



Official e-Newsletter of the American Personal & Private Chef Association
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From Candy Wallace, Executive Director

If anything good has come from the economic downturn we have all been living through, it is the rediscovery of our homes as the source of nourishment—both edible and emotional.

No longer are people thoughtlessly eating out each night when cooking at home and eating as a family is not only less expensive, but also deeply rewarding on several levels.

In fact, according to The NPD Group’s CREST®, which continually tracks consumer usage of commercial and noncommercial foodservice outlets, visits to U.S. restaurants declined by 3% for

the year ending May 2010 compared to a year ago. Consumer spending at restaurants declined by 1%—the first decline in dollars NPD has reported since it began tracking the foodservice industry in 1976.

The actual number of restaurants in the United States, both full service and quick service, declined by more than 5,200. The fact that more people are eating at home more often is a significant shift in the way Americans are making their food choices today.

Game nights at home have reappeared, movie nights abound and family projects are resurfacing as a source of maintaining the family household and supplying a family experience that comes with tangible results.

Individuals and families are discovering that their homes are no longer merely places to sleep and do laundry before dashing off elsewhere for food and entertainment. It is sad that many people lost their homes as a result of the economic turmoil this country has been struggling with for several years now. The fortunate homeowners who are still in their homes are actually appreciating them more than ever.

How does a personal-chef service fit into this new paradigm?

I talk to potential clients who have spent years eating out and are now interested in spending less, but are not willing to sacrifice health or taste as a result. Many of them actually indicate an interest in learning how to prepare healthy meals for themselves on occasion and are pleased to hear that a personal chef can offer assistance for an individual or even for a “family cooking-class dinner party.”

Other potential clients indicate they would like to obtain information about healthy eating to share with a spouse or their children—enter the personal chef once again. Healthy-eating information and tips are shared and coaching is available for a reasonable fee.

The potential clients who would like advice on how to take their kitchens GREEN and ultimately their households more GREEN are pleased to learn that personal chefs are not only terrific cooks, we are also teachers and advisers who are happy to teach and share for a reasonable fee. Teaching our clients how to use a personal chef effectively and efficiently is no longer the only advising we do.

We can show our clients how to save time and money and reduce stress by using a personal chef, but we can go a step further in several different directions for individuals who want to learn how to use their kitchens as the heart of the home to feed themselves and their families, teach healthy choices, teach skills so their children start off being able to take care of themselves in the kitchen, and give loved ones the opportunity to cook together and enjoy doing so. A personal chef can be not only the source of delicious healthy meals, but can also be the teacher/mentor who can make healthy cooking and eating possible for the inexperienced and untrained.

We can do it for our clients, show them how to do some of it themselves, or teach them how to do it so they can teach their families themselves. Personal service is the key.

What are you doing to support this new discovery of home as the heart of the family?

Candy Wallace

Personal-Chef Training through November 2010

The personal-chef segment of the foodservice industry has expanded enormously and blossomed into a recognized career path, with demand for high-quality food and service growing each year throughout the country. Join us at one of the following scheduled training sessions, where APPCA will deliver a dynamic one- or two-day, high-intensity “Jump Start” seminar or Webinar providing the best tools and educational materials in the industry with which to build a successful personal-chef business. Also, new, in-depth half-day sessions on specific business areas are now offered. Visit www.personalchef.com for complete information.

- August 15, [Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo](#), Los Angeles (1 day, accelerated)
- August 28-29, [San Diego](#)
- September 12, [Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show](#), Orlando (1 day, accelerated)
- September 25-26, [Memphis, Tenn.](#)
- October 2-3, [L'Academie de Cuisine](#), Gaithersburg, Md. (greater Washington, D.C.)
- November 6-7, [San Diego](#)

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Wallace to Emcee 2011 FENI Summit

For a third consecutive year, Candy Wallace, founder and executive director of the American Personal & Private Chef Association, will emcee the annual Summit of the Foodservice Educators Network International (FENI) in Chicago, February 18-20.

Says Wallace, who received FENI’s Medallion of Excellence in 2010, “Just as I founded the APPCA to serve the needs of an emerging and viable career path for aspiring personal chefs, FENI was first to recognize and fulfill the need among foodservice educators for professional development and peer networking. The partnering of our two organizations, given our parallel visions, is a natural fit.”



