



**DELI**

**BUSINESS**

MARKETING MERCHANDISING MANAGEMENT PROCUREMENT

FEB/MAR 2017 \$14.95



# Imported Italian Foods Gain Momentum



## **ALSO INSIDE**

PIZZA

GRAB AND GO

GRATING CHEESE

RAW MILK CHEESE

ROTISSERIE CHICKEN

DELI CONSUMER RESEARCH RESULTS



*Discover our new flavors!*

Introducing our famous goat cheese logs  
now available with the kick of **Chipotle**  
or the tangy zip of **Chive & Onion**



Distributed by Norseland, Inc.

3 Parklands Drive, Suite 102, Darien, CT 06820 | 203-324-5620 | [norseland.com](http://norseland.com)

# CONTENTS



## COVER STORY 12

Relaxed regulations, increased consumer knowledge and innovation trigger interest

### PREPARED FOODS

**Nowhere To Dough But Up.....16**  
Pizza crust opportunities abound in delis

### MERCHANDISING REVIEW

**Making The Grade ..... 19**  
**In Grab And Go**  
Targeting time-starved Americans, particularly moms and Millennials

### CHEESE CORNER

**The Real Deal .....25**  
With grating cheese, authenticity prevails

**A Raw Cheese Resurgence? .....28**  
With cleaner labels more prevalent, raw-milk cheeses are making headway

### DELI MEAT

**New Twists On An Old Favorite .....31**  
Rotisserie chicken remains a profitable deli staple

### FEATURE

**Destination Deli ..... 34**  
Cutting-edge offerings satisfy modern consumers



### COMMENTARIES

EDITOR'S NOTES  
**Sign Of The Times: ..... 8**  
**No More Samples Of Deli Meat**

PUBLISHER'S INSIGHTS  
**The Changing Supermarket Deli..... 10**

### IN EVERY ISSUE

**DELI WATCH .....6**  
**INFORMATION SHOWCASE..... 38**  
**BLAST FROM THE PAST ..... 38**

## PRESIDENT & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

JAMES E. PREVOR  
jprevor@phoenixmedianet.com

## PUBLISHING DIRECTOR

KENNETH L. WHITACRE  
kwhitacre@phoenixmedianet.com

## PUBLISHER/EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

LEE SMITH  
lsmith@phoenixmedianet.com

## EXECUTIVE EDITOR

ELLEN KOTEFF  
ekoteff@phoenixmedianet.com

## MANAGING EDITOR

LISA WHITE  
lwhite@phoenixmedianet.com

## NATIONAL SALES MANAGER

MARK GOLD  
mgold@phoenixmedianet.com

## SALES MANAGER

JANE JOHNSON  
jjohnson@phoenixmedianet.com

## PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

DIANA LEVINE  
dlevine@phoenixmedianet.com

## ART DIRECTOR

SUNSHINE GORMAN  
sgorman@phoenixmedianet.com

## PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT

FREDDY PULIDO  
JACKIE TUCKER

## RESEARCH DIRECTOR

SHARON OLSON

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

CAROL BAREUTHER HANNAH HOWARD BOB JOHNSON  
KEITH LORIA SHARON OLSON BARRY SPARKS JEFFREY STEELE

SEND 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. PREVOR

### EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

KENNETH L. WHITACRE

### SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

LEE SMITH

### VICE PRESIDENT EDITORIAL

ELLEN KOTEFF

### GENERAL COUNSEL

DEBRA PREVOR

### TRADE SHOW COORDINATOR

JACKIE LOMONTE

DELI 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 2017

### PHOENIX MEDIA NETWORK, INC.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.  
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

PUBLICATION AGREEMENT NO. 40047928

**american  
business  
media**  
The Association of Business Information Companies



# SMITHFIELD AND STEMILT PARTNER FOR EBOOK

Smithfield Foods, Smithfield, VA, has partnered with Wenatchee, WA-based Stemilt Growers to produce a digital recipe book to celebrate the sweet and savory combination of fresh pork and apples. The Apples & Fresh Pork: Creative Recipes for this Classic Pairing eBook is available for free at [www.stemilt.com](http://www.stemilt.com). All of the recipes were developed by Smithfield corporate chef Frank Dominguez and can be prepped in 15 minutes or less.

These include Pork Chops with Apples and Maple Gravy, BBQ Bacon Apple Pork Explosion and Cornbread Stuffed Bacon Wrapped Pork Tenderloin.

## COMING NEXT IN APRIL/MAY ISSUE

### COVER STORY

Sandwiches

### FEATURE STORIES

Private Label  
Guacamole  
Food Safety

### MERCHANDISING REVIEWS

Sandwich Condiments  
Ribs & Wings  
Pickles

### PROCUREMENT STRATEGIES

Packaging

### COMING IN JUNE/JULY

DELI BUSINESS will be taking a look at the 13th Annual People's Award

### PREPARED FOODS

Food Bars

### DELI MEATS

Artisan Salami

### CHEESES

Butters  
Asiago

### SUPPLEMENT

IDDBA Pre-Show Guide

### 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](http://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.

# Dairy, Deli, Bakery & Foodservice Professionals, NETWORKING BEGINS HERE

## YOU'LL SEE:

9,000 Professionals  
700 Exhibitors  
Retail Decision-Makers  
Top Speakers  
Trends Research  
And More...

### SHOW AND SELL

New Concepts  
Merchandising  
Retail Takeaways  
Unique Displays

### NEW PRODUCT — SHOWCASE —

Latest Trends  
Hundreds Of Items

### — EXPERT — NEIGHBORHOOD

One-on-One  
Expert Advice

### CAKE DECORATING — CHALLENGE —

The Industry's  
Premier Event

GROWING THE FUTURE

# IDDBA

# 17



JUNE 4-6, 2017 ANAHEIM, CA



Jim Belushi  
and The Board of Comedy



Doug Rauch  
Former President  
of Trader Joe's



Mike Eardley  
President/CEO of IDDBA



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
California's 38th Governor

## REGISTER TODAY!

IDDBA.ORG  
608.310.5000



## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### MURRAY'S CHEESE REACHES MILESTONE

Murray's Cheese, New York City, has opened its 350th store location in Bloomington, IN, through a special partnership with the Kroger family of stores. The cheese shop, opened in 1940, delivers its line of cheese, meat and specialty food items to Kroger, which includes Fred Meyer, King Soopers, Ralph's and QFC locations in more than 30 states.

[www.murrayscheese.com](http://www.murrayscheese.com)



### POMI PARTNERS WITH GABRIELE CORCOS

The Consorzio Casalasco del Pomodoro, New York City, has announced a new partnership with Gabriele Corcos. Italian chef, *New York Times* best-selling author and star of "Extra Virgin" with his wife, actress Debi Mazar, Corcos will showcase the versatility of Pomi products in authentic Italian recipes. It will consist of all courses, from appetizers to main courses.

[www.pomi.us.com](http://www.pomi.us.com)



### GROWERS EXPRESS RECEIVES HONOR

Growers Express, Salinas, CA, received the 4th annual Joe Nucci Award for Product Innovation by *Produce Business* magazine at the New York Produce Show and Conference in New York City recently. This honor acknowledges the success of Growers' Cauliflower Crumbles product, which is packed under the Green Giant Fresh and Farm Day Organic brands. The winner was selected by the *Produce Business* magazine editorial team.

[www.growersexpress.com](http://www.growersexpress.com)



### ZINGERMAN'S CREAMERY CHEESE AVAILABLE ON EAST COAST

Zingerman's Creamery, Ann Arbor, MI, has announced a partnership with World's Best Cheeses. The specialty food distributor directly delivers cheeses, crackers, oils, chocolates and meats from around the world to gourmet retail markets, and now those offerings include Zingerman's small-batch artisan cheeses. This will be the first time the Creamery has had major distribution on the East Coast.

[www.zingermanscreamery.com](http://www.zingermanscreamery.com)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### CHEESE FEST CELEBRATES 11TH YEAR

The California Artisan Cheese Festival, Petaluma, CA, is celebrating its 11th year, March 24-26, 2017, in and around the Sheraton Sonoma County in Petaluma. Many new festival elements are being introduced this year, from educational sessions and tastings included in every artisan tour; to a Friday night Ultimate Best Bite featuring local cheesemakers, cheesemongers and chefs; to a Saturday night Cheese & Cocktail party; and two cheesemaker dinners in Sonoma.

[www.artisancheesefestival.com](http://www.artisancheesefestival.com)



### GRUYÈRE AOP ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The Interprofession du Gruyère, Pringy, Switzerland, has announced the winners of its 2016 Scholarship Contest. The winners will receive a trip to the Gruyères Region of Switzerland in spring 2017. Competitors answered questions on Gruyère AOP, highlighted an aspect and presented it. Winners include Ann Campbell, Di Bruno Bros., Philadelphia; Izzy Creveling, Peterson Cheese Co., Auburn, WA; and Wendy Johnson, Whole Foods Market, West Des Moines, IA.

[www.gruyere.com](http://www.gruyere.com)

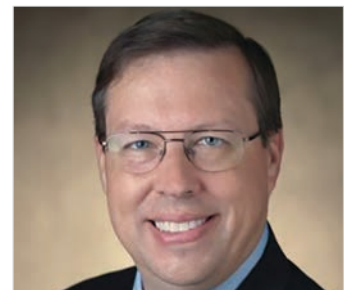
## TRANSITIONS



### GREEN GIANT ANNOUNCES MARKETING POSTS

Green Giant Fresh, Salinas, CA, has announced promotions in two marketing roles. Former senior marketing manager, Lori Bigras, has been promoted to director of marketing & communications, responsible for internal and external communications, brand messaging, media buying, websites, development and upkeep and digital media. Also, Tricia Walker has been promoted to event planner. Walker oversees the company's Samples Program.

[www.greengiantfresh.com](http://www.greengiantfresh.com)



### ANCHOR DRAFTS INDUSTRY VETERAN

Anchor Packaging, Inc., St. Louis, manufacturer of rigid non-foam food packaging, has appointed Thomas Bowden as vice president of manufacturing for all Arkansas facilities. He joins the company from ProAmpac and brings more than 30 years of experience in manufacturing and general management positions, with responsibilities at Pactiv, Sonoco, Pliant and Berry Plastics.

[www.anchorpackaging.com](http://www.anchorpackaging.com)

DELI WATCH is a regular feature of *Deli Business*. Please send information on new products, personnel changes, industry, corporate and personal milestones and available literature, along with a color photo, slide or transparency to: **Editor, DELI BUSINESS, P.O. Box 810217 • Boca Raton, FL 33481-0217 • Phone: 561-994-1118 • Fax: 561-994-1610 • Email: [DeliBusiness@phoenixmedianet.com](mailto:DeliBusiness@phoenixmedianet.com)**

## NEW PRODUCTS



### UNIQUE FLAVORS

Shamir Salads, Israel, offers a variety of salads for the U.S. retail market. Lines include Hummus; Tahini; Eggplant; Spicy Carrots; Coleslaw; Beet Salad; Red Pepper; Spicy Tomato; and Potato Salad. All products are for the retail and the institutional markets. Ingredients are based on locally-sourced fresh vegetables, herbs and spices. These items are low in fat and gluten free. Average shelf life is between 70 and 90 days.

[www.shamir-salads.com](http://www.shamir-salads.com)



### CHORIZO SEASONED TURKEY

Butterball Foodservice, Garner, NC, has introduced chorizo seasoned ground turkey. Authentic chorizo seasonings are blended into standard ground turkey, creating a healthier alternative to traditional pork chorizo. Packed in four 5-pound chubs, the chorizo can be used as an ingredient in ethnic dishes as well as breakfast crumbles, tacos, hand pattied burgers and other meals.

