

NATIONAL PROCESSED RASPBERRY COUNCIL

Marketing Committee Conference Call

June 21, 2017; 9:00 a.m.

Committee Members Participating:

Antonio Dominguez Mark Van Mersbergen Loren Kimura
 Eric Larson Brad Rader Jonny Paris
 Scott Boynton

Others Participating:

Tom Krugman Allison Beadle Hakim Fobia
 Nicki Briggs

x = participating o = absent

A. Establish Quorum; approval of minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Antonio and a quorum was established. On a motion by Mark and seconded by Eric, by unanimous vote minutes from the May 16, 2017 meeting of the Committee were approved.

B. FY 2017 Status Report

Allison was asked by Antonio to review current and ongoing activities before launching into an open discussion on Real Red Raspberries positioning. The Ambassador program has gained momentum with raspberries being presented as a “new” fruit, one that hasn’t been in the conversation until recently. Bloggers are enjoying the opportunity to discuss something new, and especially from a frozen fruit perspective. Allison noted that this has raised visibility with consumers, with blogs coming from previous Harvest Tour attendees. She said that it was encouraging to see media attention of frozen raspberries when the predominant focus is fresh market with the approach of the summer harvest season. Blogs are being posted on bloggers own sites as well as on redrazz.org extending their reach.

The press release supporting the recent Experimental Biology conference is under review. Allison explained the challenge in writing about projects that were underway without final published results. A recent article in Environmental Nutrition following the BHBS had included raspberries in the discussion on cognitive health and brain function for the first time.

The last piece of consumer communications was the upcoming filming of raspberry harvest for Blippi’s you tube post. Elementary school age educational materials will be produced based on key points in the video.

Social media ads have boosted viewership and followers on Twitter and Facebook. Allison reported that there were an increasing number of “link clicks”, defined as people clicking on the Council’s website link in the social media post, a good sign that viewers are engaging and looking for more information.

On the trade communications front, McKenzie would be representing the Council at a regional NACUFS meeting in late June. NPRC was a sponsor and had raspberry items on the menu. Loren noted the importance of regional NACUFS conferences as a low cost way and efficient way to network with industry leaders.

The upcoming Harvest Tour includes a contract foodservice operator that specializes in school foodservice. The Council’s bar and beverage menuing program will be debuted during the Harvest Tour. It includes both cocktails and mocktails, and is based on beverage innovation. The Fancy Food Show in New York will present an opportunity to identify premium food manufacturers and make new contacts. Antonio has been invited to join the Council at its booth during FNCE in Chicago this October.

Shifting to a discussion on Real Red Raspberries positioning, Mark asked if the ambassadors view Real Red Raspberries as a premium berry, and if they agree with the positioning. Allison said that while this direct question has not been raised, a review of their blogs and the imagery that has been used suggest a premium product. She said it would be easy to transition from the current discussion to premium branding.

The purpose of the positioning exercise is to articulate and identify the space that can be uniquely owned by raspberries, seeking to create a value proposition where raspberries are a premium product that elevates consumer’s eating experience. Competitive products had been benchmarked to identify how consumers define premium products, what sets raspberries apart, and a communications strategy for each target audience. Allison walked the committee through competitor profiles and attributes that drive emotional connections with products. Antonio questioned the importance of taste versus nutrition. Mark said he believed that taste was the primary driver supported by a string nutrition message. Loren agreed that without good taste, nutrition was unimportant, and that the combination of the two is what sets raspberries apart. He also said that for foodservice operators, the taste becomes an indulgent benefit that can elevate a menu, making the menu seem more “premium” because of its ingredients.

Discussion then turned to the equally important task of raising the perception of raspberries as a premium product and not a commodity among industry members. Loren agreed, noting that in order to be successful, the industry needs to believe that raspberries are a premium product. Antonio suggested that to consumers, food safety should be added as a reason to believe

raspberries as a premium. It was agreed that the Real Red Raspberries positioning piece would be added to the Council presentation at the December Small Fruit Conference.

The next version of the positioning statement will be presented to the committee during its August conference call.

C. Next Call; Adjourn

With there being no further discussion, the next conference call of the committee was set for Wednesday, July 19, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. The call was then adjourned at 10:35 a.m. by Antonio.