The FENI Summit draws high-school and postsecondary culinary and baking-and-pastry educators of professional foodservice-training programs nationwide to its annual career-development event. For more information on the 2011 Summit, visit www.feni.org.

Pictured: Wallace poses with Charlie Trotter, chef/owner of the eponymous restaurant in Chicago and keynoter of the 2010 FENI Summit.

The Dirt on Garlic

Media scares over tainted Chinese products have led U.S. consumers to investigate how garlic is produced, resulting in a resurgence of domestic sources—which actually have greater cooking and health benefits. Courtesy of Christopher Ranch

Garlic is grown globally, and has become a critical flavor component for a variety of international cuisines. China has emerged as the world’s leading source, growing two-thirds of global supply. Even in the United States, where California-grown garlic is available year-round, Chinese garlic amounts to well over half of domestic supply. The International Trade Commission reports that Chinese garlic exports into the United States in 2009 alone totaled 145 million pounds.

Most California garlic production is centralized in Gilroy, Calif., known as “the garlic capital of the world.” Gilroy-based Christopher Ranch has been an industry leader since 1956, when founder Don Christopher started farming garlic with a planting of 10 acres. Today, his son, Bill, oversees cultivation of more than 3,000 acres and shipment of more than 60 million pounds annually, distinguishing the ranch as the nation’s premier grower for the fresh market and the only commercial source of heirloom garlic.

It all starts with a single clove, which is planted as seed in the fall. Over time, the clove germinates, a sprout emerges, and the first signs of a new plant are evident. As the plant matures, the original clove falls off and a new bulb begins to form in its place. By spring time, the plant can reach a height of up to 2 feet. In the summer months, the leaves begin to yellow, water is cut off, and the bulbs begin an underground curing process that lasts several weeks. Finally, nine months after planting, the bulbs are undercut (usually by hand) and laid in rows to further cure in the sun and wind. The final harvesting step is to “hand top” the garlic by cutting the roots and stems and placing in storage bins. From there, they are taken to the packing facility to be processed.



Garlic’s A-Peel

Peeled garlic was introduced to the market more than 20 years ago in response to consumer demand for a solution to the tedious but necessary task of peeling cloves. Garlic processors long suspected that there may be a market for peeled garlic, but couldn’t figure out a way to peel the cloves efficiently without damaging them. Christopher Ranch experimented with several prototypes that didn’t deliver the quality they were targeting, and stumbled upon a workable solution by chance when a technician who was cleaning one of the sheds with an air hose blasted some cloves that had fallen into a coffee can. The compressed air, coupled with the rotational movement of the cloves in the can, cleanly removed the skins, and peeled garlic was born. This technology was incorporated into the proprietary state-of-the-art peeling plant on the ranch today.

Most peeled cloves are packed into jars, but some are placed into bins for further processing in either the purée plant or the roasting plant. In the purée plant, cloves can be chopped or puréed for use in foodservice or manufacturing applications. In the roasting plant, cloves pass through a convection oven for 10 minutes at 450°F to achieve a perfectly consistent golden hue and a nutty, mellowed flavor before being cooled under a series of fans and packed.

The convenience afforded by these value-added garlic products has led to a steady increase in garlic consumption over the years. Americans now consume an estimated 3.1 pounds of garlic per capita. This growth in popularity has also been supported by the hugely popular Gilroy Garlic Festival, founded in 1979 to promote garlic and support local charities. Thousands of garlic lovers flock to Gilroy every July to enjoy cooking demonstrations, garlic-topping contests, live music and an abundance of garlic-infused delicacies.

Despite garlic’s increasing popularity, U.S. production has actually declined over the last several decades. Starting in the early 1990s when domestic garlic plantings struggled with disease, Chinese imports have slowly gained traction in U.S. markets. A 376% anti-dumping tariff was implemented to prevent illegal dumping at U.S. ports, but Chinese imports have continued to grow nonetheless. California growers have taken a huge hit during this time, unable to compete with cheaper Chinese garlic that isn’t subject to the same quality, food safety, labor and

environmental regulations. Recent media scares over tainted Chinese products, however, have led many consumers to investigate where their food is grown and how it is produced. This demand for greater transparency, accountability and oversight has led to the resurgence of domestic sources.