[www.butterballfoodservice.com](http://www.butterballfoodservice.com)



### INNOVATIVE PACKAGING

Ovtene, Marion, MA, offers one of the first food packaging that restricts the growth of bacteria. The recyclable material is inspired by an eggshell's protection. It is composed primarily of calcium carbonate and high-density polyethylene (HDPE) resin along with other trace mineral ingredients. The physical properties maintain the organoleptic characteristics of food. It is available in rolls, sheets and bags.

[www.ovtene.com](http://www.ovtene.com)



### NEW SOUPS AND BROTH

Kettle Cuisine, Lynn, MA, has introduced a new line of organic soups under the Farm and Kettle brand. This marks a partnership between the company and farmers and artisans in the industry. A number of organic varieties are available, including Chicken & Vegetable; Chickpea & Chicken; Tomato Cheddar; Beef & Kale with Ancient Grains; and Chicken Bone Broth with Fresh Thyme.

[www.kettlecuisine.com](http://www.kettlecuisine.com)

## NEW PRODUCTS



### AN ALL-NATURAL MUSTARD

Beaverton Foods, Beaverton, OR, is adding to its Beaver Brand line with an all-natural Stone Ground Mustard. The new specialty mustard features all-natural mustard oil and no preservatives. It is also Certified Gluten-Free.

[www.beavertonfoods.com](http://www.beavertonfoods.com)



### GLOBAL SAUCE FLAVORS

Nestle Professional, Arlington, VA, offers Minor's Ready-To-Use Asian Sauces for a variety of dishes. Gochugaru peppers deliver a subtle heat to Korean-style BBQ Sauce, complemented by notes of ginger, sesame and orange. The Pad Thai sauce transports guests to Southeast Asia with a sweet, tangy taste. And the Char Siu Chinese-Style BBQ Sauce combines five spice, sherry and soy for contemporary flavor.

[www.nestleusa.com](http://www.nestleusa.com)



### SUSTAINABLY-SOURCED SALMON

Wild Planet Inc., McKinleyville, CA, offers sustainably-sourced boneless skinless Wild Pink Salmon. The filets are hand-cut and packed in 32-ounce pouches, maintaining a delicate and subtle flavor that's ideal for a variety of applications. The fish originates from cold, Alaskan waters. It is a great source for Omega 3 fatty acids.

[www.wildplanetfoods.com](http://www.wildplanetfoods.com)



### PDO MEATS FROM ITALY

Atalanta Corp., Elizabeth, NJ, has unveiled Piacenti, a line of PDO and roasted meats from Tuscany, Italy. The hams are only obtained from first-class pigs raised in Tuscany and the surrounding regions, seasoned and cured in the ancient traditions. The line includes Prosciutto Toscano PDO with bone-in and boneless, and roasted ham, loin and porchetta with herbs. Prosciutto Toscano PDO is also available in 3-ounce exact weight packages.

[www.atalantacorp.com](http://www.atalantacorp.com)

**DELI WATCH** is a regular feature of *Deli Business*. Please send information on new products, personnel changes, industry, corporate and personal milestones and available literature, along with a color photo, slide or transparency to: **Editor, DELI BUSINESS, P.O. Box 810217 • Boca Raton, FL 33481-0217 • Phone: 561-994-1118 • Fax: 561-994-1610 • Email: [DeliBusiness@phoenixmedianet.com](mailto:DeliBusiness@phoenixmedianet.com)**

# SIGN OF THE TIMES: NO MORE SAMPLES OF DELI MEAT



By  
**Jim Prevora**  
Editor-in-Chief

In South Florida, where DELI BUSINESS is headquartered, there was panic in the streets... well, maybe not quite panic and, actually the streets were clear, the frenzy was all online. *The Tampa Bay Times* published a piece, the Orlando Fox affiliate ran a report, the *Orlando Sentinel* picked it up, and the article was run in South Florida's *Sun-Sentinel*. The Tampa piece was headlined "Publix No Longer Offers You That Free Slice of Meat at The Deli Counter":

*The dance is not complicated.*

*You go to your neighborhood Publix. You say, "One pound of Boar's Head tavern ham, sliced thin." The person in the hairnet unwraps the mighty pink hemisphere, hefts it bouncily onto the stainless-steel slicer and cleaves 1 millimeter, the swath falling neatly onto a plastic deli sheet.*

*"Is this about right?" she asks. You take it into your palm, scrutinize. Maybe it's thin enough to read through, maybe it's just right. But if you're hungry, you say, "A little thinner."*

*You have just scored your second free piece of tavern ham.*

*Except, you may have noticed something changed recently at your neighborhood grocery. Some of Publix's stores are quietly putting a stop to the practice of the free slice, creating an awkward silence while you wait for your free meat. If you want it, now you have to ask.*

*What gives?*

*"We are piloting a change in a few dozen delis in Central and southwest Florida to create a more natural exchange between our deli clerks and our customers," says Brian West, media relations manager at Publix, which has more than 1,000 stores in the Southeast.*

*Translation: "Natural exchange" means no free deli samples.*

The *Orlando Sentinel* headline: "Publix Cutting Back On Free Deli Meat Slices":

*Publix spokesman Dwaine Stevens said there has been some confusion about the new Publix policy.*

*Stevens said Publix stopped automatically offering meat slices because it is offering a "cheese of the week" sample instead. Deli employees will no longer offer a piece of meat automatically with orders, but customers will be given a slice if they request it.*

*Another Publix spokesman, Brian West, insisted it was not a cost-cutting move. However, Publix' stock price has dropped about 11 percent a share since November 2015 as the chain scoops up sites for expansion into Virginia and other markets.*

Quickly, however, as consumer outrage poured in online, the *Sun-Sentinel* ran a follow-up piece titled,

"Publix Not Offering Free Deli Samples in South Florida? That's Baloney":

*In breaking deli news, Baloneygate erupted this week.*

*The Tampa Bay Times caused an uproar after reporting Tuesday that select Central and Southwest Publix Super Markets are no longer automatically offering customers free samples of sliced meats at deli counters.*

*Relax, South Florida. Publix is still offering free deli samples in stores.*

*"Our stores in South Florida should not see any changes in our deli processes, as our stores in this trade area are not impacted by the pilot," says Publix spokeswoman Maria Brous.*

South Florida is a retiree-rich market and change of this sort is traumatic, so Publix is probably smart to do its test elsewhere. Its motivation is unclear; the news reports focused on cost-cutting, but it is also quite possible that the "dance" referred to between consumer and deli clerk is too time-consuming and thus labor-intensive. Not only does this interaction cost money, but it slows down service.

The decline in Publix stock price is interesting, in part, because Publix is not a public company, so this is an internal price for employee stock purchases.

It is also possible that the "cheese of the week" promotion might be a way to get people to sample, and then, hopefully, purchase a new product, as opposed to giving people slices of product they already enjoy.

The whole kerfuffle raises the question of the role of the service deli. Many retailers, including Publix, have been emphasizing online ordering and for good reason. After all, consumers waiting in line are restricted in their buying, so allowing shoppers to just swoop by and pick up the ready-sliced orders seems a win for both consumer convenience and the interests of the store in extending actual shopping time.

If consumers don't interact with personnel, that reduces the value of having employees on the floor.

Wal-Mart has maintained a service deli specifically because it is one of the few moments where consumers interact with Wal-Mart staff. But, today, few deli clerks have the experience or the time to really engage with consumers, suggest new options, and offer more samples.

Publix is a leader in the industry and is experimenting with ways to transform the relationship between the deli clerk and the consumer. Let us hope they succeed, for in this age of much improved pre-packaged product and rising minimum wages, if the relationship is not transformed to create greater value for consumers, retailers and producers, the transition might start to look more like a disappearance.

**DB**

Looking for new products and trends  
to delight your customers?



## Put yourself in the center of the whole treating and snacking world

Discover more new innovations, items, solutions and trends at the Sweets & Snacks Expo than anywhere else. With access to the most candy & snack people and products, you'll gain a real competitive edge and grow your business.

Your "center" is here.

Register Now  
[sweetsandsnacks.com](http://sweetsandsnacks.com)



May 23-25, 2017 Chicago, IL USA

# THE CHANGING SUPERMARKET DELI



By  
**Lee Smith**  
Publisher

**J**ust back from the Winter Fancy Food Show in San Francisco and I found there are exciting trends coming together to change the face of the mainstream deli department.

The biggest growth area is still specialty cheeses. Popping up in all kinds of venues from restaurants, convenience stores, rural independents as well as high-end specialty stores, cheese's dominance cannot be denied. The growth of Murray's Cheese Shops in Kroger supermarkets is an excellent example of the new deli. Kroger's strong commitment includes the recent purchase of Rob Kaufelt's remaining shares, making Kroger the owner of Murray's, including the famous Bleecker Street store in New York City. Kroger is a progressive chain, but it is still more mainstream than not. With the purchase, we can expect to see more stores

The success of high-end salami and the growth of authentic prosciutti are leading a new generation of buyers to the conclusion that the deli meat category is emerging as a growth center. While cheese is still leading the way, deli meat sales are picking up speed very quickly and challenging cheese departments for 'new darling on the block' bragging rights.

Rocking conventional beliefs that lunch meats are belly-fillers, the new charcuterie center is selling meats that start at more than ten dollars a pound and top out at more than thirty. This is not the give-every-customer-a-slice-for-free market. The target consumer is an adult with a fine appreciation of food. When it comes to convenience eating, a dinner of cheese, bread or crackers, fine deli meat and a little fruit or salad is delicious and nutritionally complete.

## THE THREE MAJOR AREAS OF THE DELI THAT EVERY OPERATOR SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT ARE SPECIALTY CHEESES AS A SUB-DEPARTMENT, CHARCUTERIE CENTERS AND PREPARED-FOODS.

rolling out the program and more chains looking to compete with their own in-store cheese shops. Expect the trend to continue and get ever-more sophisticated.

The success of better quality and more expensive cheeses has given strength to upscaling other deli products as well. While it's true there was a time when deli meat led in sales at close to 70 percent, the deli meat category has been steadily declining. With prepared foods now leading the charge, moms more conscious of the nutritional value of kids' lunches, and more options for working adults, the category has declined to as low as 30 percent of sales in some stores.

However, specialty and artisan cheeses have proven that traditional supermarket shoppers will spend more for better quality, authenticity and variety. Initially cross merchandised near the cheese counters, delis have been displaying high quality salami chubs with authentic recipes. While a little more expensive, sales have been soaring — much to the surprise of everyone, including the artisan producers.

In many cases, the new selections are separated from the traditional, inexpensive bologna and pickle loaf. Just a casual observation in better chains shows a marked migration in shelf space, promotions and sales to higher-end, authentic products.

In pursuit of authenticity — another major change in customer attitudes — specialty cheeses and deli meats are leading the way. In the prepared food arena, any description that includes the word 'style' tacked onto the end is on the way out. Italian-style whatever is out. French-style cheeses are also out and if something says, "Swiss," it had better be from Switzerland.

While talking about authenticity, don't leave out American. Made in America is something to be proud of. Local is to be prized, whether it is peaches or bread, tomatoes, chicken or cheese. This is all about transparency.

The three major areas of the deli that every operator should be concerned about are specialty cheeses as a sub-department, charcuterie centers and prepared-foods. It all needs to be high quality, authentic and transparent.

**DB**




[www.labonneviecheese.com](http://www.labonneviecheese.com)

# Imported Italian Foods Gain Momentum



**Relaxed regulations, increased consumer knowledge and innovations trigger interest**

BY BARRY SPARKS



**I**talians have a long tradition of producing some of the best meats and cheeses in the world. Long-known for their high quality and satisfying taste, Italian meats and cheeses are gaining increased popularity in the United States, thanks to relaxed regulations, increased knowledge and understanding on the part of consumers and a series of innovations.

"Italians have been producing meats and cheeses the same way for a thousand years," says Simone Bocchini, president of Fratelli Beretta USA, headquartered in Mount Olive, NJ. "They have a proud tradition."

