

GROCERY HEADQUARTERS

Wellness leads the way

Grocery Headquarters honors those companies taking important strides in the world of wellness with its 2015 Selling Wellness Trailblazer Awards.

Wellness has been an industry buzzword for quite a few years now, but never before have grocery aisles been able to display such impressive innovation. Between the advancements seen this past year and with a look toward the future, it is easy to see that numerous companies have exceeded or are poised to exceed expectations, ensuring that consumers ring in a very happy and healthy 2015.

A few of the wellness trends that industry observers expect to see take off this year include an increased appearance of whole grains in the gluten-free set, an even stronger emphasis on environmental sustainability and the mainstreaming of holistic wellness. Among this year's award winners are the companies that have pioneered these trends early on, establishing themselves as leaders of the pack. We proudly present those that truly wowed the *Grocery Headquarters* editorial staff and board of retail advisors, earning a Trailblazer Award in one of six distinguished categories.

•International: House Foods America

Years ago as consumers' palates adapted to a wider variety of tastes, House Foods America, a subsidiary of House Foods Japan, sought to bring its healthy, Japanese-inspired foods to the U.S.

Most recently, the Garden Grove, Calif.-based company decided to simplify the process of making a healthy meal with its Wok Me Up tofu and sauce starter kit, that is available in Sweet Teriyaki or Spicy Orange. The product contains tofu and sauce in one package, meaning the chef just needs to add vegetables in order to create a simple, satisfying and nutritious meal.

"House Foods America continues to be a family-friendly company. Delivering smiles and happiness to generations of health-conscious families is our number one priority," says Yoko Difranca, manager of public relations and marketing.

Other notable entrants and companies to watch within the specialty foods category include: Jolly Llama, gluten- and dairy-free frozen treats;

Snikiddy, kid-friendly, veggie-based snacks; World Finer Foods, home to dozens of notable specialty brands including Colman's; Reed's, specially brewed ginger ale, soda and root beer; Noosa Yoghurt; Aussie-style yogurt; and Boulder Brands, better-for-you spreads, nut butters, milks and more.