Domestic Garlic: Better for You

Analysis in food labs and feedback from consumers has revealed further differences in support of domestically grown garlic. Lab tests reveal that California garlic has 23% higher Brix levels, indicating that it has higher oil content and less water saturation, leading to a better sauté and more concentrated flavor. Allicin, the compound released when garlic is crushed, and likely responsible for garlic's numerous reported health benefits, also exists in quantities up to 19% higher in domestic over imported. "Both our chef and processing customers report that California-grown garlic is two to three times more flavorful than Chinese garlic, negating any perceived price difference," says Rick Dyer, national accounts manager for Christopher Ranch.

This past year, Chinese growers reacted to years of overproduction and low prices by cutting acreage by 50%. This led to a global shortage, which was further exacerbated by the swine flu, causing demand to skyrocket since garlic is widely regarded as a disease fighting agent. The supply shortage is likely to persist until the summer, when new crop becomes available. In the meantime, domestic growers continue their efforts to differentiate California-grown garlic as a fresher, more flavorful and more sustainable alternative to imported product. "Dining trends toward sustainability, locally grown produce and increased awareness about the stories behind our food supply all bode favorably for California growers in 2010 and beyond," predicts Jeff Stokes, vice president of sales at Christopher Ranch.

Despite fierce competition from overseas, Christopher Ranch remains an innovative industry leader, introducing new eco-friendly packaging and adding green garlic to their product line this spring. The new bag reduces source material by 80%, eliminating hundreds of thousands of pounds of plastic and CO2 emissions, while extending freshness and maintaining product integrity. Green garlic is young garlic harvested before the bulb develops, yielding tender leaves with delicate flavor that add a mellow touch of garlic to any recipe. It has been growing in popularity among consumers and chefs, but availability has been limited to farmers' markets and specialty produce purveyors during the springtime. The upcoming harvest marks the first time this seasonal delicacy will be available in markets nationwide beyond the spring.

Five Produce Items to Watch

Berries, now available year-round, are the largest-selling item in the produce department of grocery stores, and the tomato category has been transformed by newly introduced varieties and innovations in packaging. And then there's "living" lettuce. Courtesy of The Perishables Group

The fresh-produce industry has changed tremendously in recent years, most notably with the growth of value-added options, new varieties and the proliferation of branding. The Perishables Group, an industry-leading consulting firm in the fresh-foods business, identified five produce items to watch in 2010. These items are evolving and appealing because they capitalize on current trends such as health, convenience and sustainability. Here are the fresh produce items to watch:

Specialty Potatoes

The foodie movement and the popularity of food-centered media have served the specialty-potato category well. Specialty potatoes add color and size variations to dishes, reduce labor and provide faster cooking times.

Tomatoes

Tomatoes are a staple item in kitchens, but the category is rapidly evolving in terms of variety and packaging. Increasing the segmentation brings greater value to the category. This strategy has transformed the tomato category, which was driven primarily by field-grown beefsteak tomatoes just five years ago.

Tomatoes are growing their image as a healthy and convenient snack thanks to sweet varieties such as the Sugardrop, developed by Tesco, and packaging such as the eye-catching dome-shaped plastic container used for Cherub snacking tomatoes. Eurofresh Farms' Bella Bites are grape-sized tomatoes marketed as a sweet and healthy, pesticide-free snack for kids.



The Kumato tomato, a flavorful brown tomato that has long been popular in Europe, was introduced by Mastronardi into the United States in mid-2009. Mastronardi has already announced that they will double the acreage devoted to producing the Kumato due to its surging popularity. They will also move production to warmer climates so they can produce year-round (Source: *The Packer*).

Contributing to the category's progress, leading tomato suppliers are making efforts to increase education about the best tomatoes for various uses and recipes, as many consumers do not have a clear understanding of these fundamentals.

Refrigerated Juices

Refrigerated juices are in a unique position to capitalize on the growing efforts to eat healthier while still maintaining an on-the-go lifestyle.

Many refrigerated juices offer multiple servings of fruit and vegetables in one bottle that can be consumed almost anywhere (and without a fork or spoon).

Though refrigerated juices are often priced relatively high compared to juices sold in center-store, one bottle is still more affordable than purchasing the equal quantity of ingredients.