It is no surprise that, steeped in tradition, these foods are increasing in popularity.

"Consumers more than ever are looking for foods with a story and a tradition. And, what evokes more history than Italy?" asks Daniella Bolla of Ponte PR and Marketing, a company located in Petaluma, CA. Its clients include Parmigiano Reggiano and Prosciutto di San Daniele.

Increased interest in Italian meats and cheeses has been significant, and companies providing these products are benefitting from this with growing revenues.

Anna Gallo, director of marketing for Savello USA, based in Wilkes-Barre, PA, says sales for her company, an importer of Italian foods, is up 10 to 15 percent.

And it's a variety of formats that are garnering increased attention.

For example, Alberto Minardi, chief executive and general manager of Principe Foods, located in Long Beach, CA, says his company, which imports and sells authentic Italian meats, experienced tremendous growth in both bulk deli and sliced items last year.

The major factors behind the growing popularity of Italian meats and cheeses are the influence of the Food Network, increasing number of cooking programs and bevy of travel shows.

### Outside The Comfort Zone

Today, consumers are more interested in trying unique products and unfamiliar food than in the past.

"They are much more willing to go outside of their comfort zone," says Garrett Digney, marketing director of Campofrio Food Group America Inc., a company located in South Chesterfield, VA.

Part of the reason is the increased exposure of these foods from top chefs.

"It has definitely increased their knowledge and understanding about Italian foods," says Bocchini. "Consumers want to duplicate the dishes they see created on television or eat in a restaurant."

Although Italian meats such as salami, mortadella, prosciutto, speck, sopressata, cacciatore and pancetta, have been longtime favorites, Italian cured meats are in high demand overall.

In 2013, the U.S. Department of Agriculture finally relaxed a decades-long ban on the importation of many cured-pork products from some regions in Italy. This greatly increased the number and variety of salumi in markets and restaurants in the United States.

The Department's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services announced that four regions and two provinces in Northern Italy were free of swine vesicular disease, a communicable ailment that infects pigs. The importation of pork or pork products from these areas was determined to be free of the virus.

"The number of authentic Italian prod-

ucts is definitely on the rise," says Digney. "Italian meats have a long history in the United States. They are a cultural part of our cuisine. The relaxed regulations have opened the opportunities for consumers to try some Italian meats they haven't had the opportunity to try before."

Prior to the lifting of the ban in 2013, only half of the country's wide variety of cold cuts had been approved for import to the United States, according to Italy's Association of Meat and Cold Cut Producers. Italian pork products approved for import to the United States included Prosciutto di Parma, Prosciutto di San Daniele and mortadella.

Italy's Association of Meat and Cold Cut Products predicted the relaxed regulations could mean an increase of \$9 to \$13 million a year in Italian cold cuts exported to the United States.

In conjunction with the relaxed regulations, some Italian meat companies have invested in a high pressure processing (HPP) plant. High pressure processing



mally-processed foods. This method meets FDA and USDA food safety standards.

### A Different Cut

Another more recent Italian meat development is retailers ordering Prosciutto di Parma, cut in quarters or halves, according to Gallo. This way, delis do not have to open the entire Prosciutto di Parma, allowing the integrity of the product to remain intact. The Consorzio del Prosciutto di Parma has approved this practice.

As an example of innovation designed to meet consumer demand as well as needs, Terre Ducali launched a new line of deli

**The major factors behind the growing popularity of Italian meats and cheeses are the influence of the Food Network, increasing number of cooking programs and bevy of travel shows.**

(HPP), a non-thermal food processing technology, has been instrumental in increasing the safety and shelf-life of dry-cured products. HPP uses pressure, rather than the traditional method of heat, to kill microorganisms, such as listeria and salmonella.

Unlike thermal processing, HPP is less destructive to the meat's nutrients and flavor, which is more reflective of mini-

meat products dedicated to people who suffer from celiac disease and those who are lactose intolerant. A recent study by the Italian Institute of Health reported about 2 percent of the adult population and about 8 percent of children suffer from food allergies or intolerances.

In light of the problem, Terre Ducali created special products under the Zero brand. These cold cut products have an absence of lactose, gluten and allergens. Terre Ducali offers all typical Italian products, such as Parma Ham, Coppa di Parma, Strolghino of Culatello, pancetta, cooked and roasted ham under its Zero brand.

Gallo says more delis are requesting pre-sliced Italian meats. Millennials seem to prefer pre-slicing more than Baby Boomers, who are accustomed to the tra-



ditional full-service slicing in the deli.

Pre-slicing increases convenience by decreasing waiting time. It is great for the busy, on-the-go consumer, says Bocchini. It also appeals to delis, since it requires less training and manpower.

While Gallo believes pre-slicing tends to change the meat's flavor profile and decreases shelf life, Bocchini says there's little difference in the freshness.

Bocchini says more grab-and-go Italian

meat products are among recent innovations. He expects the category to continue to grow, as more companies cater to consumers' busy lifestyles.

Campofino offers grab-and-go two-packs of prosciutto, pepperoni and hard salami panino.

### A Key Export

It is difficult to talk about Italian meats without discussing Italian cheeses, since

these items are so often served, and enjoyed, together.

Cheese is Italy's third most important export to the United States after wine and olive oil. Some of the most popular Italian cheeses are Grana Padano, Parmigiano Reggiano and Pecorino Romano, as well as fresh varieties like Mozzarella, Ricotta and Mascarpone.

In 2012, Italian cheeses dominated the global cheese market, accounting for more than 40 percent of the overall share. International cheese sales are expected to grow from \$72.5 billion in 2012 to \$118.44 billion by 2019, according to a report from Transparency Market Research, an Albany, NY-based company.

Total United States per capita consumption of natural cheese increased for the third straight year in 2013. Americans consume more Italian style cheeses than any other type, according to the report.

"This past year was a great year for Italian cheeses," says Giacomo Veraldi, chief executive of Ambrosi Food USA, based in Maspeth, NY. "Our business has been growing the past four years. Specialty cheeses are doing well, but the entire Italian cheese business is up."

Veraldi says little by little, U.S. consumers are learning to appreciate the variety of real Italian cheeses now available.

"People are curious about Italian cuisine," he says. "They know Italians enjoy food, and they want to understand what it's all about. Italy has an excellent reputation for good food."

"Italian food is widely considered to be the most popular cuisine, the most approachable, the most comforting, and this affects how consumers look at their cheeses, as well," says Bolla.

### An Almost Endless Variety

Consumers can choose from an almost endless variety of Italian cheeses. Every area or region of Italy has its signature cheese, and nearly 50 Italian cheeses have the prestigious Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) label.

Veraldi says a number of factors are influencing the rising popularity of Italian cheeses. Cooking shows are at the top of the list. Many television chefs are preparing regional Italian recipes that incorporate some of the lesser-known types. A lot of mild and soft cheeses, like Buffalo Mozzarella, are used.

As more Americans move from the East and West Coasts to the Midwest and



**CASTELLA®**

# A TASTE OF Italy

Grown and imported from Italy, Cerignola are colorful and meaty olives that are a hit in any antipasto platter or prepared dish.

For 25 years, Castella has partnered with the finest growers from around the globe to ensure quality and freshness in each product we offer.

Visit our website to learn more about our full line of Castella products at [www.castella.com](http://www.castella.com)

Castella can help your business grow, please call **1-866-CASTELLA** and ask for one of our representatives.

LIKE.SHARE.FOLLOW @CASTELLAIMPORTS



South, a greater demand for Italian food and products is created.

"They want to be able to get what they had in more populated areas," says Veraldi.

Consumers also are being introduced to different Italian cheeses through home service meal companies, such as Blue Apron.

"After tasting a cheese for the first time in a recipe, many people go to the deli to purchase that cheese," says Veraldi.

Among the types expected to increase in the next few years are truffle, goat's milk, raw milk, organic and flavored cheeses.

"Truffle cheese is very flavorful," says Veraldi. "Truffles, which are grown underground, give the cheese a nutty, earthy flavor. People love it, and I expect it to go more mainstream."

Goat milk cheeses, although they have a strong flavor, have fewer calories. This type also is lower in fat, cholesterol and lactose. Goat's milk cheeses have more minerals and vitamins than cow's cheese, and are easier to digest. People who are allergic to cow's milk can usually drink goat's milk without issue.

#### Goat's Milk Cheese In Demand

There is a strong demand for goat's milk

cheeses, particularly from those who are lactose intolerant.

"People are more accepting of goat's milk cheese. We have launched some new goat milk cheeses to meet the demand," says Gallo of Savello USA.

Many consumers say raw-milk cheeses are better-tasting than pasteurized cheeses. Although pasteurization kills potentially harmful bacteria, it also kills bacteria responsible for flavor. Heating milk to high temperatures changes its composition.

"Raw-milk cheeses have lots of taste, and we are starting to introduce more of them to the United States," says Veraldi.

Raw milk cheeses include Fontina and Branzi as well as versions of Maccagno, Toma Piemontese and Taleggio.

Proponents tout the health benefits of raw-milk cheese. *U.S. News and World Report* reported that consumption of raw milk cheese may significantly lower symptoms of allergic reactions, such as asthma, hay fever and eczema. The enzymes in raw milk help in the digestion of sugars, fats and minerals in the milk, according to a report published in *Appetite* magazine.

Still, consumers are encouraged to consult a physician before eating raw milk



cheese, especially if they are vulnerable to infections due to age, pregnancy or other health conditions.

As consumers seek out flavored Italian cheeses, Ambrosi offers varieties with chili peppers (Belzeblu), peppercorns (Pecorino Pepato) and black truffles (Tartu).

"The future is very exciting for Italian cheeses," says Veraldi. "Increased exposure and multiple innovations have opened up a whole new world for many consumers. And that means more business for delis and retail stores."

DB

**Fiorucci**  
DAL 1850

Contact  
cfa.marketing@campofriofg.com  
or visit [fioruccifoods.com](http://fioruccifoods.com) for  
more info.

## Tradition & Innovation

From slow-aged Prosciutto to the fastest growing Paninos, drive your deli growth with the 100% Natural, Antibiotic Free Italian line your consumers are looking for.  
Now with a bold new look for great visibility on the shelf.

# NOWHERE TO DOUGH BUT UP

**Pizza crust opportunities abound in delis**

BY KEITH LORIA



**P**izza remains one of the most popular dishes for American consumers, but more and more people have discovered that you don't need to go to your local pizza parlor to enjoy the great taste. Those seeking a more custom pie can grab the ingredients at their local supermarket, including pizza crust at the deli counter.

Increasingly, more premade pizza crusts are available, with an array of styles, sizes and flavors, in retail delis. This offers another option to refrigerated and frozen dough in the grocery aisles.

Offering variety in pizza crusts at retail is becoming the popular trend; thin crusts, along with the thicker, Sicilian-style type, are becoming more readily available and are enabling retailers to differentiate themselves in the category.

Tina Battistoni, customer marketing manager, prepared foods, in-store bakery & deli division for Rich Products, headquartered in Buffalo, NY, notes a trend the company continues to see is the move-

crusts over the last two years, with cauliflower and butternut squash being particularly strong sellers.

"More of the ancient grain movement is becoming popular," he says. "Combined with the gluten-free aspect, the ancient grains provide additional health benefits that have continued to push this category."

Venice Bakery's gluten-free crusts are made in its dedicated gluten-free baking facility and are also free of dairy, eggs and soy.

"The trends we are seeing and reading about today are all about lower carbs and less fat," says Tedeschi. "It's important that there's great packaging that highlights the healthier benefits that we're working with."

According to the 2016 Technomic *Pizza Consumer Trend Report*, gluten-free pizza crust options are exploding on pizza menus, with gluten-free being one of the leading and fastest-growing health call-outs.

