it was scheduled to open its first "lifestyle" store in California in West Hollywood, CA, in late October, with such product offerings as organic cotton denim jeans, recycled handbags, house wares, and hemp curtains.

**Wild Oats Markets, Inc.**, has opened a Wild Oats branded store-within-a-store boutique in a new Stop & Shop in Fairfield, CT. In addition, Wild Oats' Henry's Farmers Market has opened a store in Chandler, AZ.

### Marketing

**A&B Ingredients** and **Duas Rodas** have entered into an agreement whereby A&B Ingredients will market some of Duas Rodas' products, such as tropical extracts and organic banana products, in North America.

**AgraQuest's** Rapsody Biofungicide is now labeled for both foliar and soil disease treatments of ornamental and greenhouse crops.

**AirOcare**, which provides air sanitation systems for the agricultural industry, has entered into a strategic partnership with the Harold Crawford Co. to promote, market and sell AirOcare's patented air

purification equipment to new and existing produce buyers in California, Arizona, Texas, and Hawaii. In addition, AirOcare has selected Mid-South Industries, Inc., to manage the production of its air purification and sanitization equipment.

**Amy's Kitchen** has been testing branded frozen food vending machines as a way to market its products. The company has purchased seven frozen food machines and placed them in different locations such as office buildings, hospitals, and police stations. The machines, which accept only credit cards, dispense popular Amy's Kitchen food lines such as pesto tortellini bowls, ravioli bowls, enchilada meals, and breakfast entrees.

**Born Free Foods**, a division of Radlo Foods LLC, has enacted a new Egg Safety Action Plan for its Born Free® Eggs. The plan includes traceability and freshness etching on the surface of individual eggshells, pullet vaccinations, flock testing, lower settings for crack tolerance, and premium, see-through packaging for a tamper-proof option.

**Dakota Beef LLC** in September launched its Certified Organic Beef program at the new **Whole Foods** store in Columbus, OH. A full range of the company's certified organic steaks and roasts are available at the butcher's counter, and its new Organic All Beef Hot Dog is available in the refrigerated section of the deli case.

**Farmers Organic Foods International** in Wisconsin and **Nest Fresh Eggs** in Colorado have been approved to use the "Certified Humane Raised and Handled" label by Humane Farm Animal Care on their organic eggs. Meanwhile, **Earth Fare** has committed to selling only fresh eggs from hens that have not been caged.

Super Target stores in 14 states in November were to introduce new 4-packs of **Fetzer** Valley Oaks Chardonnay and Merlot in lightweight, shatterproof PET bottles closed with screw caps.

**Frey Vineyards** is continuing its relationship with **SRB Marketing** for advertising and online marketing of Frey's organic wines.

**The Hain Celestial Group, Inc.**, has licensed the trademarks and formulas of its refrigerated Rice Dream® and Soy Dream® non-dairy beverage products to Stremicks Heritage Foods, LLC. Effective Oct. 1, Heritage Foods is man-

ufacturing, marketing and distributing these products exclusively throughout the United States.

**Hot Mama's Gourmet Foods** has expanded its foodservice and private label programs, and launched a newly designed web site, [www.HotMamasFoods.com](http://www.HotMamasFoods.com), complete with recipes.

**SEKEM Group** in Egypt began running a "Life is Organic" campaign supported by radio commercials highlighting the key qualities of organic products and their benefits for consumers. Developing the campaign were Nader Ayad, manager of the marketing department, and two new staffers: Mohamed Mahmoud El Bokiey, assistant food products manager, and Ehab Tawfik, product manager marketing and communication.

**SRB Marketing** continues to help *What is Enlightenment?* magazine increase its subscription list by planning and placing online marketing for the magazine.

**Tumaro's Gourmet Tortillas** is marketing its foodservice tortillas, made with 100 percent certified organic whole wheat flour, as free of trans fats. The company noted that its retail line has always been trans fat free; the company recently conducted tests on its offerings to verify that both lines contain zero grams of trans fat.

**Whole Foods Market** has launched a Whole Baby program and educational lecture series in conjunction with *Mothering* magazine.

## Of Note

**Applegate Farms's** Organic Deli line was chosen as a 2005 Editors' Pick by *Progressive Grocer Magazine*.

**California Certified Organic Farmers** received support through fundraising events in the fall held by **Whole Foods Markets**, Henry's Farmer's Markets, and New Frontiers Natural Markets.

