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## Organic Food's Role in Foodservice

It probably won't surprise you that in a recent survey among consumers regarding food trends environmental sustainability ranked first.

The words *fresh*, *organic* and *local* led a list, that also included *children's nutrition*, *gluten-free* and *artisan*, of descriptions related to the food people want when they go out to eat.

There is also the issue of non-GMO (genetically modified organisms) food production, which may be the biggest political issue in our industry.

Going green with your menus will assert to your customers that you are a caring part of their community, will enhance and broaden your selection, will improve the quality of your food, and will even improve your top and bottom line.

However you slice it, dice it, blend it or serve it, organic foods are here to stay and should be a part of every menu. Ushered into our consciousness by chef Alice Waters at Chez Panisse in Berkeley, CA, back in the 1970s, organic foods have taken the forefront on restaurant menus in all shapes, sizes and styles.



According to one research group, Sterling-Rice in Boulder, CO, "With increased interest in knowing where food comes from and what's in it, consumers will seek options with optimum health and wellness benefits."

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That means that any restaurant worth its salt should use organic ingredients whenever possible. Perhaps even more than vegetarian and gluten-free options, organic foods provide a choice that customers want to see their restaurants offering. It delivers an important environmental message to your customers that cannot be gauged simply by dollars.

In 2014, the top 10 organic food trends ranged from beans to bugs (!) and included honey, grains and a variety of "superfoods." Staying on top of these trends is essential for all chefs and purchasing executives in order to see how they can make organic foods a part of their daily fare.

Locally sourced meat, seafood and poultry have found a place on restaurant menus. Sustainable livestock includes those that are grass fed and free range. If your restaurant is unable to source locally – for instance, if you are in a landlocked location but want sustainable seafood – you can buy food that has been raised under sustainable conditions.

Artisan foods are now the new buzzword, replacing gourmet. Approaching food in an artisan manner tells your customers you are trying harder to meet their needs. We have seen this trend in chains as ubiquitous as Subway and Domino's. Artisan usually refers to handcrafted foods bought in small batches and made with higher quality ingredients. Popular artisan items include bacon, ice cream and cheese.

Homemade desserts represent a big trend in restaurants seeking an advantage while delivering a message of high quality and low environmental

impact. Wellness can be conveyed through a combination of locally sourced foods and commodity items that have the seal of sustainability.

In terms of GMO's, the foodservice industry does not have a uniform policy on the subject. Chipotle recently announced its desire to eliminate GMO foods. GMO is used in about 80 percent of all packaged food. Corn and soybean are the most ubiquitous GMO foods.

Going forward, determining whether to use GMO foods will depend upon availability, cost and consumer demand. Sysco, for one, stocks an increasing amount of Non-GMO products, including a premium soybean oil called Sustain. Like the entire "green" arena, the evolution of non-GMO foods bears watching.

The main reasons restaurants are turning to organic foods include:

1. **It's the responsible thing to do** – Organic agricultural practices protect the planet by improving soil nutrients, producing less pollution and reducing the need for fossil fuels.
2. **Organic food is in demand** – Once a novelty, organic food is now mainstream. Consumers are

educated about what they are eating and they bring that knowledge and desire into your restaurant. Consumers are very passionate about their organic foods and restaurants need to respond accordingly.

3. **It's profitable** - Even though organic food may cost more than conventional items, consumers are willing to pay more for the opportunity to eat environmentally healthy food. In fact, they will actually cut costs elsewhere to go organic. For them it is not an indulgence but a necessity.
4. **Organic food shows you care** – Organic food is but one-step in a sustainable program that delivers a strong and positive message to your customers.
5. **There are options** – The days of just a few organic foods is gone. Organic chefs can now find year-round organic fruits and vegetables, pasta, baking goods, chocolate, honey, and cheese. Organic is no longer just about green foods but now include poultry, lamb and beef.

Overall, serving organic foods delivers a message that you are connected to your community, both small and large. Most importantly, it is a genuine message of wholesomeness and well-being that cannot be bought or sold in any other fashion.