"There are so many gluten-free options today that include fresh, frozen and ready-to-bake, along with

**Offering variety in pizza crusts at retail is becoming the popular trend; thin crusts, along with the thicker Sicilian-style type, are becoming more readily available and are enabling retailers to differentiate.**

ment beyond traditional pizza crust toward more artisanal varieties with upscale pizza toppings.

"While not yet mainstream in retail, savory herb and cheese-flavored crusts have been showing up on menus, along with flavor treatments to the edge of the pies," she says. "Ingredients such as garlic butter, Parmesan cheese and sesame seeds, to name a few, are being used to create a unique and impactful flavor profile for the crust."

Deb Crisan, senior vice president of sales and marketing for Rao's Specialty Foods, Inc., based in New York City, says crust trends include artisan flatbreads, spelt, lavosh and tortilla-style. Whole wheat and gluten-free types have also risen in popularity in recent years.

"We are definitely seeing more of a demand for artisan flatbreads and gluten-free crusts," she says. "Grilled pizzas have quickly come into play, along with many consumers now purchasing their own outdoor pizza ovens, and these are the crusts that more people are using."

#### **A Healthy Choice**

For those watching carbs or observing a gluten-free lifestyle, there are many new and convenient ready-to-use crust options available.

Joe Tedeschi, president of Venice Bakery, based in Torrance, CA, has seen a rise in plant-based pizza

a wide variety of low-carb options," says Crisan.

In addition, sprouted and ancient grains are being considered for crusts in place of the more traditional white flour.

"Thinner crusts and flatbread options continue to gain popularity and are seen by some consumers as a 'lighter' option to traditional crusts," says Rich Products' Battistoni. "These crust options, along with fresh ingredient toppings like more vegetable varieties, allow consumers to experience great-tasting pizza with more of a health halo."

Flatbread pizzas have been coming on strong for a few years, but both thick and flavored crusts are making a comeback.

"I think incorporating legumes and pulse items such as chick pea and lentil will continue to evolve, along with further introduction of ancient grains," says James Viti, vice president of sales and marketing for Delorio Foods, Inc., based in Utica, NY. "It's amazing to see how much development has occurred just over the past few years, taking the pizza base portion to the next level. I'm excited for the future of gluten free."

According to crust manufacturers, in looking at the dough and crust aspects of pizza, gluten free still remains one of the single largest movements over the past decade in this segment.

For grocers to really make an imprint in crust

sales, experts say items should be merchandised right in the pasta/pizza sauce section of the supermarket. This is because cross merchandising with pizza sauce — whether at the deli or elsewhere in the store — will create more interest and higher rings at the register.

“You can place a great display of pizza sauce on top of the fresh dough counter or a free-standing pizza dough and sauce display,” says Rao’s Crisan. “The more fresh dough crusts that are seen, the better the display will be.”

### Dedicated Space

It is crucial for retailers to dedicate ample space, keep their offerings fresh and promote their pizza program to demonstrate they are in the pizza business.

“Whether in take-and-bake or a ready-to-eat format, providing an ample number of facings and a wide assortment is essential to accomplishing this,” says Battistoni. “In-store signage is important to grab shoppers’ attention to the availability of pizza or to promote a special. Featuring by-the-slice and personal pizzas, along with unique or customizable made-to-order pizzas on a menu board, creates an allure.”

Additional marketing on websites and taking online orders for pizza further enables a retailer to be viewed as a destination for pizza.

Some take-and-bake pizza options sold in the deli feature par-bake crusts and dough balls merchandised with all the fixings and provide shoppers with the ability to make and bake their own pizzas at home. Retailers can offer specials incorporating items outside the deli, such as pairing pizza with complementary items like beverages and sides.

### Recipe Ideas

There are numerous recipes available to retailers and consumers on the web today and through the Food Network and other food-related outlets. Deli retailers can take a few ideas, be creative and customize fresh and fun options, such as breakfast or dessert pizzas.

Venice Bakery constantly changes up recipe ideas for foodservice and retailers on its website.

“Whether it is the many recipe sources



on the internet or finding inspiration within the pizza industry, the sky’s the limit when it comes to creative options available for pie recipes,” says Battistoni. “Retailers with or without culinary resources can work in collaboration with supplier partners to deliver upon the specific taste preferences of their customers.”

DB

**DeLORIO'S**

Our proficiency in CRAFTING customers' PRIVATE LABEL formulations, using state of the art manufacturing, makes Delorios the TOP CHOICE for your business.



**CERTIFIED Organic**  
CAPABILITIES  
ALL DOUGH PRODUCTS

**Specialty Sweet & Savory Breadsticks**

Cinnamon/Sugar, jalapeno & cheddar cheese, garlic & herb, topped & untopped

**Topped Pizzas**

Traditional cheese pizzas, garlic, BBQ & cheddar, and Buffalo sauce

**New**





Delorio Foods Inc. Utica, NY 13501 • [www.deorios.com](http://www.deorios.com)

800-649-7612

# MAKING THE GRADE IN GRAB AND GO

**Targeting time-starved Americans, particularly moms and Millennials**

BY JEFFREY STEELE

**I**t's an exciting time for the grab-and-go section in supermarket delis. Several trends are coming together simultaneously to elevate this category of deli offerings, both in consumer consciousness and in contribution to stores' bottom lines.

Supermarket delis are increasingly upscaling grab-and-go items, featuring higher-end and more natural ingredients. There's a greater emphasis on nutrition and healthful offerings. These products are being presented in packaging that helps sell the lines, delivering greater function and variety, as well as sustainability.

And all this is taking place during a time when Americans are eating on the go like never before, increasing their snacking while eating more but smaller meals.

It all adds up to a bonanza of profits for supermarket delis, as they not only chalk up increasing sales to time-stressed consumers, but command higher price points, as well.



More and more Americans are starved for time these days, and increasingly are demanding immediate solutions. The inevitable result is that the deli grab-and-go section of supermarket delis is assuming greater importance and gaining larger market share.

### The Right Consumers

Targeting the right consumers is of vital concern to companies serving this burgeoning category.

"The biggest targets are the moms, who are concerned about the food they serve their families," says Steve Davies, the director of marketing and public affairs at NatureWorks LLC, a plastics provider located in Minnetonka, MN that sells to companies creating grab-and-go packages. "These are consumers who definitely want to see the food they're buying. They don't want to see opaque packages, just the food inside."

In the view of others, the most important target consumers are members of Generation Y, which is also known as the Millennial generation.

"Millennials are very hot on nutrition and mini meals," says Peggy Cross, founder and chief executive of Corte Madera, CA-based EcoTensil, a provider of sustainable, foldable and disposable utensils made of paperboard similar to that in a paper cup. "[These consumers are] very busy, starting to have kids, and there is a lot going on in their lives; they gravitate toward minimally-processed, nutritious and satisfying grab-and-go meals and snacks. One sees many examples of brands meeting this growing demand, with single-serve oat-

meal cups; grain and legume deli salads; muffin cups; soup and pasta cups; peanut butter singles; chia squeeze pouches; avocado cups; hummus or salsa and chip

ment, every on-the-go consumer is an appropriate target for grab-and-go items.

"People try to segment this market into age groups, but delis should be targeting all mobile consumers," says Jason Horbac, associate communications manager with Sayreville, NJ-based Sabert Corp. "You have more and more people eating on their way to work, in the car, or perhaps on their way to an appointment."

Some 60 percent of consumers rank portability as an important or extremely important factor when choosing a snack or a grab-and-go food, he says, adding, "Moms might be a percentage of the population grabbing something on the way elsewhere, but it's really the whole population. The beauty of grab and go is that it touches everyone."

### Probing Packaging Trends

The most important factors in grab-and-go packaging are functionality, versatility and sustainability. All three are

**The most important factors in grab-and-go packaging are functionality, versatility and sustainability.**

combo cups; yogurt and cereal combo cups; and the list goes on."

For still other key observers of the seg-

playing a growing role in shaping the grab-and-go packaging trends we see today and will witness tomorrow.



# BETTER ON-THE-GO



Deli customers want convenience. But they also want appetite appeal, freshness and portability.

**Placon GoCubes™** attract customers with clear, sleek lids and bases so on-the-go offerings look better and stay fresh longer. With 5 bases and 5 inserts, your merchandising options are endless. And made with up to 100% post-consumer PET materials to help you and your customer meet sustainability goals.

**Your choice for better on-the-go packaging is clear: Placon GoCubes. Simply better.**

TO REQUEST YOUR SAMPLE TODAY CALL 800.541.1535 OR VISIT [PLACON.COM](http://PLACON.COM)

An example of functionality might be the clear packaging NatureWorks provides. Up until now, many dairy items in grab and go have been packaged in tough, impact-resistant and usually opaque high-impact polystyrene (HIP).

"You can make it transparent, but that becomes rather expensive, and that's why there's growing interest in our Ingeo," says Davies, referring to a NatureWorks rigid plastic product that is created from plants rather than oil, and provides transparency on par with PET. "When you compare Ingeo to HIP, we are price competitive."

The growing move toward greater versatility is being witnessed in such offerings as Sabert Corp.'s Snack Collection, available in both PET recyclable containers and compostable pulp packaging. "They have that family look, so they're very similar styles, in a variety of shapes, sizes and lid heights, for different types of sandwiches, snacks or menu items that are showing up," says Horbac.

The trend toward sustainability is evident in many packaging innovations, among them products from EcoTensil, including EcoTaster, a compostable demo



utensil; EcoSpoon, a full-sized spoon; and EcoSpoon4, which is inserted in or attached to single-serve to-go containers. EcoSpoon can be sealed under an existing label, such that consumers peel off the label and find a clean spoon between the label and package top.

Consumers want convenience, but also value sustainability and waste reduction.

"That's where EcoTensils comes in,"

says Cross. "It solves that conundrum. Since ours is a paperboard utensil, we're made from renewable material, while plastic utensils are made from non-sustainable petroleum. You use plastic for a minute and it's in the landfill for more than a millennium."

Also key is the move toward natural and fresh, says Julie Eller, sales director with Excelsior Technologies, a UK-based,

## GRAB AND GO, OR GRAB AND GROW?

**T**hough grab and go is hot today, it's not exactly new. Some trace grab and go's evolution back to 1902, when Horn & Hardart unveiled the first automat in Philadelphia. Automats weren't exactly synonymous with fine dining, but in their 1920s-to-'40s heyday and after, they met a need for affordable, quickly-served meals and snacks.

The last automat vanished in 1991, but grab and go carried on, continuing to endure the red-headed stepchild's lack of respect. Grab and go didn't have to be good, the reasoning went. Consumers considering grabbing an item and heading out the door didn't have much choice but accepting what they could grasp and paying for it quickly.

In the years since, as American consumers found themselves ever more time starved, purchasing grab-and-go items has become far more common. The Chicago-based marketresearch company Technomic determined that, between 2006 and 2014, sales of grab-and-go food items surged approximately 10.4 percent each year.

Supermarket delis have responded to consumers' demand for more and better grab-and-go options with ever more upscale items to meet every noshing need. That is likely why, among non-restaurant outlets, supermarkets command the biggest grab-and-go market share, claiming a 22 percent slice of the pie, according to Technomic. Only convenience stores come close at 19 percent, dwarfing all other channels.

One of the important drivers of the grab-and-go market in the supermarket deli is consumers' growing preference for round-the-clock snacking.

According to Sayreville, NJ-based Sabert Corp., citing statistics from Technomic, in 2014, 71 percent of respondents said they snacked in mid-afternoon, while 37 percent snacked in mid-morning, 31 percent in mid-evening and 40 percent in the late night.

Sabert also reported on the increase in percentage of consumers who ranked portability as an important priority. That number had risen to 60 percent in 2014 as compared to 55 percent a scant two years before in 2012.

Ironically, today's grab and go shares one interesting attribute with yesteryear's automats: transparency. The little glass doors customers peered through in automats have their counterpart in today's increasingly transparent grab-and-go packaging. Some believe clear views into a container's food can grow sales by 20 percent.