Sales of refrigerated juice declined last year, but the products are still growing in distribution. Four of the five top refrigerated juice brands experienced a sales drop over the latest 52 weeks ending Sept. 26, 2009; but still combined to generate \$300 million in sales.

Refrigerated juices also benefit from their ideal fit into the convenience-store channel. A sales rebound in 2010 is likely as the economy continues to improve.

Living Lettuce

Having launched less than five years ago, living lettuce is warranting attention in the leafy greens section.

Grown hydroponically and packaged with its roots still intact, living lettuce has an extended shelf life of up to 18 days post-harvest and its sustainable growing practices require little to no use of pesticides.

Most people can't resist the opportunity to have fresh produce that reduces the impact on the environment and eliminates waste, with the added benefit of a longer shelf life. Watch for this item to grow in sales and distribution this year.

Berries

Though the berry category is a long-time staple in the produce department, it has established itself as a force to reckon with in recent years. Total berry dollar sales increased 58% over the past five years, led by blackberries and blueberries with increases of 122% and 87%, respectively.

Berry sales growth can be attributed to the variety and quality of berries that are available throughout the year. Production expanded domestically, with blueberries experiencing notable production growth in Oregon, Washington and Michigan. Mexico, Chile and Argentina are also growing and exporting berries to the United States, extending the availability to year-round.

A second important factor in the growth of the berry category is the significant presence of organic items. Organic berries account for 5.6% of total berry dollar sales, with organic strawberries representing \$53.8 million last year.

Finally, the super-food trend, fueled by consumers' increasing demands for healthy food choices, helped the berry industry, as blueberries and blackberries have some of the highest amounts of antioxidants of all fruits and vegetables.

Berries are now the largest-selling item in the produce department of grocery stores and were one of the few items that grew during the recession.

The fresh-food industry will be watching closely as the economic recovery continues to develop the second half of 2010, with hopes that any changes will benefit fresh produce industry overall.

Source: Perishables Group FreshFacts® Powered by Nielsen, Five-year Historical Data (Projected to 100 percent total U.S. Supermarket ACV).

Homemade Tater Tots

A palate-specific recipe from Chef Mark Zeitouni, The Standard Spa and Hotel, Miami Beach.

Yield: 4 portions

Zeitouni's Homemade Tater Tots secured the grand prize in the Idaho Potato Commission's Side Dish Challenge held at the 2010 South Beach Wine and Food Festival's Burger Bash this spring. (A \$5,000 donation to Florida International University was made on behalf of Zeitouni.) Says the chef, carefully read the following directions and complete the processes from start to finish without letting the potatoes get cold. It's the warm starch from the barely cooked potatoes that holds the tater tots together.



- 2 large Idaho® Russet Potatoes, washed thoroughly
- 2 shallots, peeled
- 6 parsley sprigs, picked and roughly chopped
- 4 scallions, green part only, chopped
- Pinch white pepper, finely ground
- Pinch sea salt, finely ground
- Vegetable oil for frying

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Place potatoes on baking pan and cook for 20 minutes or until when squeezed the potatoes barely “give.” Remove from oven and set baking pan on top of oven to keep warm for another 20 minutes. (This will allow the center of the potatoes to barely cook so they will not turn brown after shredding. The goal is to have the potatoes barely cooked, but not to the point that they turn to mashed potatoes when grated.)
 2. Peel the potato skin back using a butter knife or similar. Try not to remove any of the flesh underneath the skin, as it will help bind the tater tots.
 3. Using either a shredder attachment on a food processor or a hand grater, shred the potatoes into a bowl. Then press the shallots through the shredder attachment or, if doing by hand, dice finely.
 4. Add the shallots and the remaining ingredients to the bowl and mix thoroughly. The mixture should still be warm and sticky to the touch. At this point, the potatoes can either be pressed into a cookie sheet to a 1-inch thickness or hand-formed into balls of the same 1-inch thickness. Wet your hands or rolling pin so the starch will not stick. Once formed, allow to cool.
 5. Press onto a cookie sheet and cut into 1-inch-by-1-inch squares.
 6. Heat a deep fryer or sauté pan with ½ inch of vegetable oil to medium-high heat and carefully place the tater tots in the oil. Turn the potatoes so all sides are cooked evenly to golden brown. Season lightly with a pinch of sea salt and serve.
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Going with the Flow