## Axis Featured Manufacturer

### Udi's Gluten Free Foods

As an Axis Purchasing featured manufacturer, Udi's Gluten Free Foods is the No. 1 gluten free bread and baked goods company in the U.S. Their product portfolio includes gluten free breads, bagels, buns, muffins, pizza crusts, cookies and granola in a variety of pack sizes.

With the prevalence of Celiac disease and gluten intolerance rising, more consumers are looking for gluten free options at their favorite restaurants. Dining out is an enjoyable social experience shared by family and friends, so groups look to restaurants

with diverse menus to include gluten free meals. In addition, Udi's products appeal to a large customer base with other dietary needs, as they offer foods that are dairy, soy, and nut free.

#### **What does this mean for foodservice establishments?**

- An opportunity to gain incremental revenue or avoid lost revenue by offering gluten free options to their guests.
- An opportunity to create a strong point of difference by providing the "best in class" service and offering leading gluten free branded items.
- An opportunity to develop a unique customer base that is loyal, passionate, and vocal.

Udi's Gluten Free Foods is one of more than 350 featured manufacturers offering savings through Axis Purchasing. You can save money through Axis, and increase revenue and profits by selling products from Udi's Gluten Free Foods. For more information on Udi's, visit [www.udisglutenfree.com](http://www.udisglutenfree.com) or contact Axis Purchasing at [info@AxisPurchasing.com](mailto:info@AxisPurchasing.com).



## Customer Profile

### Red Boy Pizza Expands with Axis

If you go to Red Boy Pizza, which is based in San Francisco, Home of the sourdough bread, you have to try the family recipe sourdough pizza crust.

The brainchild of Peter and Kitty Fortsner, Red Boy is a family business opened in 1969 as a 90-square foot operation that capitalized on the popularity of sourdough. (The pizza dough they chose emanated from a mother dough, which originated in 1918.)

Today, Red Boy is still a family operation, but has grown to eight locations and is expanding its chain throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Now owned and operated by the Radwan Family, father, Farid (President), mother Antoinette (CFO), and sons Joseph (CEO), James (COO) and Daniel (Executive-in-Training) run Red Boy. It is truly a family affair.

In order to grow what has become a successful franchise operation, the Radwans know they have to have everything in place, including operations, marketing, menu and training.

"Since 2005 when we bought the company from the Fortsner family, we have opened three new



locations," said James Radwan. "But, in order to grow properly we needed to have our infrastructure in place, tighten our supply chain, upgrade the stores POS and online ordering systems, overhaul the website and create promotional opportunities for our customers."

Axis Purchasing has played a key role in perfecting the systems that will help Red Boy grow properly. James knows that franchisees need a structured, value-added proposition. Axis Purchasing provided the ideal solution, offering Red Boy a program that provided significant savings.

"Axis provided savings we can reinvest in the business," said James. "Axis offers us the ability to compare products that we match against each other for price and quality. They provide a very accessible program that also offers value-added services, like its Sprint promotions. And, they pay monthly which is very important for cash flow."

"Axis Purchasing's program added value to our system," said James. "It has really helped set our company up for the growth phase."

As the company has grown, it has also evolved. The Radwans added a gluten-free pizza to their menu that has been a great seller, and they have added a number of sustainable practices that make them more efficient, contemporary and more green.

"We are constantly looking for produce that is organic, yet provides the greatest value and is operationally feasible," said James about their desire to add eco-friendly practices. "Within the restaurant itself we have added unbleached paper products, upgraded the facilities with tankless water heaters,

added LED lighting and are constantly evaluating the market for organic products that fit our menu and pricing.”

It is not easy to cook a pizza using sourdough. Making pizza at Red Boy is a skilled position that takes a lot of practice and a passion for great pizza.

In keeping with the culture of the San Francisco Bay Area, Red Boy has turned baking pizza into an art.

After 45 years, Red Boy has built a strong foundation for success further enforced by its skilled pizza making process and now by its enhanced purchasing, inventory control and marketing systems.

