



**FY 2016 Marketing Plan Narrative  
National Processed Raspberry Council  
For the Period October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016**

**FY 2016 Marketing Tactics**

Beginning in FY 2015, Salt & Company, a Public Relations Agency, was contracted to take the Council's marketing program to the next level. Activities conducted during FY 2015 include Consumer, Trade, and Industry market research surveys to gain an understanding of market dynamics and industry knowledge, an audit of the Council's digital strategy and resources, creation of marketing and issues messages, and introducing processed raspberries to a broader professional audience.

Overall, the consumer marketing research determined that most consumers (82 percent) have positive comments about raspberries including taste and nutrition. Vitamin C was identified as specific nutrition message that rose to the top among the other nutrition claims that could be made. The year-round convenience of frozen raspberries and the fact that they are picked at the peak of ripeness, flavor, and nutrition was also cited as very important to consumers. This research also identified that the NPRC's tag line, "The Taste Your Love, The Nutrition You Want" tested the highest with 36 percent claiming it most accurately described the benefits of eating raspberries. Using this consumer research, a case can be made for manufacturers to use more real raspberries in their product development and it was also revealed that consumers believe a real-fruit certification for packaged goods is very important and they check ingredient labels most of the time.

The trade marketing research found that between 2009 – 2014, raspberry product launches in the U.S. food and drink market increased by 116%, the majority falling within the Snacks, Dairy, Juice Drinks and Chocolate Confectionary categories. 67% of U.S. raspberry product launches were shelf-stable products, 10% refrigerated and 14% frozen. Whether in energy bars or spoonable yogurt, the health benefits of raspberries were relevant, but flavor remained the draw. The pattern is repeated in foodservice, where raspberries currently have limited menu presence, predominantly featured in smoothies, cocktails, desserts and bakery items. The current barriers to raspberry consumption in foodservice also suggest the greatest opportunity. Consumers and chefs tend to consider raspberries a seasonal treat and summer menu item. But the promotion of the year-round availability of processed raspberries could change that thinking.

The overarching goal in FY 2016 will be to increase usage and value of processed raspberries among food manufacturers, foodservice operators, and consumers. The strategy will be to strengthen the understanding of the benefits of processed raspberries through an integrated marketing communications program targeting consumers, health professionals, food manufacturers, and foodservice decision makers. Specific objectives include deepening the understanding of target audiences, updating nutrition data and messaging, developing an arsenal of compelling communications tools, educating target audiences on the benefits of frozen raspberries, and engaging and educating industry members.

## **Public Relations**

A series of Public Relations tools will be employed by the Council in FY 2016, including:

- a. All forms of traditional, electronic, and social media will be utilized to project timely and themed stories highlighting the industry and raspberry's contribution to health and wellness. Simple recipes and usage ideas, including kid-friendly and "mommy and me" tips targeting Millennial Moms, will help stimulate creative uses for processed raspberries. Information on processed raspberry health benefits and usage advantages will be employed to drive home the message.
- b. Attendance at trade shows, conferences and symposia will raise awareness and educate key influencers/decision makers while broadening raspberry's reach.
- c. Trade media relations will serve to raise awareness of processed raspberries and educate foodservice and food manufacturers.
- d. Social media will stimulate conversation, gain recognition for raspberries, and be employed to tap into this immediate, user driven communication format. Proactive monitoring and scheduling of information will serve to keep content fresh. Recipe and cooking demonstrations will deliver a wholesome product image.
- e. Ongoing surveys will establish baseline usage, attitudes, and awareness of our product. Who are our customers (institutional, industrial, consumer)? What do they know/don't know about our products? How do they use them? Answers to these and similar questions will be used to focus program content as well as provide a measure of program success.
- f. Video footage will showcase the processed raspberry industry.
- g. Messaging for the Industry's Crisis Communications Management plan to address industry vulnerabilities and risks will be further developed. Electronic resources will be prepared to assist the industry in the event of a crisis situation. Product samples will be distributed to trade partners or used during trade education events.
- j. All digital resources will be actively managed to optimize the impact of this medium. The Council's website will feature Search Engine Optimization, and site content management to generate a user friendly experience with the regular addition of new content, links to grower, processor, importer websites, and site metrics.
- k. An e-newsletter will be published with information on marketing activity and research findings. Distribution will be to all producers, importers, allied organizations, and interested third parties. The Council's marketing communications program will generate content of interest to readers.

## **New Markets**

The Council will respond to identified opportunities that provide the prospect to expand the market for processed raspberries. This could include new market segments, new products, or new packaging.

### **FY 2015 Marketing Activities and Budget: \$848,600.**

*Salt & Company will implement proactive and responsive marketing communication programs to raise awareness of raspberries in the consumer, foodservice and food manufacturing sectors. Consistent messaging will draw on existing and ongoing research findings. Partnerships with dietitians, media, and health organizations will capitalize on their relationships and reach. Public relations activity will utilize all available marketing tools to reach decision makers and influencers.*

### **Administrative Services: \$101,100.**

**Program Management and Services.** This budget items include a portion of the Executive Director's time and expenses to oversee Agency and independent contractor activities, Council travel to attend and participate in Council and committee meetings to discuss marketing programs, and an allocation of direct administrative expenses necessary to support marketing program functions (printing, supplies, booth maintenance, memberships, and legal services for contract review, trademark registration, etc.).