Wendy Weller found her passion for cooking on the high seas. On land, she’s channeled that love into a successful personal-chef business. *By Lisa Shames*

Being a chef is no easy endeavor. Whether it’s working the line in a busy restaurant, catering an event in a remote outdoor setting or preparing meals for a variety of clients with a variety of likes and dislikes, it’s not a career for the timid. Now add to that rough seas, finicky refrigeration, kitchens the size of a small closet and limited supplies and you have an idea of what being a chef on a yacht can be like. But that didn’t stop Wendy Weller from pursuing that path for seven years. Back on land—most recently in Sarasota, Fla.—Weller has taken those hard-earned skills and created Chef on Demand. Here’s how she got there.

APPCA: How did you get interested in cooking?

Weller: I learned to cook at my mother’s knee. I’ve been cooking ever since I was old enough to be in the kitchen. I was raised on a working farm, so it was born out of necessity. I didn’t necessarily realize it at the time, but it certainly turned out to be a good skill to have. It led me to where I am now. I didn’t know until I got to be an adult and started working on boats that it was something I had an interest in and something I wanted to do with my life.

APPCA: Why is cooking important to you?

Weller: It’s my passion. I’m not artistic in any other way. I don’t paint or draw. So it’s a great creative outlet for me and allows me to express myself in food.



APPCA: Why did you decide to go to culinary school?

Weller: When I was working on one of the yachts in 1996, the owner of the boat wanted to have a professionally schooled chef. So he sent me to school. I went to The CIA and I took some continuing-education courses for a few weeks.

APPCA: How did you become a chef on a yacht?

Weller: I was working on boats in the Caribbean. I got my captain's license. Then I met my husband [to be]. We were both boat captains, and only one of us could be the captain, so I decided to become the chef. When I started working on boats, I always had an interest in cooking. I would help the chef and do a lot of slicing and dicing and watching what they were doing. Most of the chefs were culinary graduates, so I paid a lot of attention.

APPCA: What was it like being a chef on a yacht?

Weller: You're working 16 hours a day, three to four weeks straight. You're sharing quarters with three to four crewmembers and living in a room the size of matchbox. When I started, I was working on 50-foot boats and later on ones up to 120 feet. Usually we had three to four crewmembers and then we took on anywhere from six to 10 people. I was cooking for the owners, guests as well as the crew. On the other side, the travel was great. I visited some of the world's most beautiful resorts and playgrounds of the rich and famous, like St. Barts and Martha's Vineyard. I worked on boats for about 12 years and was a chef for about seven of those.

A lot of times there are rough seas. On most boats you're working on a stove that has gimbles, which are little bars around the burner that block the pot from sliding when the boat moves. One of the things I had to learn right away was you can't fill pots all the way to the top. If you are in rough seas you try not to cook, but if you have to, you'll cook things that only need to go into the oven. I used to try to do all my cooking before we set sail. I would get up early in the morning and try and get as much cooking done for the day as I could. That way, when we were sailing all day, I wouldn't have to worry about cooking as much.

We used to do deliveries on the boats we worked from the Caribbean to New England, and we'd be out at sea for days at a time. There was one time when all of our refrigeration went down. We were going to be out for a least a week, and this happened the third day. I just started cooking and cooking and then would pile up the cooler with ice from the icemaker machine. The delivery crew was very impressed since they got to have lobsters that were leftover from the charter.

APPCA: What kind of skills did that experience give you?

Weller: I learned how to manage my time and my space. I also became experienced in procuring ingredients from other countries. I learned to take those ingredients and prepare them in a delicious, healthful and safe way. I learned how to plan menus far in advance, but also was able to modify them at guests' whim. There was always a lot of improvising involved. Normally, I would provision the boat before the guests came on board for a week at a time. Then along the way, if there were places to stop, I would re-provision with fresh produce. Normally I would have everything for at least a week.

APPCA: Why did you decide to become a personal chef?

Weller: I decided to become one after my husband and I became land-based. It was a natural segue, very similar to being a chef on a boat, just minus the water. The yachting business has a high burnout rate. Living with other people in a very small confined space takes its toll after a few years. We decided it was time to go on land. After 9/11, the boat business went downhill, too, and we weren't in the mood to wait. So we headed for land, and that's when I started my personal chef business. I started in 2002 when we were living in Texas, and then we moved to Virginia in 2005. Last month we moved to Sarasota. You can be a personal chef anywhere. It's just a matter of getting contacts and referrals and being at the right place at the right time.