**Coleman Natural Foods** has undertaken The Coleman Eco-Project 2015, a decade-long conservation program to address the need to restore American forests and protect U.S. working farms and ranches. Under a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, American Forests and American Farmland Trust, Coleman has committed to planting one million trees and has challenged companies and individuals to help plant nine million more trees. During October, **Wild Oats Markets, Inc.**, participated by displaying tear pads permitting customers to make one, five or ten-dollar contributions to the project at each store checkout. A corresponding number of

trees were to be planted for each dollar contribution made to the challenge.

**Country Choice Organic** has awarded \$1,000 each to the following winners whose efforts make it easy to eat organic: The Gifted Learning Project (Moorhead, MN), Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (Augusta, ME), Land Stewardship Project (Minneapolis, MN), Cooperative Development Services (St. Paul, MN), Episcopal Group Home Inc. (Wayzata, MN), **Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association** (Columbus, OH), **Carolina Farm Stewardship Association** (Pittsboro, NC), Sustainable Farming Association of Northeastern Minnesota (Carlton, MN), The Morris Farm Trust (Wiscasset, ME), and **Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Services** (Spring Valley, WI).

Receiving Socially Responsible Business Awards at Natural Products Expo East were OTA member companies **Dagoba Organic Chocolate**, **NOW Foods Inc.**, **OM Organics** (exclusive North American distributing and marketing company for Organic India), and **Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps**. Receiving Spirit of Organic awards were Frederick Schilling of **Dagoba Organic Chocolate**, Wende Elliott of **Wholesome Harvest LLC**, Matt McLean of **Uncle Matt's Organic**, and Scott Silverman of **Jungle Products, Inc.**

**Eco Lips, Inc.**, has taken steps through the Iowa Renewable Energy Association to add solar power to its Iowa manufacturing facility. In addition, the company is cutting power use by going from electromagnetic ballast to a flicker-free ballast, translating to one-third less electricity usage per light than previous. Also, the lighting tubes were changed to produce a more natural "sunlight" effect that saves electricity.

Among the sponsors for Farm Aid in September were **American Apparel**, the **Organic Trade Association**, **Organic Valley**, **WhiteWave Foods (Silk® Soy milk and Horizon Organic)**, and **Wild Oats Markets**.

**Nora Pouillon** joined three other master chefs in preparing a gala dinner featuring sustainable cuisine at the Carriage House Center in New York City in conjunction with Harvard Medical School's Center for Health and the Global Environment's 2005 Global Environmental Citizen event in October.

**Organic Bouquet Inc.** is partnering with such organizations as Amnesty International USA, Heifer International, CARE, and Adopt-A Minefield to raise

funds for their charitable efforts and cause marketing. Orders placed through its web site ([www.organicBouquet.com](http://www.organicBouquet.com)) can be designated for any of these organizations, with a percentage of the purchase price channeled to the particular organization.

**Organic Valley Family of Farms** has been named *Start Magazine's* Mid-Market Manufacturer of the Year.

**Otter Creek Brewing** hosted its tenth annual Oktoberfest benefit party to raise funds for the Addison County Community Action Group, an organization helping those in need. In other developments, the company resumed brewing its Wolaver's organic oatmeal stout this fall due to popular demand.

**Purrfectplay** now publishes an online newsletter. Its first issue, posted at <http://purrfectplay.com/newsletter-05-09.php> includes facts about fabric dyes and the benefits of growing cotton organically.

**SunOpta's** 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Pro Organics Foundation Golf Classic raised \$46,550 (Canadian) for Covenant House Vancouver, which aids homeless youth ages 13-24.

## Personnel News

**Albert's Organics**, a division of **United Natural Foods, Inc.**, has appointed Troy Ludgate as general manager, Brian Goering as head of sales, and Gary Overturf as operations manager for the newly acquired Roots and Fruits/Albert's division.

**Aurora Organic Dairy** has promoted Dr. Juan S. Velez to the new position of vice president, farm operations, to oversee all ag-related functions on the company's dairy farms. In addition, Gary R. Sebek has been named chief financial officer.

**Nature's Path Foods** has hired Simon J. Russell as its new chief financial officer.

**Oregon Tilth** has appointed John Foster as its interim executive director.

Steven H. Townsend has resigned from his posts as president and chief executive of **United Natural Foods, Inc.** As a result, former CEO Michael S. Funk was to return to the posts.

Joseph Scalzo, former group president of personal care and global value chain at The Gillette Company, has been named president and CEO of Dean Foods' **WhiteWave Foods** division.

**Wild Oats Markets** has hired Patricia DiPersio as food safety specialist and corporate dietitian and has added Dan Bolstad as senior vice president of operations. 