Prospects for the segment are perhaps best summed up by Technomic, noting it "expects the foodservice grab-n-go market to continue to grow and thrive, especially as best-in-class examples keep increasing the variety and quality of on-the-go offerings. In fact, it might be more appropriate to call the segment grab and grow."

DB

flexible packaging innovator.

"Packaging has to support this trend," she says.

Excelsior's FreshTECH packaging systems integrate advanced packaging technology with post-harvest science to optimize product freshness and extend life.

In addition, packaging has to deliver consumers' expectations for convenience, so Excelsior Technologies focuses on using material to protect the food, while ensuring the provision of fool-proof, added-value benefits like resealability, pockets or carry handles, to make the packaging as functional as possible, she says.

Another trend Eller is noticing is lightweighting, the move to create packaging that automatically delivers savings in energy and transportation and reduces volumes in the recycling stream.

Other trends include non-spill and re-sealable containers and packaging fitting car cup holders, says Dionysios Christou, vice president of marketing at Coral Gables, FL-based Del Monte Fresh Produce N.A. Inc.

"Del Monte Fresh Produce recently developed new packaging for its Del Monte

**A great many food trends are impacting grab and go, among them higher-end ingredients, greater nutritional value and miniature meal-sized portions.**

Fresh Cut Grab-N-Go fruit and vegetable line," says Christou.

The product now comes in tamper-evident packaging with large, clear nutritional panels. The packaging shows the entire product and fits in car cup holders.

In addition, a great many food trends are impacting grab and go, among them higher-end ingredients, greater nutritional value and miniature meal-sized portions.

Horbac is among those emphasizing more upscale grab-and-go items. While \$4 might have been an expected price point four years ago, today it might be \$10.

Sabert offers packages for everything from focaccia to flatbreads, and from Brie to berries. "Consumers are trusting the

food is more upscale," he says. "That's where packaging plays a big role, to allow consumers to see the food is fresh and the ingredients are high end, both of which allow delis to grab a higher price point."

Cross notes consumers prefer fresh food, with fewer ingredients and ingredients they can pronounce. "There's huge opportunity within the deli for growth in grab-and-go, single-serve, nutritious, fresh mini-meals or nutritious snacking items," she says. "And delis are perfectly positioned to fill this demand."

From her cross-the-pond vantage point, Eller believes moves toward local, craft and artisanal items and ingredients are increasingly critical to success. Also noteworthy

**NEW!**  
Two-Piece Paninos



High Protein Snacking,  
Made Easy & Delicious



Contact [cfa.marketing@campofriofg.com](mailto:cfa.marketing@campofriofg.com) or visit [fioruccifoods.com](http://fioruccifoods.com) for more info.

are the use of grains like quinoa and buckwheat that can be eaten hot or cold, and the inclusion of “superfood” vegetables like chard, spinach, kale and watercress.

### Merchandising And Marketing

Merchandising and marketing trends today and in the future will focus on making food an experience, says Eller. Social media has altered and will continue to alter the way consumers interact with their

**Retailers can best position on-the-go items for optimal sales by incorporating eye-catching point of sale on shelves, cross merchandising and improving on-pack labeling information about the product.**



Black Kassel – the shape of feasts to come. Offer your customers the best of European craftsmanship, with savory salamis and specialty deli meats, made using old-world techniques and recipes handed down through generations. Available in unique shapes, for everyday snacks or festive royal gatherings.

OLD WORLD CRAFTSMANSHIP. LEGENDARY TASTE.  
BLACKKASSEL.COM 1.800.265.2627



GLUTEN FREE  
LACTOSE FREE  
NO MSG

favorite brands. Brand owners need to use every Internet of Things (IoT) technology to keep abreast of what consumers want, she says.

“Mass personalization isn’t new; it is still resonating with consumers and that’s one reason why we’ve seen the rise of limited-time editions [that] keep brands fresh,” she reports, noting private label is gaining ground at such a rapid rate that with some retailers it can be hard to differentiate between established and own-label brands. “Packaging has such a huge role to play in this arena.”

Retailers can best position on-the-go items for optimal sales by incorporating eye-catching point of sale on shelves, cross merchandising and improving on-pack labeling information about the product.

“Special packaging designed for convenience and displays close to the checkout and entrance of the store are other great tactics,” says Christou. “We also encourage retailers to be mindful of seasonal demands, such as summer road trips, tailgating and holiday-themed displays.”

### Forecasting The Future

As for the future of supermarket deli grab and go, Davies believes it will cast a brighter spotlight on the food itself rather than the packaging. “There’ll be a trend around material replacement, as packaging that obscures the food is replaced with containers that better allow consumers to see what they’re buying,” he predicts.

Horbac says the future will usher in solutions for smaller meals, more innovative tamper-proof containers and greater use of compartmentalized packaging, allowing consumers to custom create their own snacks of items like crackers, cheese and tomatoes.

In the final analysis, most agree that consumers’ lives will not get any less busy. “Consumers want the best possible quality in the shortest time, and that is the future for grab and go,” predicts Eller. **DB**



# THE REAL DEAL

## With grating cheese, authenticity prevails

BY HANNAH HOWARD

If buyers had to nail down what customers are looking for in grating cheese in one word, it would be ‘authenticity.’ When it comes to both wedges that they will purchase and grate at home, and pre-grated and pre-shredded cheese, consumers are seeking quality brands they can trust.

“We have seen consumers becoming more interested in authentic cheeses and wanting to know where the cheese comes from,” says Mari Meriluoto, director of brand development at Atalanta Corp., a global specialty food importer located in Elizabeth, NJ. “This is in line with Millennials looking for transparency and authenticity in their food.”

The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB), a nonprofit organization of dairy producers, found that convenience, flavor, authenticity and freshness were the top trends in cheese for 2016. This holds

true for the cheese that American shoppers will use to top pizzas, fill quesadillas and melt in omelets; and that’s just the start. When it comes to grating cheese, consumers are seeking out brands they know will be of high quality and without fillers — the real deal.

### The Classics And Beyond

Per capita spending on cheese has increased 37 percent since 2008, according to the USDA, and sales of grating cheese are on the rise. Convincing consumers to buy is key. Marfuggi has seen “a definite increase in pre-grated cheese sales versus wedges or wheels of cheese that primarily are used for grating.”

Consumers are looking for the faster, easier option when it comes to using cheese in their kitchens at home, and skipping the additional step of grating a chunk of cheese is a valuable time-saver. “Pre-grated is a

convenience factor, when you don’t have time to grate it yourself,” says Meriluoto. “In taste, freshly-grated wins.”

With a punchy flavor and grate-able texture, aged, hard cheeses lend themselves to being finely shredded. The quintessential grating cheese is Parmigiano Reggiano, but there are dozens of other popular options. Grating superstars include Grana Padano, domestic Parmesan, other aged cow’s milk cheeses like Gouda and Asiago, sheep’s milk cheeses such as Pecorino Romano, and even goat cheeses like Coach Farm’s grating stick.

When it comes to grating cheese, the “most popular are Pecorino Romano from Italy and then Parmesan, either domestic or imported,” says Philip Marfuggi, president and chief executive of West Caldwell, NJ-based The Ambriola Co., which imports and distributes Italian cheese. Customers also look for cheeses like low

moisture Mozzarella, Pepper Jack, Colby and Cheddar to use in recipes at home. Customers can be directed to “cheeses that come from regions with a long tradition, like Grana Padano or Parmigiano Reggiano,” says Meriluoto.

Novelty is a factor, too. New blends of shredded cheese are being created, and delis can market these for specific applications, like homemade flatbreads, nachos and macaroni and cheese. Other new products include additions like fresh herbs and roasted garlic.

The company mislabeled its product and misled customers to shell out money for what was thought to be Parmesan, not Parmesan laced with cheaper cheese and cheap additives.

The Castle Cheese incident was not a lone wolf. Kraft was sued in California over a claim that its “100 percent Grated Parmesan Cheese” contains wood pulp filler, and a similar suit was filed against Wal-Mart by a consumer who alleged the chain’s Great Value brand “100 percent Grated Parmesan Cheese” contains up to

Parmesan, unlike Parmigiano Reggiano, is not a protected name. So, there are Parmesan cheeses made around the world, most often in the United States and Argentina.

If the cheese has some clumps in it, it’s probably a good thing, say experts, while the type that looks like white powder may not be authentic or high quality.

Cheese is a living, breathing product, so imperfections are to be expected. Grated cheese has a higher surface area and a shorter shelf life than whole wheels and blocks, another reason a whole wedge is a good choice for delis to obtain a longer cheese life, optimal flavor and less risk of any potential issues.

Customers care more than ever about where their food comes from. According to the Chicago foodservice research firm Technomic, 62 percent of Americans are more likely to purchase foods that are produced locally. Consumers want to know how their cheese was made, by whom and if it was sustainably produced. Transparency is a key purchasing factor, especially for Millennials, who are willing to pay more for specialty foods that are sustainable and traceable. Good cheese costs more money, but customers are willing to shell out for excellence.

### **Cheese Makes Everything Better**

Sprinkling Parmesan or Pecorino over pasta is just the beginning. The culinary possibilities for grated cheeses in deli foodservice programs are endless, and a little bit of cheese adds a welcome burst of flavor, salt and depth that can round out countless dishes. Parmigiano Reggiano elevates a simple dish to a special one. Pecorino is tasty shaved over summer squash or tossed in an arugula salad with a lemony vinaigrette. Adding aged Gouda to mac and cheese lends a butterscotch richness, and this cheese also can be melted into buttery mashed potatoes or used atop a gratin. Gruyère or Comté can be folded into quiche or stuffed in roasted tomatoes.

Delis with foodservice programs can experiment, and all stores can provide customers with recipes that include melting grated cheese over enchiladas, making cheese-topped flatbreads with in-season veggies, whipping up a batch of fondue, making grilled cheese sandwiches and panini, stuffing peppers and mushroom caps, baking cheesy breads and biscuits and topping soups, stews and salads with grated cheese.

**DB**



Last year, Bloomberg published an article called “The Parmesan Cheese You Sprinkle on Your Penne Could Be Wood.” If it sounds inflammatory, it’s because it is. The Food and Drug Administration discovered that Castle Cheese Inc., a Pennsylvania company, had doctored its alleged “100 percent real Parmesan” with a mix of cheaper Cheddar cheese and cellulose, also known as wood pulp.

### **Trust Is Essential**

Wood pulp sounds unsavory, but cellulose is actually a common, completely legal food ingredient used as an anti-caking agent that keeps grated cheese from clumping. Cellulose may also appear on a label as “added fiber” and is often found in cereal. The FDA allows cheese products to contain up to four percent cellulose.

Which is not to say that what Castle Cheese did was legal or ethically sound.

10 percent cellulose.

“My feeling is that if cellulose is being used, the label should have to state the percentage in bold letters, not only on the ingredient statement, but also in the product description,” says Marfuggi. “I am not in favor of using cellulose in grated cheese.”

This doubt over what’s really in cheese muddies the water for buyers and consumers looking for quality, honest products. It’s up to deli departments to clarify ingredients and labels.

“Whenever buying pre-grated Parmigiano Reggiano, it’s ideal to purchase the cheese with the Italian consortium’s logo on it where it clearly states Parmigiano Reggiano,” advises Danielle Bolla, co-director of the Consorzio Parmigiano Reggiano USA, based in Italy. “This means it would have been grated in Italy and is certified to have no additives, which are never allowed in Parmigiano Reggiano.”



**BELGIOIOSO®**

# OUR AGING ROOMS

At BelGioioso, cheesemaking is an art. Our American Grana®, an 18-month Extra Aged Parmesan, takes patience to produce. We deliberately choose not to cut corners and aging rooms are our commitment to traditional cheesemaking methods. By aging on natural wooden shelves, our Master Cheesemakers follow the proper steps to ensure what is best for this cheese.

