

•**Smithfield Foods Inc.**, Norfolk, VA, proposed an "alliance" with **Thorn Apple Valley Inc.**, Southfield, MI, but Thorn Apple Valley's president and CEO Joel Dorfman said the pork-processing company intends to remain independent. Mr. Dorfman also rejected Smithfield's offer to buy all of a \$15 million offering of convertible subordinated debentures Thorn Apple Valley is preparing, and said the company intended to proceed with plans to sell it to the public...*Wall Street Journal* (Mar. 21)

•**Target Stores**, a division of **Dayton Hudson Corp.**, opened its first store in New Jersey—a 124,000-sq. ft. Target Greatland store in Edison—bringing its store count to 752 outlets in 39 states. Five other Target stores were opened on the same day in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and upstate New York. Two more will open in New Jersey, in Cherry Hill and Union, by the end of 1997...*Mass Market Retailers* (Mar)

•**PepsiCo's Frito-Lay Inc.** will start making *Ruffles* and *Lay's* potato chips at a plant in Visalia, CA, that used to make *Eagle* brand snacks. The Eagle plant was closed a year ago by **Anheuser-Busch**. The Frito-Lay renovation may cost an estimated \$60 million.

•**Goodnature Products, Inc.**, Buffalo, NY, has announced the introduction of an affordable, new flash pasteurization system for the small cider and juice producer. The treated product is said to retain its natural flavor, appearance and nutritional value. For information call Goodnature at 716/855-3325; Fax:716/855-3328.

•**Kellogg's Cocoa Frosted Flakes** will hit supermarket shelves in late April. The Battle Creek, MI-based company anticipates that adults will like Cocoa Frosted Flakes because it is cholesterol-free and fat-free. About 60% of Frosted Flakes consumers are older than 18. Supermarket sales of Frosted Flakes, the country's best-selling cereal, fell 11.2% last year, according to **Information Resources**. Kellogg said it plans to begin marketing regular Frosted Flakes in China, India and Thailand.

•**Grand Union Company's** new store format called **MASTERS** ("maximize all space, totally expand the right stuff") will debut in April upon completion of four renovations in Closter, NJ, and in Pawling, Elsmere and Glenmont, NY...*Mass Market Retailers* (Mar. 10)

•**Polk County** will be the first school district in Florida to test recycled vegetable oil as a biodiesel fuel in its school buses. **NOPEC**, the Lakeland company that produces the fuel and is promoting the "Fuel for Schools" program is pitching its program to Hillsborough County schools in April. Districts statewide are being encouraged to try the

alternative fuel. **NOPEC** is recruiting restaurants and theme parks to donate their vegetable oil to be recycled into the fuel. "It absolutely does smell like fast food," said Fred Murphy, assistant superintendent for transportation. But he said it sure beats black smoke filling the air...*Tampa Tribune* (Mar. 13)

•In April, **Ghirardelli Chocolate Co.** will start renovating a 3,800-sq. ft. store in the Disney Village Marketplace in Orlando, which will house its fifth Chocolate Shop & Soda Fountain operation. More than 250 products will be featured at the store, which will resemble a 19th century soda fountain. It is expected to open in September. Ghirardelli hopes to open as many as 15 stores in the next five years...*Gourmet News* (March)

•**Florida Crystals**, a leading producer of natural sugar and rice products, unveiled the first retail certified organic cane sugar ever produced in the United States. It is grown on the company's farm in Palm Beach County, Florida. Florida Crystals' first crop of organic sugar is available only in limited retail quantities. It is being packaged in one-pound clear fluted recyclable dispensers, reminiscent of traditional sugar pourers used at coffee counters.

• Some 47% of U.S. consumers plan to spend more money at discounters this year over last year, revealed **Ernst & Young's** Forecast '97 survey. Only 7% say they will spend less...*Business Week* (Mar. 17)

•If you don't have time to grab a cup of coffee, you can gobble down a new Coffee Cookie developed by **Java City, Roasters of Fine Coffee**, and **California Fresh Baking Company**. The novel cookie is touted as an all-natural, low-fat, high-caffeine "cup of coffee in a briefcase." The Coffee Cookies come in Cafe Mocha and French Vanilla and are topped with a chocolate-covered coffee bean. They are available in all Java City cafes and will soon be shipped nationally to **Home Express, Raley's, Bel Air, and Lucky** stores.

•**Procter & Gamble Co.**, Cincinnati, has introduced **Pringle's Pop Ums** in Kentucky test markets. The tortilla snacks are bite-size and shaped like a Pringle's icon. The snack's oval shape gives it a different crunch than other corn chips.

•**My Own Meals, Inc.** and the **Islamic Food & Nutrition Council of America** co-authored a handbook for the food industry called *Halal Industrial Production Standards*. It is written for companies seeking halal certification or currently producing halal products, as well as for institutions serving a Muslim and Islamic clientele. The book is available by writing to My Own Meals, Inc., P.O. Box 334, Deerfield, IL 60015 and including \$10.00 for postage and handling by check, VISA or MasterCard.