

Dairy goes gourmet at Fleur de Lait

BY TRISH WILLIAMS

NEW HOLLAND — In this age of ingenuity, consumers are constantly being introduced to a whole array of new food products on their weekly trip to the grocery market. As a result the typical American palate is becoming decidedly more sophisticated, and frankly bored with the same old meat and potatoes.

To help the consumer conquer the ho-hum food dullness, Fleur de Lait Foods of New Holland, has created a line of gourmet dairy products that would tantalize even the most discriminating tastebuds. Culinary delights like Sante Creme Fraiche and Neufchatel cheese are just two of the 35 gourmet dairy foods this young company makes.

Fleur de Lait is French. Translated to English it means, Flower of Milk. Fleur de Lait Foods, Ltd. is a subsidiary of Zausner Foods. Zausner also manufactures dairy products, primarily cottage cheese, puddings and the standard line of manufactured dairy products.

Fleur de Lait was started four years ago to manufacture only gourmet dairy foods and project a more suave international image than its parent company.

Packaging is just as important to this image making as what goes in that package, according to Phillippe Jallon, vice president and director of operations for Fleur de Lait. Complimenting the attractive packaging, are colorful advertising flyers designed for distributors and marketers. The front of the flyer is a full display of the product. On the back suggestions are given for in-store sampling, merchandising ideas, and display ideas, as well as a description of the product.

Fleur de Lait began to sell its products in gourmet and cheese shops. It now distributes nationwide and in Canada through gourmet shops and supermarkets. It is looking at marketing possibilities in several more foreign countries, but the strong U.S. dollar is slowing the export potential, says Jallon.

Jallon grew up in France in his family's dairy processing business. After working for several dairies in France, he came to the United States to work for Zausner. With his eloquent French dialect, he is a natural for promoting the Fleur de Lait foods.

"We are out to be the best on the market," Jallon said. "We have an advantage today, we are the leader

in the market for gourmet dairy foods. Our products appeal to the consumer because they are better quality."

To keep this competitive advantage, Fleur de Lait treats information on how the company develops, creates and distributes their products highly confidentially.

The company has sought a unique market position between imported dairy products and domestic. It touts itself as, "like an import, but fresher and less expensive."

One of the new products developed in Fleur de Lait test kitchens is a reduced fat and salt cheese they named New Holland. The New Holland cheese is targeted at persons on restricted diets. It contains 28% less fat, 53% less salt, and 140% less sodium.

Fleur de Lait buys the milk it uses to manufacture these products from dairymen in Lancaster, Lebanon and Berks counties. The success of this imaginative new company is causing their demand for fresh milk to increase by 30% each year.



Fleur de Lait Foods of New Holland, Lancaster county creates gourmet dairy foods for the consumer who wants something different.

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