

CATEGORY NEWS

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Grocery Spending, Satisfaction Grow

JACKSONVILLE, FL — Consumers report spending an average of \$318.70 per month on groceries in 2014, the highest figure since 2009, and more than half say they enjoy shopping for food, a survey from Acosta Sales & Marketing indicates.

Some 72 percent of Asian Americans, 67 percent of African Americans, 66 percent of Hispanics and 64 percent of millennials report they relish grocery shopping. Consumers say they look for deals (38 percent) and new products (40) on these forays, Acosta claims.

The survey also finds that more than one quarter of consumers review digital circulars before shopping, while 22 percent of shoppers log into a store's loyalty program to update points and trip information following a visit.

"Shopper engagement, combined with improving economic conditions and increased consumer confidence, is giving way to an improved environment for CPGs and retailers to build brand loyalty, introduce new products and grow their businesses," says Colin Steward, senior vice-president.

Peruvian Cocoa Outputs, Exports Show Gains

WASHINGTON — Peruvian cocoa production is expected to reach 70,000 metric tons, a five percent increase, and exports are anticipated to grow 18 percent compared with 2013, according to the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).

The gains are a result of higher prices for the commodity and government programs aimed at replacing the acreage of coca with the chocolate ingredient, FAS reports. Currently, 90 percent of Peru's crop ships internationally. As more acreage is devoted to cocoa, the agency predicts Peru will be among the top 10 exporters.



Snyder's-Lance Launches 'Better-For-You' Division

CHARLOTTE, NC — Aiming to make a stronger presence in the health and sustainability spheres, Snyder's-Lance, Inc. has developed a "better-for-you" division and has increased its investment in Late July Organic Snacks.

Snyder's-Lance
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President and CEO Carl Lee Jr. reports the new division will intensify the company's focus on providing healthier snacks and position it as a leader in healthy snacking and sustainable foods.

Snyder's-Lance also has expanded capacity and improved the green footprint of its Hyannis, MA, Cape Cod potato chip facility through a \$10 million investment. Recent improvements include new cooking kettles and energy-saving upgrades to mechanical systems, resulting in an annual reduction in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to the planting of more than 85 acres of trees, the company claims. Further, it has purchased credits from a nearby solar farm as part of the commitment to reduce greenhouse gases.

The snack maker also is replacing the site's treatment system with a wastewater pretreatment plant that will provide space for future development.

Acquisitions Form Base Of ADM Specialty Ingredients Division

CHICAGO — With the acquisition of Wild Flavors GmbH and Specialty Commodities, Inc. Archer Daniels Midland Co. (ADM) has formed a new division, Wild Flavors and Specialty Ingredients.

The business unit combines healthy ingredient processing and distribution activities and a global network of suppliers for its specialty protein, emulsifiers, natural health and nutrition, soluble fiber, polyols and hydrocolloids products. Wild Flavors and Specialty Ingredients will become a reportable segment beginning January 1.

Formation of the division and the acquisitions are part of the company's plan for improving returns and reducing volatility, according to ADM Chairman and CEO Patricia Woertz. "Consumers around the world are demanding higher-quality, better-tasting, healthier foods with clean labels," she says. "We are continuing to add new product streams to our portfolio to enhance our capabilities to serve our customers as they respond to this demand."

Greg Morris, previously ADM president, North America oilseed processing, heads the new division as president, while Wild's North American COO Vince Macciocchi is the global president responsible for designing its go-to-market strategy, according to ADM.

In addition, former ADM Vice-President, North American Oilseeds Ken Campbell is now president of Specialty Commodities, and Kevin Andreson, previously Specialty Commodities' chief operating officer, has been appointed vice-president, specialty commodities, for ADM. Founding Partner and CEO of Specialty Commodities Larry Leitner is joining the business unit.



WCF, CropLife Combat African Cocoa Pests

BRUSSELS — CropLife Africa Middle East and the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) are partnering to train more than 32,000 cocoa growers in Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana and Nigeria to battle natural threats to the cocoa crop.

The initiative trains select farmers to identify pests, advise growers about management and apply protective agents to plantings.

According to a CropLife spokesman, insects and diseases deplete approximately 30 to 40 percent of cocoa plants in the region annually, and weather conditions attributed to climate change are expected to make the situation worse. West Africa produces 70 percent of the world's cocoa supply, the organization reports.

The project is part of the WCF African Cocoa Initiative, a public-private partnership sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development.