



Press Release: March 5, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mediterranean Foods Alliance Launched Helps Shoppers Find Med Diet Foods

BOSTON, MA – Oldways, the widely-respected non-profit "food issues think tank" known worldwide for developing the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid, announced today its Mediterranean Foods Alliance (MFA).

The MFA is a key expansion of Oldways 15-year education programs about eating and drinking the Med way. It is a non-profit consumer advocacy group comprised of companies that make or import Mediterranean products, as well as trade associations with education programs about these products. The Alliance's mission is to improve consumer health by increasing awareness and consumption of Mediterranean foods and drinks in more homes, restaurants, hospitals-in short, everywhere Americans eat

The MFA continues and broadens the scope of Med Mark, a packaging symbol program launched by Oldways in 2007 that guides harried shoppers to healthful Mediterranean products that meet strict quality standards. The Med Mark now appears on over 100 food items, including pasta and pasta sauce, hummus, olives, extra virgin olive oils, dipping oils, soups and avocado oils. The number of products bearing the Med Mark is projected to triple by year's end.

Med Mark founding members include The California Avocado Commission, The Cheeses of France, Al Wadi Al Akhdar, Divina, Gnar Juice, International Collection, Lucini Italia, Sabra Go Mediterranean, GAEA and Villa Cappelli.

"Consumer interest in Mediterranean foods continues to grow because it's an eating style that's easy, great tasting and good for you," said Nicki Heverling, Registered Dietitian and Program Manager of the MFA. "In just the past year alone, more than 100 studies were published supporting the power of the Med Diet, from its ability to reduce asthma in children to helping people live longer, healthier lives. Membership in the Alliance benefits food industry players by deepening their involvement and visibility in this consumer supported food trend."

Initial MFA tools and programs feature the Spring 2008 launch of the Mediterranean Foods Alliance web site. This site offers the ultimate online resource for all things Mediterranean, including an interactive Med Diet Pyramid and an extensive library of recipes. The Alliance will also offer innovative grocery store events like "Cart to Kitchen Med Store Tours," a how-to for stocking a Med Diet pantry at home.

"This recent surge of new studies reinforcing the benefits of the Mediterranean Diet persuaded us that it's time to gather health and nutrition leaders for a high-level conference to synthesize all this new information," said K. Dun Gifford, Oldways Founder and President. "The conference, slated for November, is a bookend to the 15th anniversary year of the Med Diet Pyramid, which we're kicking-off with the MFA launch. The results from this important conference will help us reach even more consumers about the very palatable range of health-promoting Mediterranean products."

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About Mediterranean Foods Alliance

The Mediterranean Foods Alliance was created by Oldways, the recognized leader for a decade and a half in synthesizing the scientific evidence for the benefits of the Mediterranean Diet, and in developing public awareness and other educational programs about traditional Mediterranean foods and drinks.

The Mediterranean Foods Alliance is a non-profit consumer advocacy group established by Oldways to (1) advance scientific understandings of the Mediterranean Diet; (2) educate consumers, journalists, health professionals and others about the Mediterranean Diet; and (3) help consumers find and choose Mediterranean foods and drinks with the Med Mark.

Med Mark is a packaging symbol that helps consumers quickly identify "Med Diet" foods in grocery stores. Since its launch in 2007, the Med Mark symbol has been added to packaging for more than 100 Mediterranean food products such as pasta and pasta sauce, hummus, olives, extra virgin olive oils, dipping oils, soups and avocado oils.

You can learn more about Med Mark at www.mediterraneanmark.org. For fact sheets, images, conference materials and more, please contact Jane Kuby, Oldways Press Office, at 617-896-4888 or jkuby@oldwayspt.org.