

25th Anniversary Year

2012 marks a significant milestone in the history of Ross Organic as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary. Back in 1987, Bill Ross started our business with a dream of bringing customers in the Western U.S. world class ingredients from world class suppliers with the highest degree of ethics, service and professionalism. Over the years, Bill's dedication and devotion to growing this business on behalf of our customers and employees has been both impressive and inspiring. Fast-forward twenty-five years, one new century and even a new millennium and the company has become more than he ever could have ever imagined.

When asked how he feels about this anniversary, Bill remarks "I am amazed at what we've accomplished, what we've survived and what we've become as a company. When I started the company, I never thought about who we'd be in twenty-five years. I don't think I could have visualized this". Nor could he have visualized that his two daughters, grade-schoolers at the time, would come to join the company and subsequently help run the company today.

"Even though we are celebrating our 25th year in business, we feel that there is still so much to accomplish " remarked daughter, Erin Coulter, Business Manager, "Our plan has been to take this foundation and good fortune and build it into something even greater". And as daughter, Stephanie Ross Leshney, VP Sales & Marketing concludes, "We are so proud of our father and what he has meant to us, our family and the families of team members. If you think our 25th Anniversary party is going to be fun, wait for our 50th!"



Year in Review - 2011 "The Amazing Race"

2011 was undoubtedly the fastest-paced business year in our twenty-five year history. As we dashed from challenge to challenge, tracking down leads and drumming up work it was like a twelve month episode of The Amazing Race! And while we won some challenges and lost some others in 2011, we are ending on a positive note and have never felt more blessed to be in the position we are in. We are fortunate to have ended our year with such remarkable pace, knowing that two years ago things were very different. One of the few positives of lasting through the worst economy in our company's history, is that we have a newfound appreciation for being busy and being back in growth mode. Maybe it's not The Amazing Race after all...it's an endless season of Survivor!

In all seriousness, we must first give thanks to our customers, large and small, for choosing Ross Organic when faced with ingredient choices. Every single order, from the pail to the truckload, - your support means so much to the entire Ross Organic family. Second, thanks to our supplier partners, our Principals, for their trust and unwavering support of Ross Organic. Last, but certainly not least we must thank our employees and team members for working tirelessly day in and day out this last year. There is no doubt they "left it all on the field"...

In 2011, we also welcomed three new suppliers to our mix- Naolys, Arizona Chemical and Gelest PCS. We welcomed four new employees, Robyn Bowlby, Inside Sales, Tammy Hatanaka, Sample Coordinator, Hayley Hoffman, Technical Sales, and Leslie Ching, Technical Sales. We also created two new roles internally - Technical Manager, Kimerly Prince and Sales Coordinator, Angela Castlen.

The year was full with heavy workloads but we found time to make memorable moments at some of our company events. Amber Lira surprised all with her Black Swan costume as she won the prized Halloween Costume Contest. Sandy Lee did it again, winning our Annual Cookie & Candy Exchange (recipe on page 5). Will 2012 be her three-peat year? And lastly, we all had our moment as "Kings of the World" as we posed for a Holiday picture at the bow of the Queen Mary in the Long Beach Harbor.

I hope that in 2012 you'll all continue to follow us on our website, rossorg.com, where we post regular newsfeed articles about our business, our products and supplier news as well as in these quarterly newsletters. Communication and information exchange have been the hallmarks of this business founded 25 years ago - we hope we can continue to share the exciting technological developments and continue to help make the Western U.S. the most exciting and innovative environment in our industry.

On behalf of the entire team here at Ross Organic, Happy New Year and Best Wishes for a Healthy and Successful 2012!

-Bill



Ceapro, Inc.

Selects ROSS for the Western Region

We are pleased to announce that Ross Organic has reached an agreement with Ceapro, Inc. to represent their line of certified all natural active ingredients in the western region. Ceapro Inc. is a Canadian biotechnology company involved in the development and commercialization of natural products for personal care and cosmetic industries using proprietary technology and natural, renewable resources. The commercial line of natural active ingredients include beta glucan, avenanthramides (colloidal oat extract), colloidal oat flour, oat oil, oat peptides, and lupin peptides.

