

## New Program Promises Faster Recalls



Photo: Salvatore Sacco, CP Images.

GS1 Canada, together with a coalition of leading industry associations, has launched a new national recall program aimed at enhancing consumer safety and reducing the administrative burden for businesses. The GS1 Canada Product Recall program will complement rather than replace the existing Canadian Food Inspection Agency recall notification process, but

because it offers a standardized communication protocol between participating businesses it will allow for faster, more accurate and efficient recalls. As well as GS1, the coalition includes the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors, the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers, Food and Consumer Products of Canada, and the Retail Council of Canada (RCC). The program will launch in 2010 beginning with the grocery sector. (Above, left) Diane Brisebois, president and CEO of the RCC, and Eileen MacDonald, COO of GS1 Canada, demonstrate the new national recall program.

## The Natural Controversy

Food manufacturers and consumers have recently been trying to define "natural." That's one reason the Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology (CIFST) – Toronto Section held its Fall Technical Session on the issue. The event, held in October, was called "The Natural Controversy."

The question of "natural" is tricky to navigate on several fronts. Most foods have some degree of processing, even bread, which consumers may not realize. For food manufacturers, as Ron Doering, partner, Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP, explained, regulations governing this area in Canada are still ambiguous.

At the same time consumers are unclear on the term themselves, yet are increasingly demanding manufacturers introduce more "natural" products.

## Addressing Canada's Aging Population

If you think you don't need to address Canada's aging population, think again. In 2005 in Canada 1.3 people in 10 were over 65 years of age. By 2056, one in three people will be over 65. And according to the Guelph Food Technology's Agri-Food for Healthy Aging Innovation Breakfast held in late October, this large and influential group will change how we deliver healthcare and how we manufacture food.

In order to meet the needs of this group, the speakers at the event called on industry – from health and agricultural scientists, to food scientists, manufacturers and government – to focus on research. This aging population, which will include people with different levels of mobility and need, will have unique demands nutritionally. And studies show that access to the nutrients they need

can positively affect their health.

For food manufacturers, producers and retailers, this group presents an opportunity. The industry will have to review issues such as how food is marketed to this population, how it's delivered, how easy food labels are to read, how easy nutritious foods are to prepare, and if there is a way to supply pureed foods, for instance, with more nutritional value.

This group will also benefit greatly from fortified products, offering manufacturers an opportunity to formulate new products, and plant and animal scientists and producers an opportunity to alter seeds and feed to enhance certain nutrients. Some examples of areas to research include: foods for cognitive health (omega-3 fatty acids contribute to improved brain function), foods



to maintain eye health (lutein), foods to combat malnutrition (protein), and making healthy foods, such as broccoli and sweet potatoes, easier to prepare.