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The Iceless Leaders*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Star Launches a Sustainable Spinach Bag made with EarthFirst® PLA Film to Wal*Mart

NewStar® is the first produce company to deliver sustainable produce packaging, launching a 10 oz. Fresh Spinach package to Wal-Mart in September, 2006.

Salinas, California, October 1, 2006 – NewStar Fresh Foods®, a Salinas-based grower, shipper and processor of fresh produce, announces the launch of Fresh Spinach packaged in new eco-friendly, socially responsible EarthFirst PLA packaging film. EarthFirst PLA film is manufactured by Plastic Suppliers in Columbus, Ohio utilizing NatureWorks® PLA resin from NatureWorks LLC. Made from Midwestern corn, EarthFirst PLA (Polylactic Acid) packaging film is a bio-based plastic alternative to many petrochemical-based films that can be used in a wide range of packaging applications. The material provides the convenience, look, feel and performance of petroleum-based plastic packaging – while being made from a 100% annually renewable natural resource.

The launch of NewStar® sustainable packaging is a culmination of months of research and application, fueled by the desire of Company Executives to curb dependence on finite environmental resources. “We felt a larger commitment was needed as a Company, as an Industry, to move towards sustainability in agricultural practices, and using EarthFirst PLA packaging film is another step towards becoming greater stewards of the environment,” stated John Killeen, NewStar® Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

The Company’s efforts towards sustainability began in May 2006 with a dual launch of a new Certified Organic line of products, and the introduction of PLA packaging with NewStar® 1 lb. Organic Baby Spinach packaged in a NatureWorks® PLA Clamshell. “In an era of resource depletion, NewStar® is making concerted efforts in corporate responsibility to shift conventional business practices towards renewable resources, and although it’s not the easy thing to do, it’s the right thing to do,” stated Killeen. “Working with Wal-Mart to launch our PLA packaging was a natural fit with their efforts to promote sustainability initiatives.”

PLA Technology

The technology to produce EarthFirst PLA film allows abundant, annually renewable resources like ordinary field corn to replace finite ones (petroleum) in everyday products, such as food packaging. Essentially, PLA resin technology harvests the starch stored in corn into natural plant sugars. The sugar is then fermented into lactic acid, which is used to create clear resin pellets called Polylactic Acid (PLA) that can be shaped into a variety of bottles, containers, trays, film and other packaging.

PLA Sustainability

With the purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), NatureWorks LLC is the first to offer a greenhouse gas neutral biopolymer to the market,* generating 100% less greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) than the material it replaces. In addition, NatureWorks PLA resin offers the most landfill waste diversion options of any current commercial plastic resin. It can be physically recycled, industrial composted, incinerated, chemically converted or land filled. ** The multiple disposal alternatives of NatureWorks PLA resin means it can play a key role in landfill diversion.

PLA Compostability

Unlike PET or any petroleum-based plastic, products made from EarthFirst PLA film have the flexibility to be disposed of in several manners, including commercial composting. The Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) approved EarthFirst PLA film as a compostable material, which undergoes degradation by biological processes during composting to yield carbon dioxide (CO₂), water, inorganic compounds and biomass at a rate consistent with other compostable material and leaves no visible, distinguishable or toxic residue.

About NewStar Fresh Foods®

NewStar® is a leading grower and shipper of foodservice and retail value-added products, a co-brand of EarthFirst PLA film, is considered the “Iceless leader” in Green Onions, and is a leading supplier of quality Spinach and Asparagus. NewStar® distributes its products throughout North America and worldwide, with processing facilities and growing locations in California, Arizona, Mexico, Peru and Chile. NewStar® brands include NewStar, OMO, Young and Tender, and Harvestar.

*Based on the purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates by NatureWorks, LLC. **Composting is effective in industrial compost facilities, where available.
EarthFirst is a registered trademark of Plastic Suppliers, Inc
EarthFirst PLA film is made with NatureWorks PLA resin
NatureWorks is a registered trademark of NatureWorks, LLC.

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