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END CAPS

UNION, SAFEWAY IRON OUT PACT TO SAVE 700 MARYLAND WORKERS

Teamsters Union leaders, Maryland officials and representatives of Safeway have reached an agreement to stop the closure of Safeway's Collington distribution center in Prince George's County. The agreement will save more than 700 Teamster warehouse jobs and add an additional 25 jobs at the center.

The agreement also paves the way for possible expansion in the future as Safeway's parent company, Albertsons, continues to grow its footprint on the East Coast.

C&S Wholesale Grocers, the firm that operates the Safeway distribution center and employs its workers, originally planned to move its warehouse operations to Pennsylvania, which would have displaced more than 700 workers, most of whom live in Prince George's County.

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**FANCY FOODS
CELEBRATES 35TH
ANNIVERSARY**

AGNE President & CEO Mike Bourgoine To Retire In July

Mike Bourgoine, long-time leader of Associated Grocers of New England (AGNE) of Pembroke, New Hampshire will retire effective July 3.

Bourgoine, president and CEO, will continue to work on finalizing the transition plan with EVP and COO, Mike Violette.

Bourgoine joined AGNE in March of 2001 as EVP and was promoted to COO in 2003 and president in early 2004. He took on the role of CEO, in addition to president, later in 2004.

In making the retirement announcement to AGNE's associates, Bourgoine said, "My 15 years working with you have been the best years of my working life. We have accomplished much in those years together. We have taken little old AG from a small wholesaler among many, much larger wholesalers to a company that is respected and admired in New England and nationally. We not only survived, but

we have also thrived, and it is because we care about our customers, the communities we live in, and each other. I will certainly miss working every day with you as you make AG even more successful."

While he may be stepping down in a little more than five months, Bourgoine was clear about AG's key to the future. "Continued expansion of our product offering and territorial reach to generate growth and prosperity for our customers. The vision for



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Mike Bourgoine

Key Food Moves Ahead With Food Emporium & Gala Fresh Banners

Key Food Stores of Staten Island, New York, a supermarket cooperative with 217 primarily member-owned and corporate grocery stores, has acquired The Food Emporium banner name and related intellectual property assets from A&P. In addition,



brand in the New York market. This is an exciting time for our company as we integrate The Food Emporium and other stores acquired from A&P into our supermarket family."

Key Food plans to expand The Food

Column

NEW CHANNELS REPORT

EDITORIAL



BY JON
MAINWARING
Oneir Solutions

Top Five 'Must' Features For Business Software For Food Producers

food sensitivities in the population, environmental consciousness and PETA agendas.

All this is squeezed against tighter operating margins brought on by extreme weather changes and ever-mounting business fees and taxes.

Legacy stand-alone systems for processing, inventory control, sales and accounting simply cannot keep up.

Here is a list of the most critical

five features all food processors and their distributors must demand in order to keep their companies in the black and out of the courtroom.

1. Readily accessible order placement

A modern ERP system should allow 24/7 order processing options for buyers—whether they represent a supermarket chain, wholesaler or franchised convenience store or

restaurant. The customer should be able to review their purchasing history per period, along with favorable pricing plans and a suggested retail price. The customer must be able place the order on the spot, which would generate an automatic email confirmation and simultaneously forward the order directly to the food producer's warehouse for picking, packing and shipping.

2. Accurate inventory control

Unfailingly accurate inventory control tops the list as the most effective way to contain the damage in the case of a product recall.

By electronically and logically joining what were previously separate functions, the connectivity of enterprise-wide systems facilitates efficiency and greatly improves accuracy. Ingredients can be tracked from their source at the farm or factory, all the way down to individual lots and pallets and put on trucks for delivery to individual stores.

3. Non-stop monitoring

Aside from mandatory FDA and USDA requirements, customers in the distribution channel, and ultimately food consumers, should demand assurance that proper precautions are taken during production. A literal "paper trail" isn't good enough. You need electronic documentation to guarantee food safety.

Look for quality control software in line with Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) policies and procedures. Starting from a production bill of materials, these systems continuously track ingredients, quantities, any special equipment and preparation procedures and quality control sampling, among other critical elements.

4. Customization and scalability

HOW TO FIXTURE FOR MAXIMUM SALES



Horror stories of exorbitant costs, high maintenance fees and years-long implementation snafus have worked to keep many companies from even considering end-to-end software systems.

But with the latest breed of software programs written specifically for the food industry, nothing could be further from the truth. The interoperability and scalability of these new applications allow businesses to add just the modules they need to fit their growth, without breaking the bank.

5. Affordability

What good is any software system if purchasing and maintaining it doesn't provide a favorable ROI (return on investment)? But while food costs have gone up, technology costs have leveled off and in some cases dropped, at least in terms of performance vs. cost. At one time an expensive luxury that only the big boys could afford, complete systems now exist at rates that even small food producers can afford.

For a growing number of food producers the ease of ordering, accuracy, affordability, scalability and user friendliness of these new business management systems means they can grow within their industry without sacrificing functionality, sophistication or their reputation.

Jon Mainwaring is EVP of Oneir Solutions, a provider of scalable ERP software that manages key business functions through one shared information database. Mainwaring has a P.Eng (Professional Engineer) degree and an MBA and has been an expert in ERP software systems for more than 30 years. The company's website: oneirsolutions.com.

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