*Available in the specialty cheese section in wedges and shredded cups.*



Aging Room, BelGioioso Pulaski Plant, WI December 2016

f i p y  
belgioioso.com

**M**arieke's Gouda, based in Thorp, WI, entered the cheesemaking business only producing pasteurized product. Seeing an opportunity, the company shifted gears a year later and now solely offers raw milk Gouda.

"We had our Minneapolis distributor conduct demos with raw versus pasteurized product, and people could taste the difference," says Marieke Penterman, owner of Marieke's Gouda. "It may be wishful thinking, but I believe in raw-milk cheese."

This is a product steeped in tradition. For thousands of years, all cheese was made from raw milk, but within just the past century, raw-milk cheeses have been largely displaced by factory-made, pasteurized cheeses.

Recently, however, raw-milk cheese, including Gruyère, Parmigiano Reggiano, Comté, Roquefort and Manchego, has experienced a resurgence in popularity. This has been fueled by a growing number of artisan cheesemakers around the world, along with deli departments, cheese retailers and enthusiasts who are above all drawn to the intense flavor experience that raw-milk cheese provides.

# A Raw Cheese Resurgence?

**With cleaner labels more prevalent, raw-milk cheeses are making headway**

BY NIKKI SIZEMORE AND LISA WHITE

But flavor alone isn't the whole story. These advocates also share a philosophy that supports traditional production methods, and with them the health benefits and a concern for the environment.

"It has to do with a philosophy of life; a philosophy of eating well and having the best taste experience," states Ken Skovron, owner of Darien Cheese & Fine Foods in Darien, CT, which carries roughly 90 percent raw-milk cheese. "If you have mixed vegetation, healthy animals and high-quality milk, you can taste the terroir in the raw-milk and, therefore, in the cheese. When it's pasteurized, the cheese's DNA is essentially burned out, as are the flavor esters, the health value and vitality in the cheese."

Still, supermarkets are unfortunately and unknowingly part of the move toward more pasteurized cheeses.

"Increased requirements for higher levels of food safety audits will see more moves toward larger producers and commodity cheeses that are predominately pasteurized," says Steven Millard, vice president, merchandising and foodservice, at Murray's Cheese, an artisanal cheese and specialty foods retailer and wholesaler based in New York City.

## The Process

In the production of factory-made cheese, milk usually comes from numerous sources, typically grain-, corn- or silage-fed animals. It is then

pooled, pasteurized and standardized to create a uniform flavor.

In contrast, milk for artisan cheese comes from a limited number of sources or a single farm, and its flavors reflect the unique characteristics of a region, climate and herd.

"Milk reflects a certain profile related to location, breed and environment, and this comes through most clearly with raw milk," explains Judy Schad, owner of Greenville, IN-based Capriole, which makes three aged raw-goat milk cheeses. "All things being equal, raw milk will provide more flavor than pasteurized milk. It's not so much about the first flavor profile in the mouth, but what comes in the middle

stringent standards for supporting the diversity and sustainability of their terroir.

For example, the Switzerland-based producers of Gruyère AOP, a PDO product, follow strict production guidelines. As a result, there is one recipe used for this raw-milk cheese, which is refined for a minimum of five months.

"The only way of differentiating it is by where it is refined and how long," says Laure Rousseau, who handles marketing and promotion for Switzerland's Gruyère AOP. "Plus, as it is still hand-made by men, each [cheese] is different."

Also, raw-milk cheeses are most likely to be of the semi-hard or hard variety.

"Mixed milk varieties also are becoming

In 2000, the FDA threatened to ban the production and sale of all raw-milk cheese, but was blocked by a growing number of artisan cheesemakers, enthusiasts and organizations such as the Cheese of Choice Coalition, which fought for the right to continue to produce and consume aged raw-milk cheeses.

Most recently, the FDA dropped allowable limits of non-toxicogenic *E. coli* from 100 parts per million to 10 parts per million, which makes it exceedingly difficult to produce raw-milk cheese. Consequently, producers have to add in layers of testing to ensure cheese will meet these significantly more stringent limits.

Indeed, from a safety standpoint, aged



PHOTO COURTESY OF LE GRUYÈRE AOP

of the mouth and the finish."

Regional variations in soil composition and vegetation lend complexity and a distinct taste of place, or terroir, to raw milk, and later to the cheese it produces. It's important to note good milk starts with healthy animals and soils.

According to Schad, the best milk comes from animals that are allowed to behave naturally, given plenty of space and kept comfortable. This can range from letting cows and sheep graze on plenty of natural pasture or goats to browse on woodland, to avoiding silage and other grain feeds, to providing comfortable straw bedding. Compared with heavily-plowed or chemically-fertilized pastures, naturally-grown fields result in cheese with more complexity and flavor. Plus, many of the great historical raw-milk cheeses, including Gruyère, Comté and Beaufort, have

big," says Cardlos Yescas, program director at Oldways Cheese Coalition, located in Boston.

### The Challenges

Concerns over the safety of raw-milk cheeses have been a controversial issue in the United States for decades. While all cheeses were made from raw milk prior to the industrial revolution, once production moved from small farms to large factories where milk is pooled from thousands of animals, pasteurization became a necessity for eliminating pathogens.

Since the 1940's, the USDA has banned the sale, and later the importation, of raw-milk cheese, unless it has been aged for at least 60 days at a temperature at or above 35°F, at which point any contaminants, such as listeria and salmonella, are thought to be eliminated.

raw-milk cheeses have had a great track record in the United States, with virtually no record of illness. On the contrary, most cases of food poisoning have come from pasteurized cheeses that were contaminated post-process.

Studies by Catherine Donnelly, a microbiologist and international expert in food safety at the University of Vermont, have shown that, unlike raw-milk cheeses, pasteurized cheeses lack the beneficial bacteria to fight off pathogens if contaminated after pasteurization.

"People's immune systems are so sterile, yet raw milk is full of good bacteria that is beneficial," says Penterman.

Marieke's Gouda tests all its cheeses for bacteria, such as *E. coli*, salmonella, listeria and staph aureus.

"The issues are generally the same as any other cheese, including customer



awareness and education,” says Millard. “It is generally advised that pregnant women, the elderly, the very young and those with compromised immune systems avoid raw milk cheese.”

### The Current Climate

Those in the industry say the move in Europe has been increasingly heading toward pasteurized cheese, but this is not necessarily the direction America is taking.

“Here in the United States, we are seeing small to medium cheese producers still focusing on raw-milk varieties, and America is leading in terms of innovation and steadfast determination to protect these products,” says Millard.

Many American cheesemakers have adopted their own environmental standards, such as Andy Hatch of Uplands Cheese Co. in Wisconsin, which makes Pleasant Ridge Reserve. He only produces cheese when cows can graze on healthy pastures. “If pastures become stressed or dry in the summer, we put hay in the fields for the cows to eat, and we don’t use that milk to make cheese,” he says. “Once the pasture is recovered, we’ll start making cheese again.”

When milk is pasteurized, the enzymes and bacteria that produce flavor and aroma are destroyed, neutralizing complexity. Just because a cheese is made from raw milk, however, doesn’t guarantee it’s going to taste better than a pasteurized cheese. Experts agree flavor is ultimately dependent on the skill of the cheesemaker.

Careful attention at every level of production is important not only for flavor,

but also for ensuring the ultimate safety of raw-milk cheese.

Today, it’s easier than ever to find American-made raw-milk cheese. More cheesemakers have adopted artisan methods of production, modeling these cheeses

cheese and, if made from grass-fed animals, is higher in omega-3 fatty acids and conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), a cancer-fighting agent.

“In terms of trends, we’re starting to see a couple cheeses closer to the 60-day mark in terms of aging,” says Yescas. “Cheesemakers are trying to create soft-ripened cheeses instead of the long-term types that are aged six, 12 or 24 months, due to customer demand for fresher, younger cheeses with less prominent flavor than aged cheese.”

Also, precut cheese in cases are more likely to be labeled as containing raw milk, rather than designated unpasteurized, since the latter has more negative connotations to consumers.

“Raw milk highlights that the cheese is different, but it’s also in line with today’s food trends like vegan, fermentation and live foods,” says Yescas.

To garner added attention at the store level, these cheeses are more likely to be showcased closer to where prepared foods are being sold or near the front of the deli department as opposed to the back.

**Careful attention at every level of production is important not only for flavor but also for ensuring the ultimate safety of raw-milk cheese.**

after historical European varieties as well as creating unique, new cheeses that reflect their regions.

The Raw Milk Cheesemakers’ Association is currently comprised of 50 cheesemakers located across the United States, and Slow Food’s American Raw Milk Cheese Presidium includes 30 American-made, sustainably produced raw-milk cheeses.

Consumers are also helping to fuel the trend, increasing the demand for artisan cheeses and spending more for these varieties, which can be pricier than industrialized cheeses due to significantly higher production costs.

Not only are they drawn to the taste of raw-milk cheese, but also to the health benefits. This variety has slightly more vitamins and nutrients than pasteurized

Stores also are creating more space and branding for these raw milk products. One example is Kroger stores, which incorporates Murray’s Cheese Stores within many of its locations.

“This gives consumers a sense of a separate marketplace,” says Yescas. “It’s similar to what Whole Foods first initiated in its locations.”

It’s important to note that deli retailers can benefit from educating staff and customers about raw-milk cheese, including the origin, production process, health benefits, pairings and flavors.

There are options for retailers. “Raw-milk cheeses provide a wide variety of flavor notes and nuances within the product that is often lost when the milk is pasteurized,” says Millard. “These cheeses and the producers are worth saving.”

**DB**



# New Twists On An Old Favorite

## Rotisserie chicken remains a profitable deli staple

BY CAROL M. BAREUTHER

**S**pit roasting or rotisserie grilling meats spun over an open fire is an age-old cooking method. In fact, the world's oldest gastronomic society, the la Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, got its start in 1248 in Paris when King Louis IX created a guild to improve the culinary art of roasting geese. Fast forward, rotisserie-cooked poultry is back in style thanks to a revival begun in the 1980's by the restaurant chain now called Boston Market.

The numbers certainly prove this point. Last year, an estimated 900 million rotisserie chickens were sold of which 700 million were rung-up through retail grocery and club chain registers, according to the Washington, DC-headquartered National Chicken Council (NCC).

What's more, rotisserie chicken represents 7 percent of deli dollars and 11.6 percent of deli prepared food dollars, per data provided by the Chicago-headquartered Nielsen Perishables Group, for the 52 weeks ending October 29, 2016. This same data shows that rotisserie chicken represents the majority (42.8 percent) of deli chicken sales, followed by fried (21.3 percent), wings (16 percent) and appetizers (11.7 percent).

"Tender and juicy, rotisserie-roasted chicken is an excellent focus for any meal and during any occasion. Since opening our flagship store in the U.S., Eataly NYC Flatiron, we have found that the dish is a favorite among customers at La Rosticceria, our rotisserie counter," says Fitz Tallon, executive chef at Eataly NYC, an Italian-themed retailer in Flatiron that has 30 locations



PHOTO BY VIRGINIA ROLLISON

worldwide, five of which are here in the United States.

### What's Trending?

Size, flavor, even where and how chickens are raised are on-trend points supermarket delis are using to differentiate stores from the competition.

"Cooked weight of birds is typically between 36 to 48 ounces or enough to serve four," says Brad Dunn, director of retail deli for Koch Foods, Inc., in Park Ridge, IL. "Programs are trending to larger weight on the rotisserie birds, mostly due to supply and demand."

"Many stores are adding an in-store rub such as lemon pepper or barbecue. Rotisserie chicken with differing flavors and rubs are very popular, and we continue to see this growing in sales," adds Dunn.

Expanding flavors is an obvious way to increase sales.