### **Public Relations and Market Development Programs: \$737,500**

1. **Marketing Intelligence: \$70,000.** In FY 2016, Food Manufacturer and Foodservice Operator Marketing Research will be employed to gain an understanding of current usage and future intentions as well as attitudes about processed raspberries of the trade. This research will be conducted using online surveys sent to the respective targeted audiences.
2. **Communications Assets: \$109,000.** To support collateral development, print messaging, digital communications, consumer and trade promotion, various assets, including but not limited to photography, recipe development and nutritional analysis, videography, development of infographics, product samples, and maintenance of the Council's trademarked identity and trade show booth will be used.
3. **Product Nutrition Data: \$38,000.** In partnership with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service, a nutritional analysis for IQF, juice/puree, and concentrated processed raspberries will be conducted and published in the USDA Nutritional Database. This is important, as trade partners look to this database for accurate and up to date information on the composition of processed raspberries. Part of this activity will be to update the Council's nutritional messages and claims.
4. **Consumer Communications: \$65,000.** Utilizing media relationships developed during FY 2015 and Media RD Ambassadors armed with the most current information on processed raspberries, holding a NYC Food Editor Dinner, and securing paid media placements will carry processed raspberry's messages to decision makers and key influencers to deliver the Council's messages directly to consumers.
5. **Trade Communications: \$92,000.** Similar to the Consumer Communications program, an ongoing Media Relations program will be used to carry our message to foodservice and food manufacturing trade professionals. Attendance at various Trade Conferences

including but not limited to the International Foodservice Editorial Council (IFEC), Nutrition Executive Study Group (NESG), Institute of Food Technology (IFT), Research Chefs Association (RCA), and National Association of College and University Food Services (NACUFS) will help project our message to decision makers. The Council will also reach out directly to manufacturers, operators and Registered Dietitians with product samples and menu/recipe ideation. A key part of this activity will be conducting a Harvest Tour for the trade, modeled on the blogger tour hosted in the summer of 2015.

6. **Health Professional Communications: \$96,000.** Trade Shows are a key part of health professional communications, and allow the Council to gain direct access to an important target audience. Major conferences include but are not limited to Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Food and Nutrition conference and Expo (AND/FNCE), Sports, Cardiovascular Health and Wellness Nutrition (SCAN), American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE), and additional Dietary Practice Groups of the AND. The purpose of attending these conferences is to network with exhibitors and attendees.
7. **Digital Communications: \$130,500.** All Council digital assets and resources will be provided for in this budget item. These assets and resources, including the website and social media, will be used to communicate to internal (industry) and external (trade and consumer) audiences. The website will provide a place to embed video messages, industry news, recipes and usage information, etc. Funds will be used to host, manage, and update the site to keep it fresh, and to provide site metrics. Key search words will be identified to raise the site's presence during searches. To support the Council's Social Media program, graphic interfaces will be created and usage metrics will be monitored. Recognizing how social media is monitored by foodservice operators and food manufacturers to gauge consumer eating and food trends, the Council's Social Media program takes on additional importance and will be used to link and integrate all other communications programs. Recipe contests, themed activities, blog posts, and Twitter "parties" are some of the tactics that will be employed to keep readers informed and actively communicating about processed raspberries. Newly created recipes and cooking demonstrations will provide additional content, and will be regularly cycled to deliver continuously fresh content.
8. **Nutrition Research Support: \$9,000.** Quarterly research summaries will be prepared from progress reports submitted to the Council, and published in the newsletter to inform producers and importers about the status of Council-funded research. From research published in peer-reviewed journals or presented at scientific conferences, new wellness messages will be developed. As necessary, a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be initiated and sent to researchers.
9. **Issues Management: \$12,000.** Funds in this budget will be used to monitor media regarding issues that could impact the raspberry industry and to develop appropriate response messages.
10. **Raspberry Roundtable: \$5,000.** Every other year in association with the Berry Health Benefits Symposium, the Council holds a Raspberry Roundtable, bringing together scientists and marketers to discuss findings from the Symposium and their application to raspberries. The agenda for the half-day post Symposium Roundtable will be "Marketing the Science of Raspberry Nutrition", seeking to identify current research project overlaps with wellness trends to help direct future research activity. Much of the budget for activity

planning was included in the FY 2015 budget. The FY 2016 budget is to coordinate and facilitate the activity by Salt and Company.

11. **Industry Communications: \$10,000.** An e-newsletter will be published with information on marketing activity and research findings. The Council's social media program will contribute a column, along with articles of interest by guest writers. Salt & Company will produce and contribute content to the newsletter. The newsletter will be distributed to all growers, importers, and external partners who have expressed an interest in keeping apprised of industry events. Preparation of materials to support participation and attendance at industry and grower meetings to present the impact of Council marketing and research programs is also part of this activity.
12. **Program Management: \$91,000.** Ongoing program oversight, coordination, and Marketing Committee call support and participation are the main use of these budgeted funds. Additionally, the budget will be used to conduct a Marketing Team strategy session, provide funds for the Salt team to attend and participate in Council meetings, and facilitate planning and budgeting for the FY2017 marketing program.
13. **Measurement: \$10,000.** To gauge program achievements and success all forms of media will be monitored and measured using advanced analytics. Results will be reported to the Council and the industry through either the newsletter or direct reports.

**New Markets: \$10,000.** The Council will respond to opportunities as they arise during the course of the year that offer the prospect to expand the market for processed raspberries. This could include providing information to new market segments, or development of new products or new packaging.