



The Evolution of the Frozen Treat™

Jim Picariello, President
Wise Acre, Inc.
9 Tradewinds Lane
Blue Hill, ME 04614
jim@wise-acre.com
207-374-5400
www.wise-acre.com

Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE

A MAINE WISE ACRE CREATES NATURAL FROZEN TREATS FOR ADULTS

Frosteas gain rapid momentum - from country fairs to national acclaim

Blue Hill, ME (October 14, 2008) How does a guy who majored in philosophy and electronic music production end up creating all natural, frozen tea treats that win national acclaim and has gone from being sampled at farmers' markets to freezer shelves in 500-plus grocery stores?

Think Ben & Jerry's and Tom's of Maine. Like those well-known New England entrepreneurs, Jim Picariello created his Frosteas and Frostbites by accident and necessity.

"I used to drink tons of green tea with honey and rather than waste left-over tea, I froze it," Picariello says. "And, it tasted awesome."

Then, an idea woke him one day at 4 a.m.: "Does anybody sell natural, frozen tea treats?"

Picariello quickly discovered: "Nobody on the planet sells anything like this."

Fast forward two years: Picariello is now founder and president of Wise Acre, Inc. (<http://www.wise-acre.com>), a name chosen for Picariello's irreverent and off-beat business attitude. The frozen treats he used to make in his kitchen (with a stock pot and beer-brewing equipment) are now created in a manufacturing facility he opened this year in the small, coastal Maine town of Blue Hill.

His Frosteas and Frostbites – made from Maine honey, maple syrup and organic teas – are now sold in natural and mainstream grocery stores from Maine to Florida and the Midwest, and heading west.

"Jim has had one of the fastest-growing products I've seen," says Beth Calder, University of Maine food science specialist, who assisted Picariello in formulating his unique flavors.

Surprisingly, Calder says, Picariello's product has done well despite the fact he's spent little on advertising. "From the beginning," Calder says, "Jim has believed in his product and he's made it a success. For him, the sky is the limit and he wants to grow his product as far and as fast as he can."

And, it doesn't hurt that Picariello, Calder says, is as unique as his frozen teas. "You could say he's quirky."

Picariello's friend Joel Walther, offers his own character assessment: "Jim's a cross between Bill Gates and Pee Wee Herman. He's a computer geek and he's got the quirky sense of wonder like a child, which is why I think he's such a great entrepreneur."

Though he's received national recognition (the 2007 Natural Food Expo East's most innovative new product and favorable taste-testing by The Food Network), Picariello's success, his wife says, has required "that he do some crazy things."

Before national food distributors agreed to carry his product, Picariello made deliveries himself out of his 1990 Dodge Caravan. "He'd put our two girls to bed," Jill Picariello remembers, "and then drive all night from Maine to Massachusetts, make his deliveries and head back home."

Now that his delivery days are over, Picariello spends his time looking for investors, along with supervising the employees he fondly calls his "ragtag band of misfits" (including a part-time lobsterman, a former grocery clerk, an ex-innkeeper and a rock guitarist who doubles as the "fix-it guy").

At the Blue Hill plant, where cussing is encouraged and laughter is mandated, his 500-gallon tanks mix up 24,000 Frosteas in one shift – a far cry from the 300 treats Picariello used to make in his kitchen in two days.

His new production plant also offers Picariello the chance to expand his market. The 37-year-old entrepreneur hopes to sell his healthy Frosteas to schools, hospitals, gyms and bars. And, his Cool Your Jets flavor, loaded with soothing chamomile and spearmint is a perfect antidote, Picariello says, to calm the nation's financial jitters.

"Our frozen treats taste great blended with vodka or gin," Picariello says. "What better way to forget about the economic crisis than to calm your nerves with a Maine Maple Lemon Frostbite tossed in a glass of vodka!"

###