



Collaboration Offers Innovations Like Newman's Own's 'Common Good' a Speedier Path to Market

Just one year after Newman's Own CEO Mike McGrath told LiDestri Foods CEO Giovanni LiDestri about an idea for a new line of organic pasta sauces, pallets of finished jars began arriving at Kroger stores nationwide, under the name Common Good.

The product line's speed to market becomes even more impressive upon learning that LiDestri, the Rochester, NY-based co-packer, commissioned a California farmer to grow a specific tomato varietal the two executives selected in an early taste test. Working at the LiDestri Innovation Center, they agreed the varietal beat out Italy's famed San Marzanos. The 1.5-million-pound special order began ripening in the fields in August 2015, and by November, they had been transformed into five flavors of Common Good pasta sauce: marinara, roasted garlic, vodka, tomato basil and arrabiata, packed on pallets and shipped to retail.

"That's like the dream," McGrath says of the one-year conception-to-delivery execution, which also required teams of truck drivers to travel 24 hours a day between the tomato fields and the cooking vats to hit the target delivery date. "I have been in the consumer packaged goods business a long time, and there's no question about LiDestri's ability to get product to market in fast order," McGrath said.



Speeding new products to market has never been more important to grabbing and holding market share, given the technology-fueled compression of today's business cycle. Lower barriers to entry have intensified competition and made the timely delivery of well-executed innovative products nearly non-negotiable for consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies.

While some contract packagers do little more than receive formulas and turn raw materials into product, many, including LiDestri, are taking on an increasingly collaborative role in the CPG innovation process. In 2013, to foster collaboration with CPG and retail brand customers, LiDestri opened its Innovation Center, which includes not only modern test kitchens but also a pilot room, providing a valuable middle step in calibrating formulas between stovetop and full-scale runs. For Common Good, McGrath and LiDestri worked side by side in the Innovation Center kitchens to develop the recipes, cooking their way through a mountain of spices and gallons of extra virgin olive oil.

“In terms of innovation, they are all over it,” McGrath said of LiDestri Foods, whose relationship with Newman’s Own stretches back more than 30 years and includes a close relationship between its founder, Paul Newman, and Giovanni LiDestri. Like the full line of Newman’s Own products, all of Common Good’s profits go to charity.

“He’s trying to help me build my brand,” McGrath said. “To me, that’s the most important thing that a co-packer can do—and, by the way, most don’t do it.”



For more information, or to schedule an interview with LiDestri Foods please contact:

Carrie Miller
Director of Content and PR
IntraLink Global
cmiller@intralinkglobal.com
847-461-3236

About LiDestri Food and Beverage

LiDestri is a premier private label and contract manufacturer of food, beverages and spirits, supplying over 40 million cases of product each year. LiDestri's core competencies include producing aseptically filled, hot filled, cold filled and retorted products in glass and plastic containers for retail and food service customers. Established more than 40 years ago, LiDestri now operates five SQF, level-3-certified, state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities in Fairport, NY; Rochester, NY; Fresno, CA; Lansdale, PA; and Pennsauken, NJ.

About Newman's Own Foundation

Paul Newman was committed to helping make the world a better place. To carry on his philanthropic legacy, Newman's Own Foundation turns all net profits and royalties from the sale of Newman's Own products into charitable donations. To date, Paul Newman and Newman's Own Foundation have given over \$370 million to thousands of charities around the world. For more information, visit www.newmansownfoundation.org.