## Axis Purchasing Teams with Produce Alliance

Axis Purchasing partners with industry leaders to bring our members top quality products and services at the best price. Produce Alliance is the best in the produce industry. They pioneered representation of produce users to the premier grower/shipper community, providing access to the highest quality fresh produce under contracts which assures supply while managing cost and risks.

### Independently Owned Distribution Network

Produce Alliance specializes in providing fresh produce procurement and distribution services to food service clients across North America, the Caribbean and beyond. They manage an alliance of 44 independently owned specialty distributors of fresh products, with combined produce sales of over \$3 billion annually. Each member is carefully selected using the most rigorous qualification criteria.

Every member commits to full compliance with Produce Alliance’s audited distribution, purchasing, and category management programs designed for client success.



Now as with our quality manufacturing agreements, our members enjoy fresh produce management:

- Low Contract Pricing
- Weekly Price Audit
- Quality Control
- Complete Cold Chain Traceability
- Over Payment Collections

Visit Produce Alliance at [www.ProduceAlliance.com](http://www.ProduceAlliance.com) or contact Axis Purchasing to start saving on fresh Produce Today at [info@AxisPurchasing.com](mailto:info@AxisPurchasing.com).

## Axis Supports Broughton Hotels’ “National Make a Difference Day”



Axis Purchasing is proud to support Broughton Hotels efforts to give back to their community via National Make a Difference Day, October 22 2014. On that day, Broughton Hotels will make 6,000 sack lunches and donate to

various charities in Los Angeles, Chicago and the Central California Coast.

As an organization, Broughton Hotels is dedicated to giving back to their community. The first Friday of every month, their home office team of 12 makes 150 sack lunches that they donate to the Orangewood Children’s Home. In April of 2014, their three Chicago hotels decided to take this to a completely new level. With a team of 50 employees, this group made over 6,000 PB&J sandwiches that they donated to various homeless shelters in the Chicago area. Their dedication to their community inspired them to get all their hotels involved and really make a difference.



## Axis Offers New “Opportunity Buy” Program with



JAFCO FOODS services large National/Multi-Unit Food Organizations looking to lower food cost. JAFCO provides quality food and cost solutions, LOWERING food cost as much as 25% - 40% against similar items in distribution. With over 25 years of experience, JAFCO ships an average of 1.5 million pounds of product to over 2,000 locations every month.

**What is an “Opportunity Buy”?** Any item a manufacturer decides is overstocked, imperfect, off spec, or discontinued. Sizing is important to a national chain restaurant that buys on spec.

**Also available are “Ongoing” Opportunity Buy products:** These are items that are contracted with smaller manufacturers at a price that fits your budget. They are always the same pack, box, quality, and size. JAFCO has 85 items always available.

**Quality Assured:** JAFCO’s quality assurance team is at the heart of the organization, making sure all products follow a strict policy that exceeds most distributors in the marketplace today.

**JAFCO is so confident in their services, they offer 100% Satisfaction GUARANTEED!**

**To learn more about how JAFCO’s “Opportunity Buy” Program can save you money, contact:**

### Axis Purchasing

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## About Us

Axis Purchasing focuses on increasing your purchase and operational efficiencies; we bring the right product, at the lowest cost with the most efficient vehicle to your operation.

We offer a \$18 billion group-purchasing portfolio built on 350 foodservice manufacturers – many that you use right now. Our program includes rebates, contract pricing and a deep analysis of your purchases so we can offer options. You maintain complete control, keep your distributor and there are no out of pocket expense.

We are a consortium of experts that complement your existing staff. Our advanced skills include food, disposable and equipment purchasing, multi-level



distribution (systems, broad-line and produce), and operations.

Our happy customers appreciate our true value, not just cheap prices. That is why we have quickly grown to thousands of foodservice locations. Find us at [www.axispurchasing.com](http://www.axispurchasing.com) or call 703-310-7607 TODAY to learn what you have been missing.

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*“There’s only one thing more rewarding than serving the best food...”*

*Serving it at a lower cost!”*