APPCA: Describe your business Chef on Demand.

Weller: I do dinner parties, basic personal-chef services, cocktail parties, business lunches. I do food-and-wine pairings when requested. I have clients who are health- and weight-conscious, so I do meals that cater to that. I love to bake, so I like to surprise my clients with a fresh loaf of bread out of the oven. I do that whenever I can, since I think it adds something special to the meal. I also have a huge interest in desserts. That's always the great finishing touch to a dinner party. When I do a cocktail-style party, I do finger-food desserts. When people ask, I tell them my specialty is being able to do anything that the client requests. Adaptability is my specialty.

APPCA: Why do you think you've been successful at it?

Weller: I love what I do and it shows in my product. It's as simple as that. Also, in the places that I've lived—south Texas, Virginia and now Sarasota—there is a lot of tourism. So I cater my business to the vacationers. I'll create a few days' worth of meals or provision their vacation homes. I also locate hard-to-find rental items for them: baby strollers for joggers, special beach chairs or whatever they have a request for. If the people they're renting from can't provide that for them, I will. To get business, I do a lot of marketing to the realtors who rent vacation homes and condos. The people still want the same types of food [as regular personal-chef clients], maybe just not as much. I also do grocery shopping for them so they don't have to. Obviously, in the summertime, there is more of this type of business than in winter.

APPCA: What do you like best about being a personal chef?

Weller: Being my own boss and being able to structure my business to suit my lifestyle. I love not punching a clock every day or having to report to anybody except my clients. I can take on new clients or not. It's up to me.

APPCA: What do you find the most challenging?

Weller: For me, the physical demand. Standing on my feet for hours at a time and the lifting of heavy bags and supplies. But on the plus side, it does help keep me in shape!

APPCA: What have been some of your most memorable accomplishments?

Weller: I've helped put on a party on a sailing yacht for 200 people with only one-and-a-half days to put it together. I was provisioning for a charter, and I got a phone call from someone I worked with, and the first thing he said was, "Wendy, are you sitting down?" I got back on the phone and spoke with the butcher, baker and everyone else and told them to double, triple, quadruple the order. With the help of the crew, I pulled it off. I got rave reviews for it. That's always been a feather in my cap.

I also won an award in Antigua at the 2008 Boat Show for the Concourse des Chefs competition. I was competing against mega-yacht chefs. That was pretty nice.

APPCA: What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned along the way?

Weller: Business is client-driven, and it's about what they want to eat and not what you want to cook. You have to be flexible in a moment's notice. It's all about the client. That's the biggest lesson I've learned.

APPCA: How do you find your clients?

Weller: I've gotten them through the Internet, both the APPCA Web site and my own Web site. Also, I've gotten them through referrals from previous clients.

APPCA: Where do you go for inspiration?

Weller: I do a lot of Web surfing where I'll go onto food and cooking sites. I'll Google restaurants and look at their menus. I'll check out hot new restaurants sometimes, too, but I don't do what they do. It gives me good ideas to keep up with new trends. But there are a lot of bad ones out there, so I have to weed them out.

APPCA: Future plans?

Weller: I plan on doing this for a long time. I just relocated to Sarasota, so I need to build up another successful business in another part of the country. It is a little daunting and a challenge. It's like starting over again. But I do have more experience and knowledge this time around. I know more about it every time. I don't have to stop and think about what I have to do. I know what I have to do. Now it's just a matter of doing it.

APPCA: What skills are needed to be a successful personal chef?

Weller: Time management is a good one to have and, of course, being able to cook and to love it and have a passion for it. It's not enough just to be committed to it; you have to really enjoy it. You have to have a bit of business sense, too. For me, the hardest thing is the marketing. It's important you have the ability to sell yourself. That's harder than anything. Even harder than cooking a meal.

APPCA: Advice for those thinking about becoming a personal chef?

Weller: After you learn what to do, you have to do it. You have to be patient. It won't happen overnight. Don't ever sell yourself short. You have to remain confident in your abilities and work ethics.

For more information on Chef on Demand, visit chefondemand.me or call (941) 962-9007.

