Canola oil American food product of the year

Last year it was big news when Procter & Gamble announced it was switching one of its American vegetable oil brands, Puritan, to 100 percent canola oil.

This year the news is even bigger! The American Health Foundation of New York has named Puritan Oil Food Product of the Year for 1987.

To be eligible for the award food products must show innovation which helps Americans adhere to recommended U.S. dietary guidelines. In response to the award Procter & Gamble said, "Puritan is the only leading cooking oil currently available (in the United States) that is made from canola oil, an oil that has only six percent saturated fat, about 30 percent less that other "health" oils, such as safflower and sunflower."

"We developed Puritan Oil in response to the consumer need to reduce the levels of saturated fats in their diets. Puritan Oil can be an important part of a diet designed to reduce the risk of heart disease," said Paul Drzewiecki, Associate Director of Food Product Development at Procter & Gamble.

Procter & Gamble introduced its reformulated canola oil-based Puritan brand in mid-July of 1986, 18 months after canola oil was granted Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS) status in the United States.

Since the granting of GRAS status exports of canola oil to the United States have been growing by leaps and bounds. For the 1986/87 crop year those exports stood at 69,000 tonnes, double the previous crop year's exports of 33,000 tonnes. For the crop year 84/85, which included the six month period immediately following granting of GRAS status, exports were 11,000 tonnes. In the calendar year prior to GRAS, 1984, canola oil exported for industrial purposes to the U.S. stood at 4,000 tonnes.

The award is just recognition not only of the merits of canola oil but also of the pioneering efforts undertaken by Procter & Gamble in introducing canola oil to the American market. The company has invested considerable time and money into product development, market research and promotion of the reformulated Puritan Oil brand.

From a Canadian canola industry perspective Procter & Gamble's initiatives in positioning canola oil as a healthful food are much appreciated. Not only has the company shown American consumers the benefits of canola oil but its lead has demonstrated to other refiners and end users that there is a role for canola oil in the American market.

"Recognition by the American Health Foundation of the Health benefits of canola oil is a very positive sign for our canola industry," says Les Rankin, General Manager, Commodity Marketing, CSP Foods Ltd.

CSP Foods worked closely with Procter & Gamble for nearly a year prior to the launching of the new Puritan to ensure that Canadian canola oil would meet the exacting quality standards set out by the Cincinnati-based company.

"CSP is proud to be the supplier of canola oil to Procter & Gamble for the manufacture of Puritan oil," says Mr. Rankin.

And the canola industry has every right to be proud that it had the foresight and wherewithal to develop an oilseed which has come to be so widely recognized for its health benefits.

Congratulations...
Procter & Gamble
And congratulations canola oil.