"A 'Flavor of the Week' can encourage shoppers to take an extra look," says Thomas Super, senior vice president of communications for the NCC. "Also, rotisserie chicken breasts are becoming more widely available. While the breast offering of flavors tend to reflect those of whole birds, it may be time to introduce butter-basted chicken breasts."

Some retailers are tapping into the local craze when it comes to rotisserie chicken programs. A recent trend report from the Culinary Visions Panel, a food-focused insight and trend forecasting practice based in Chicago, IL, shows 62 percent of consumers are willing to pay a little more for food that comes from local producers.

Eataly's rotisserie-roasted chickens are

raised on Zimmerman Farm in Lancaster, PA, where they are fed a strict diet free of growth hormones and preservatives. The chickens also are free to roam. After arriving at La Rosticceria, the birds are brined for six hours, seasoned, tied by hand, and slow-roasted over an open flame.

Eataly retails its rotisserie chicken for \$5.80 per pound.

Beyond local, many chains are now focusing on healthy chicken products that are organic- and antibiotic-free to keep up

includes a growing preference for no-antibiotics-ever products."

It's the theater aspect of rotisserie cooking that helps market these products in the deli.

### Birds On Stage

The look of the equipment used to make rotisserie chicken is becoming an essential part of the selling experience, says Sharon Olson, executive director of Culinary Visions Panel. "There is nothing like cooking on display to gain attention. In a recent Culinary Visions Panel survey, 62 percent of consumers said they liked open kitchens where they can see their food being made."

The importance of appearance, in addition to the smells, is what attracts consumers to rotisserie displays.

"Theater display features of the rotisserie will also be essential in producing impulse buys," says Sarah Millard, senior communications specialist for Alto-Shaam, in Menomonee Falls, WI. If a customer can see the chicken rotating and cooking through the glass, they perceive the product as fresh. Also, the look of the chicken will impact sales. Customers are looking for chicken browned to perfection, so equipment that cooks evenly with a crispy finish is essential."

**Size, flavor, even where and how chickens are raised are on-trend points supermarket delis are using to differentiate stores from the competition.**

with consumer demand, according to Barbara Campbell, director of marketing for the Eaton, OH-based food equipment manufacturer, Henny Penny Corp.

"Rotisserie chickens are going to remain a go-to for today's time-starved consumers, but that doesn't mean they're not going to have the same expectations of grab-and-go food as they do with other items in the grocery cart," says Joe Forsthoffer, director of corporate communications for Perdue Farms, based in Salisbury, MD. "They want to know where the food came from and how it was produced, and that

Alto-Sham debuts its self-cleaning rotisserie ovens this spring. In addition to self-cleaning, new features also include automatic grease collection, touchscreen controls and seven browning levels.

Updated equipment and technology help take the labor out of preparation, while enhancing the merchandising potential.

Some deli operators are moving away from the traditional rotisserie equipment and moving toward combi smokers, according to Alan Sterling, director of marketing for Wayne Farms, LLC, in Oakwood, GA. "These are time savers,

reducing cook time from 1 ½ to 2 hours to 50 minutes, and space savers in the back of house. It also allows the deli to not only prepare rotisserie chickens, but other food items, as well."

There are other equipment options for stores seeking the perfect fit.

Delis without rotisseries or combi smokers can still offer rotisserie-like chicken to customers.

The Broaster Co., based in Beloit, WI, offers its Broasterie chicken, which is marinated chicken seasoned with a rotisserie flavoring and pressure fried. The company sells the blended marinade, seasoning and fryer.

Delis also can diversify offerings in different ways.

By far, hot rotisserie-cooked chicken out sells the cold variety, says Koch Food's Dunn. "Most customers are looking for a hot product that can be consumed immediately. However, some supermarket retailers offer cold rotisserie chickens for those customers that are looking for meals at a later date."

How rotisserie chicken is displayed after cooking is also a key component to driving sales at the store level.

"LED lights and custom graphics on merchandisers are essential to attract customers to the product," says Alto-Shaam's Millard. "Where the merchandiser is placed is also important. The best locations to drive sales include the deli, as well as near checkout lines to encourage an impulse buy for a meal to grab and go."

In addition, timing and inventory are key when it comes to rotisserie chicken sales.

The most successful thing a retailer can do is to make sure to be aware of peak traffic times and cook rotisserie chickens



PHOTO BY VIRGINIA ROLLISON

several times throughout the day, according to Koch Foods' Dunn. The animation of the birds in the oven and the smells that it creates will help draw customers and sell it to them. However, today's busy customers want to get in and out of the store as fast as possible, so if they have to wait until more chickens are done, the chance of losing that sale is great."

### Bundled Meals

Bundling is a classic foodservice technique where rotisserie chicken is paired with seasonal sides and beverages and sold as a meal deal at a promotional price.

Today, many customers are using curb-side or take out at local restaurants for their dinner needs. Supermarkets are beginning to bundle meals to offer the same type of service with hot chicken.

"This includes fresh deli sides like mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, vegetables, fresh bread from the bakery

and dessert," says Dunn at Koch Foods. "If you compare the supermarket bundles to restaurant take-outs, you find that the value is generally greater at the supermarket. Where the supermarket struggles is marketing and communicating the bundle message to customers. Also, keep in mind what the customers think the value is. Is the value the cost of the product or is the value how fast and easy it is to pick up dinner?"

Beyond the traditional bundle, one of the biggest challenges in increasing sales of rotisserie chicken is that it has become a commodity.

"The main presentation is price point," says Eric Le Blanc, director of marketing for Tyson Foods, Inc., in Springdale, AR. "To inspire customers to buy more often requires education and inspiration. That is, suggesting ways rotisserie chicken can be part of a fresh, flavorful, customized meal. The ability to customize is important to attracting Millennial customers."

This is where supermarket delis can expand offerings, creating a destination and increasing sales.

Meal ideas Le Blanc suggests include a Chicken Pesto Croissant; Grilled Chicken, Avocado and Mozzarella Salad; and Rotisserie Chicken Tacos.

"Retailers should consider offering packages of fixings to make chicken salad from rotisserie chicken," suggests NCC's Super. "Consider the very successful growth of the chain Chicken Salad Chick. The fixing packages would be refrigerated, have all the necessary ingredients for the salad except the chicken, and be located near the rotisserie chicken. Buy two chickens and get \$1 off the bundle." **DB**



# DESTINATION DELI

## Cutting-edge offerings satisfy modern consumers

BY SHARON OLSON

**W**e have heard and read much about restaurants within grocery stores in recent years, yet the deli has long been a destination for consumers interested in fresh ingredients and prepared foods. This department has a unique ability to satisfy the modern consumer's seemingly insatiable desire for food experiences. Whether it is offering new contemporary meals or time-honored traditional ones, today's deli can have the power to make your store a destination.

This year's study explored unique aspects of the consumer's food experiences that provide business opportunities for delis. Culinary Visions Panel surveyed more than 1,000 consumers throughout the United States to identify aspects of shopping at the deli that make it unique, craveable and worth the trip.

The deli can be important to the perceptions consumers have about the entire store. Forty-five percent of consumers surveyed said they decide which supermarket they shop at based on the quality of the deli; furthermore, 67 percent believed if the food in the deli is fresh, then everything in the store is better. Seasonal offerings are an important cue to freshness, as 50 percent of the consumers surveyed would order more from the deli if additional seasonal choices were available.

### The Power Of Fresh

Wide arrays of food and salad bars have become a regular feature of many delis today. Restaurant concepts like 3 Greens Market or Bea's Market in Chicago are capitalizing on this popular trend by creating foodservice concepts that feature self-service food bars. These offer

consumers the trifecta of value: freshness, customization and variety. Food bars can be a double-edged sword, as half of the consumers surveyed love them because there are so many fresh ingredients available; yet, 62 percent will not return to a deli if the salad bar is often messy.

### Customer Connection

The deli has a unique opportunity to create personal connections with employees and customers; in fact, 51 percent of the consumers surveyed said they trust their local deli because they are familiar with the employees behind the counter. Trust is one of the most important and elusive aspects of marketing today, and it is an attribute well worth cultivating.

Even though technology is facilitating more and more transactions, personal interactions can make a big difference in customer satisfaction. Sixty-one percent of consumers said they love their local deli because the employees are friendly. Notably, 43 percent said they will usually skip making a purchase in the deli if employees look bored.

## THE STATS

- 1,039 consumers were surveyed around the United States in regards to their food experiences when visiting their local deli.
- Of these consumers surveyed, 32% lived in a 1 or 2 person household, 52% lived in a 3 or 4 person household and the rest lived in a 5+ person household. Furthermore, 37% had no children, 19% had 1 child and the remaining had 2 or more children.
- 82% of the consumers surveyed were between 18 and 54 years old. The remaining number of consumers were 55+ years old.
- The ratio of female to male consumers surveyed was 55:45 respectively.

- Consumers were surveyed in the United States regarding their expectations, attitudes and behaviors at their local deli and various food markets.

### COLOR KEY

- STRONGLY AGREE
- AGREE
- NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE
- DISAGREE
- STRONGLY DISAGREE

Source: Culinary Visions Panel Deli-Destinations 2017

The deli is a place where employee knowledge and competence really matter. Competence goes beyond taking an order and filling it correctly, as 42 percent of the consumers surveyed said they love their local deli because the employees anticipate what they are going to order.

Seventy-four percent of consumers said it is important that the employee behind the deli counter can answer their questions about the food they are interested in purchasing. Among other consumer interests, 63 percent said nutritional information about prepared foods is important. Learning about new foods and preparation methods has become a great American pastime, as 67 percent of consumers surveyed said they love learning about new foods by shopping around markets.

### Slow Food Or The Fast Lane

There is no question that consumers lead fast-paced, over-scheduled lifestyles that demand convenience. More than half (57 percent) said that convenience is more important than anything when getting a meal or snack from the deli. However, there are some things that are worth the wait, especially in the deli where 63 percent of consumers were willing to wait for service to get exactly what they want.

Technology can add efficiency for customers in a hurry who order online or via a phone app so they are able to grab and go when they get to the store. This is the kind of competitive edge that levels the playing field with quick-service restaurants and

makes the deli a desirable destination for consumers who are on-the-go.

More than half of customers prefer quick and convenient options, while others prefer to savor the experience by taking advantage of in-store dining. Some stores make a serious commitment to in-store dining by offering multiple dining concepts and locations throughout a given venue (each offering a different type of experience). In-store seating areas may be more family-friendly, while others are more focused on lunch customers dropping in

artisanal food products sold in their local supermarket deli.

International foods can make a deli a destination for many consumers, which is why understanding the local community's tastes is important. Fifty-four percent of consumers like to shop for authentic international foods at the deli.

Savvy sampling encourages customers to try new items. Fifty-six percent of consumers say sampling is important to them at the deli, and 71 percent say they are more likely to purchase something that

**Technology can add efficiency for customers in a hurry who order online or via a phone app so they are able to grab and go when they get to the store.**

during the workday. Designated adult-only areas appeal to those who want to enjoy a wine or craft beer pairing with a snack to make any evening feel special.

### Surprise and Delight

In general, consumers have expectations that supermarket delis only offer traditional foods. In fact, 52 percent said they would be surprised if the deli in a supermarket had more than traditional American foods. Yet, almost half (49 percent) said they would order more from the deli if more exotic choices were available; additionally, 58 percent said they wish there were more

they may not have considered if a sample is offered.