Consumer Acceptance of Stevia Is On Par with Established Artificial Sweeteners

Two years after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the use of the natural sweetener Stevia in foods and beverages; consumers' acceptance of Stevia in their diets is comparable to their intentions to consume products with the artificial sweeteners aspartame and sucralose, according to food-and-beverage market research conducted by The NPD Group, a leading market-research company.

NPD's Dieting Monitor, which continually examines top-of-mind dieting and nutrition-related issues facing consumers, began tracking consumer attitudes about Stevia, which is sold under a number of trade names including PureVia and Truvia, in August 2009. According to June data from the most recent Dieting Monitor, 35% of U.S. consumers said that they either already ate or would consider eating or drinking products or beverages that contain Stevia. This compares to 39% of consumers who said the same for aspartame, which is sold under the trade names Equal and Nutrasweet. Fifty-one percent of consumers said that they either already ate or would consider eating or drinking products or beverages that contain sucralose, which is sold under the trade name Splenda, among others.

Stevia is a genus of about 240 species of herbs and shrubs in the sunflower family, native to subtropical and tropical regions from western North America to South America. The species *Stevia rebaudiana*, commonly known as sweetleaf, sweet leaf, sugarleaf or simply Stevia, is widely grown for its sweet leaves. As a sweetener and sugar substitute, Stevia's taste has a slower onset and longer duration than that of sugar. With its extracts having up to 300 times the sweetness of sugar, Stevia has garnered attention with the rise in demand for low-carbohydrate, low-sugar food alternatives. Medical research has also shown possible benefits of Stevia in treating obesity and high blood pressure. Because Stevia has a negligible effect on blood glucose, it is attractive as a natural sweetener to people on carbohydrate-controlled diets.

Foods and beverages using Stevia as a sugar substitute entered the market in 2009. Aspartame, which has recently been renamed "AmnioSweet," has been in the marketplace for 15 years, and sucralose was introduced in 1999.

SIDE DISH

Cheech Marin Questions an Answer on “Jeopardy.” On the March 18, 2010, airing of the long-running TV game show “Jeopardy,” celebrity contestant Cheech Marin of Cheech & Chong fame was given the answer: “Sullivan University offers the USA’s first diploma for personal *these*, who can whip you up a nice Terrine de Canard.” The correct question? “What is chef?” For that, Marin added \$10,600 to his total for the game. Sullivan University in Louisville, Ky., is the first institution of higher learning in the United States to offer a personal-chef diploma through its partnership with the APPCA.

Chefs Collaborative Publishes *Foods at Risk in the Gulf*. Chefs Collaborative, along with project partner and author Dr. Gary Nabhan of Renewing America's Food Traditions (RAFT), announce the publication of *Foods at Risk in the Gulf Coast*. As a result of the Gulf oil disaster, *Foods at Risk in the Gulf Coast*, a booklet containing essays by Richard McCarthy, Sara Roahen, Dr. Lance Hill, Louis Michot, Poppy Tooker and others along with scientific documentation regarding Louisiana’s imperiled food culture, was rushed to publication. “The Gulf Coast is home to America’s most diverse and robust food culture,” says Melissa Kogut, executive director of Chefs Collaborative. “This booklet serves as an important testament to the fragility of that culture in the face of this disaster. We support the Gulf Coast seafood industry and encourage our members around the country to do the same by continuing to buy the seafood that has been deemed safe by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).” NOAA has closed 35% of federal Gulf waters to fishing; hundreds of miles of state waters have also been closed. Chefs Collaborative, based in Boston, is the leading nonprofit network of chefs that fosters a sustainable food system through advocacy, education and collaboration with the broader food community. To download the booklet, visit www.chefscollaborative.org. For more information or for contacts in New Orleans, call (617) 236-5200.

Become “Healthy Chef of the Year” and Win \$10,000 in Prizes. *Cooking Light* magazine launches a nationwide search to find the chef with the healthiest and most innovative cooking approach. The contest, searching for a self-taught or professionally trained chef, launches at CookingLight.com/castingcall and runs through August 14, 2010. Entrants must submit a three-minute prep-to-plate video of a healthy, original recipe on which they will be judged. Four finalists will be chosen from the entries to compete in a live cook-off event at The Taste of Atlanta, October 23 and 24, 2010. The *Cooking Light* judges will select the winner, who will be named the “Healthy Chef of the Year.” The winner will receive a \$10,000 prize package including a kitchen makeover, a year's worth of free groceries and the opportunity to become a contributor to *Cooking Light* magazine and CookingLight.com in 2011. Any and all skill levels are welcome to enter, from home cooks to culinary-school graduates. Entrants must be legal residents of the United States and 21 years or older at the time of entry. Anyone who is paid to cook for a living is not eligible to enter.

Martha’s Back this Fall, Followed by “Mad Hungry.” Executives from Hallmark Channel and Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia in June revealed the original “how-to” programming block set to launch exclusively on the cable network this fall. The slate of new programming is anchored by the debut of the Emmy® Award-winning series “The Martha Stewart Show” on Hallmark Channel beginning September 13 at 10:00-11:00 a.m. ET/PT weekdays. “The Martha Stewart Show,” nominated for two Daytime Emmy® Awards in May in the categories of Best Lifestyle Show and Best Lifestyle Host, will continue to air from New York City with a live studio audience. Named by *Entertainment Weekly* as one of the best food shows on television, Stewart will continue covering subjects near and dear to her heart encompassing all aspects of living. “With Hallmark Channel we have found a perfect home for our programming, and I’m excited that we will be able to offer audiences even more of the informative, entertaining and inspiring content

they want and expect from us,” Stewart said. From 12:00 to 12:30 p.m. ET/PT weekdays, Hallmark Channel will premiere “Mad Hungry with Lucinda.” Lucinda Scala Quinn is the executive food editor at MSLO, host of the radio show “EatDrink” on Sirius XM and author of popular cookbooks including her most recent title, *Mad Hungry: Feeding Men & Boys*. Quinn’s goal with the show is to bring family back to the dinner table. She’ll reveal her tips on how she has conquered the challenge of whetting the appetite of her husband and three sons.

Raisin’ a Winner. It was a proud day in April for Andrea Spring of Bradenton, Fla., as the restaurant owner took Best in Show in the professional division of the 16th Annual American Pie Council® (APC)/ Crisco® 2010 National Pie Championships® for her Chocolate Walnut Raisin Pie. This was the first year the raisin category was available to professional-division bakers and the first time that a pie in the raisin category has ever won Best of Show in the prestigious baking competition. (The raisin category is sponsored by the California Raisin Marketing Board.) The APC/Crisco® National Pie Championships were held in Orlando in conjunction with the APC Great American Pie Festival sponsored by Crisco. This year brought a record number of entries (917) among the four categories. “When I saw that raisin was a new category in the professional division, I really wanted to tackle that because I like the challenge of the new and unusual,” said Spring, who owns the Sign of the Mermaid Restaurant. “I love raisins, but I considered that a 'straight-out' raisin pie may not appeal to the masses. The first time I made the pie I knew the flavors were perfect for the contest. Pairing it with favorites like milk chocolate and walnuts enhances the raisins and creates a very appealing pie.” As Best of Show professional winner, Spring received \$5,000, a new Sears Kenmore range and a Crisco® gift basket.



Not Your Nonna’s Olive Oil. As part of a groundbreaking initiative to introduce super-premium olive oil in the United States, The Culinary Institute of America (CIA) recently launched the Oleoteca® Villa Campestri and related OliveToLive restaurant offerings at its Greystone campus in the heart of the Napa Valley. The Oleoteca Villa Campestri at the CIA at Greystone was created to bring some of the world’s very best olive oils—what many are now calling “super-premium” olive oils—to American chefs and food enthusiasts. Representing top estates in California, Spain, Italy and Greece, these oils are selected for their outstanding sensory profiles and for meeting technical standards higher than those for “extra virgin.” These select olive oils are then handled under the most stringent storage and transportation conditions to ensure a degree of freshness and flavor that will be strikingly new to most Americans. The Oleoteca at the CIA at Greystone will be part of the Marketplace at Greystone’s innovative Flavor Bar, where dynamic and interactive “Taste Like a Chef” sensory and educational sessions give visitors insights into how a chef tastes and uses flavor to create a variety of foods. In the olive-oil session, guests will learn how super-premium olive oils are produced, how to taste olive oil, olive-oil attributes and styles, and how to cook with and store olive oil.