### Take A Cue From Restaurants

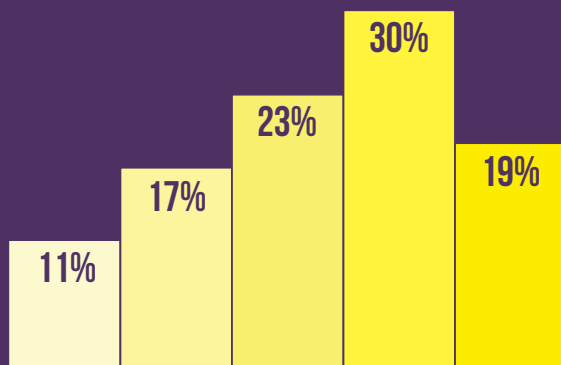
When it comes to food quality, 'restaurant quality' is considered the standard. Seventy-two percent of consumers said they like a deli where the prepared foods are comparable in quality to their favorite restaurant. Forty-four percent said their local deli could become their go-to eatery if the deli had a chef creating the menu.

Restaurants have been the traditional choice when dining away from home, yet, even that may be changing, as consumers

## EXOTIC OPTIONS

49% of the consumers surveyed would order more from the deli if more exotic choices were available.

**I would order more from the deli if more exotic choices were available**

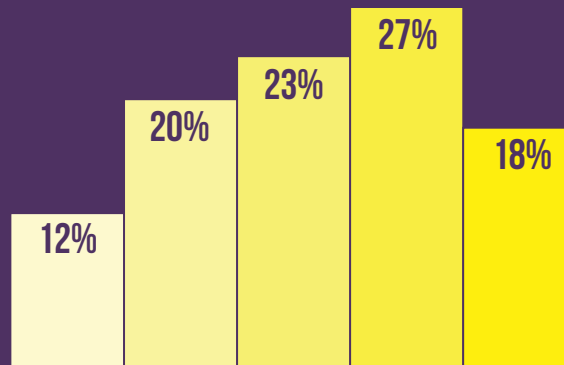


Q: When you chose to dine at home or in a restaurant, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

## DELI DRIVE SUPERMARKET SATISFACTION

45% of the consumers surveyed decide which supermarket they shop at based on the quality of the deli.

**I decide which supermarket I shop at based on the quality of the deli**



Q: When you chose to dine at home or in a restaurant, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

scrutinize the wide array of choices they have for dining on-the-go. Sixty percent of consumers surveyed considered the deli a good option for prepared meals that they could bring to work. With the sandwich as a lunch time staple, it is no surprise that 66 percent of consumers surveyed considered the deli a good option for ingredients to make lunch for work.

Fast casual restaurants have been aggressive at creating desirable and convenient catering options for consumers. Fifty-one percent of consumers said the deli was a great choice for simple catered trays, but nothing more. The opportunity is certainly available for delis to add imagination and appeal to simple catered trays with the wide range of available bread and condiment options alone.

More and more table service restaurants are offering a quick-service window or adjacent space for customers who crave a restaurant-quality meal on-the-go. Separate checkout lanes are a must for supermarket delis offering foodservice, but there may be other imaginative options to get customers thinking about the deli instead of a local restaurant.

Some supermarkets are taking their offerings on the road with food trucks or special pop-up venues to help build their brand and expand awareness of their offerings to a larger community of customers.

### Celebration Destination

The deli is earning its place as a destination for family parties. Forty-four percent

of consumers surveyed said they prefer to order catering from the deli when organizing family gatherings or celebrations.

Although restaurants remain a primary destination for celebrations, 54 percent of consumers would like their deli to offer catered meals as good as their favorite restaurant. The presence of a chef in the deli was another plus, as 46 percent said their deli would be their go-to catering source if a chef was creating the meals.

Consumers are constantly on the lookout for new affordable event venues, and some are even turning to teaching kitchens or organized events at their local supermarket deli to change things up. These experiences can make private parties feel more festive and hassle free, citing these as more imaginative and interactive than the typical restaurant experience.

### Variety & Freshness Prevail

Consumers who go out of their way to patronize a particular supermarket deli mention variety and freshness characteristics more than any other attributes. Food is unlike many other retail categories, where merchants provide a limited assortment of goods in brick and mortar stores and a significantly wider variety online. Food is a personal business and customers like to see lots of choices when they are at the deli. Seventy-seven percent of consumers said they loved delis that have an abundance of options available.

Differentiated offerings are also important to success. When there are too many

types of the same foods available, 49 percent of consumers said they just order whatever is on sale. The majority of consumers (54 percent) agree most of the delis in their area offer similar foods, so it does not matter where they shop. A deli becomes a destination when the product mix is successfully curated.

Markets and food halls are the latest food scenes to draw consumer attention, and there are many aspects of these experiences that can be successfully created in the deli to make it a food destination. The energy of a marketplace draws in customers, as 67 percent love the collaborative energy they find at a food market. Sixty percent like to roam around with a beverage and absorb the whole environment of the market. Shopping and socializing entice consumers to market experiences, with 63 percent of consumers saying they love talking to vendors who are passionate about the food they sell.

The deli is in a unique position to become the destination consumers crave for food and experiences. The secret to success is creating the right combination of comfort and culinary adventure. **DB**

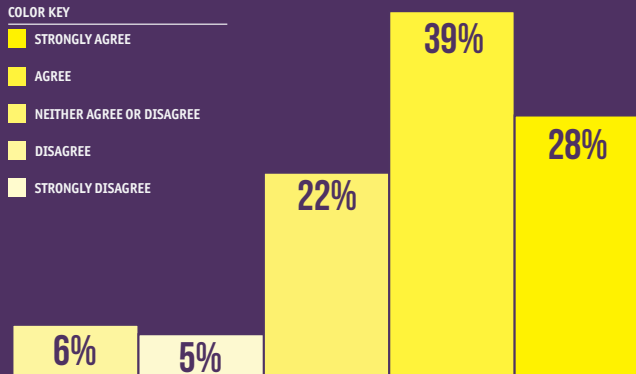
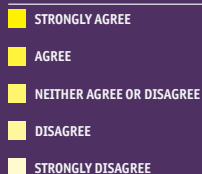
*Sharon Olson is the executive director of Culinary Visions Panel, a division of Olson Communications based in Chicago. Culinary Visions Panel is a food focused insight and trend forecasting firm that provides original consumer and culinary professional research for companies in the food industry.*

## FRESH IMPRESSIONS

67% of the consumers surveyed believe that everything in the store is better if the food in the deli is fresh

**If the food in the deli is fresh, it makes me feel that everything in the store is better**

#### COLOR KEY

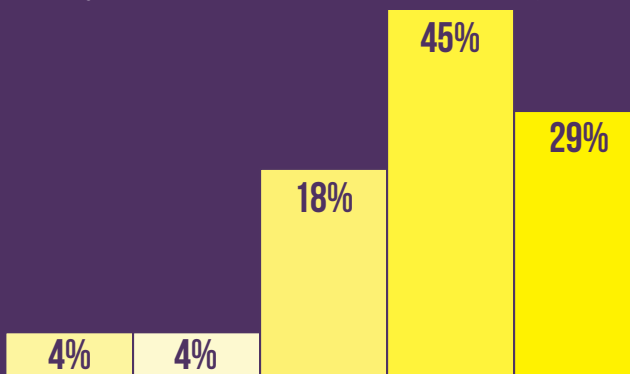


Q: When you chose to dine at home or in a restaurant, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

## EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE IS MEANINGFUL

74% of the consumers surveyed believe it is important that the employee behind the deli counter can answer their questions about the food they are purchasing.

**It is important that the employee behind the deli counter can answer my questions about the food I am interested in purchasing**



Q: When you chose to dine at home or in a restaurant, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

# ***Need Fresh Ideas?***

## **THE REFRIGERATED FOODS ASSOCIATION**

### **Provides Climates *FULL* of...**



**Food Safety & Technical Research**

**Industry Advancement & Development**

**Community, Networking & Events**

***Become a Member Today!***

**[www.refrigeratedfoods.org](http://www.refrigeratedfoods.org)**

**678.426.8175**

**[info@refrigeratedfoods.org](mailto:info@refrigeratedfoods.org)**



***Advancing & Safeguarding the Refrigerated Foods Industry***

# MIXING TRADITION AND MODERNITY



**F**or more than 200 years, manufacturer Beretta has been committed to bringing into Italian homes all the specialties of authentic-cured meats and Italian cuisine on a daily basis. Its products combine tradition, modernity and quality.

The long history is quite colorful. The Beretta family founded the business on May 5, 1812 during the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte. This is when the first factory was established with a notarial deed in Barzanò. It was this first official document that embodies all the passion of two centuries that has remained unchanged together with the group's values, enthusiasm and dedication to the Italian-cured meat industry.

In 1920, Felice and Mario Beretta opened a butcher shop and delicatessen and transformed the meat processing business into an industry in step with the times.

Between 1960 and 1965, following the success of the first supermarkets, Giuseppe and Vittore Beretta decided to expand the company's production activity by investing in and diversifying the production of pre-packaged cold cuts.

The first plant in Italy was established in 1976 and specialized in the production of frankfurters under the brand name Wuber.

In the decade between 1990 and 2000, Beretta started conquering foreign markets; in 1997, a production unit was acquired in New Jersey. Then, in 2015, a new production site was established in Mount Olive, NJ.

The secret of the company's success throughout the many years it has been in business is continuous innovation in response to the diverse needs of an evolving market and its consumers.

Beretta is present in almost all European and non-European countries and is one of the most active and well-known Italian food exporters. "Made in Italy" is not only a brand; it is a harmonious blend of culture and nature, renewed tradition and the genuine taste of quality products. This is why Beretta is the ambassador of Italian products throughout the world.

Today Beretta products are sold in more than 40 countries and the group has four factories abroad.

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](mailto: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
Atlanta Foods International .....	11 .....	Cheese .....	404-688-1315
BelGioioso Cheese, Inc. ....	27 .....	Cheese .....	877-863-2123
Blount Fine Foods .....	39 .....	Soups .....	800-274-2526
Campofrio Food Group America .....	15 .....	Deli Meats .....	804-520-7775
Campofrio Food Group America .....	23 .....	Deli Meats .....	804-520-7775
Castella Imports .....	14 .....	Mediterranean Specialties .....	866-CASTELLA
Couturier North-America, Inc. ....	2 .....	French Cheese .....	518-851-2570
Delorio's Frozen Dough .....	18 .....	Pizza Dough .....	800-649-7612
George E. DeLallo Co. ....	40 .....	Cookies .....	800-433-9100
IDDBA .....	5 .....	Trade Association .....	608-310-5000
National Confectioners Association .....	9 .....	Sweet Snacks .....	202-534-1440
Piller Sausages & Delicatessens Ltd. ....	24 .....	Deli Meats .....	800-265-2628
Placon .....	21 .....	Packaging .....	800-541-1535
Refrigerated Foods Association .....	37 .....	Trade Association .....	770-303-9905

# THE FOUR SMALL WORDS THAT EARN YOU BIG SALES

This one is organic.

Because Millennials are all about making smart food choices, you can earn their business by carrying the Blount Organic line of soups, sides, entrees and sauces. Millennials (and all health-conscious shoppers) can choose from exciting and varied recipes that are USDA certified organic, simple and authentic, and that fit busy lifestyles with heat-and-serve convenience.

For your share of the 75 million-strong millennial market, all your Blount sales rep at 800-274-2526.



[BlountFineFoods.com](http://BlountFineFoods.com)

*Hillary McDonald,  
Research & Dietetic Technician*

**SOUPS • SAUCES • SIDES • ENTRÉES**



SINCE 1950  
**DELALLO**

## *Olives & Antipasti*

Leaders and innovators in the category for over 30 years, our Olive & Antipasti Program is recognized as the best in the country by top retailers everywhere.

OLIVES & ANTIPASTI BAR PROGRAM • GRAB-N-GO PACKAGED OLIVES & ANTIPASTI  
SANDWICH, SALAD & PREPARED FOOD PROGRAMS • INNOVATIVE MARKETING SOLUTIONS

George DeLallo Co., Inc. | Jeannette, PA 15644 | 1-800-433-9100 | [www.delallo.com](http://www.delallo.com) | [@delallofoods](https://www.instagram.com/delallofoods)