Bill Ross, President of Ross Organic, remarked "We've long known that oat derivatives possess interesting cosmetic properties as anti-irritants. Ceapro's fractions from the oat and other natural sources are truly revolutionary technologies. In our representation of Ceapro, we are aligned with a technology-driven company. This newfound relationship will ensure a continual supply of novel and unique ingredients to our client base."

Ceapro Chief Scientific Officer, David Fielder remarked "With a focus on the customer first approach and strong track record in delivering high quality specialty ingredients to the Cosmetic & Personal Care industry, Ross Organic is a natural fit for Ceapro."

"Ross Organic Specialty Sales is amongst the few distributors with demonstrated technical capabilities to sell and support Ceapro's innovative products and also impart the science behind them. We are very confident that the team at Ross Organic will open new doors for Ceapro's portfolio of certified botanical ingredients." added Fielder.



ROSS Expands Sales Team

In an effort to better serve our growing customer base, we have expanded our sales operations with the addition of a new sales representative. Leslie Ching, Technical Sales Representative, is now responsible for customers in the southern California region as well as the states of Washington and Oregon.

Prior to coming on board with Ross Organic, Ching worked for a reputable specialty chemical distributor in the southern California region. Ching graduated from California State University - Northridge where she earned her degree in Biology and was a member of the NCAA Division I Cross Country and Track Program.

"Ross Organic is very pleased to have Leslie on board," said Richard Hersey, Director of Sales. "Leslie rounds out our technical selling team and her addition will allow greater account coverage". With Leslie Ching on board, the Ross Organic sales team is now comprised of seven members.



Newsletter Contest:

Find the ROSS Ladybug

Can you find the ROSS Ladybug? It is hiding here somewhere in The Source. Email your answer to info@rossorg.com with subject line "ROSS Newsletter Contest" and you will be eligible to win a special prize (over 50\$ value).



eNewsletter - Sign Up

It's easy to be informed. Sign up for ROSS Organic's "The Informer" eNewsletter by visiting www.rossorg.com



NACD Annual Meeting 2011: Celebrating 40 Years of Stewardship

NACD celebrated its 40th anniversary at this year's Annual Meeting in Bonita Springs, FL. Attendees participated in a number of dynamic presentations that covered a range of topics, including the economic and financial forecast for the U.S., balancing work and life from a leadership perspective, effective negotiation, and providing excellence in customer interaction.



The final session was highlighted by a lively, insightful and anti-partisan keynote speech by James Carville, Political Contributor and Commentator for CNN. He provided a most provocative discussion on the current political climate and the outlook for the upcoming Presidential election. Members who support the advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C. by contributing to the Responsible Distribution PAC were invited to a private discussion and photo session with Mr. Carville.



Photo: Susan Nicholls-Billheimer, member of the Government Affairs committee and newly elected Director at Large and husband, Alan, with Mr. Carville

Rheomer® 33 - The Choice is Crystal Clear

Rhodia has launched a rheology-modifying polymer for personal cleansing solutions that we believe will soon become a staple in R&D laboratories in 2012. Rheomer® 33 (INCI: Polyacrylate 33) can be used to create a wide range of textures for shower gels, body and facial washes and shampoos. It facilitates the suspension of beads and particles and can yield ultra-high clarity, high richness and good foaming properties.

Rheomer® 33 was designed to address the negative sensory attributes associated with traditional acrylate thickeners. Crystal-clear shower gels with suspended capsules, facial scrubs with exfoliating beads- Rheomer® 33 delivers beautiful formulations. With additional benefits of improved flash foam, foam volume and clean rinsing, the benefits of Rheomer® 33 are consumer-perceivable.

In today's economy, product developers are challenged to find ways to reduce cost in formulations. Rheomer® 33 is an ideal choice for thickening low-to-medium surfactant systems, in the range of 6-13% surfactant content.

Rheomer® 33 has a low in-process viscosity, making it very easy to use. It has a high tolerance to salt, maintaining performance and clarity with salt concentrations up to 1.5%.

Please contact your Ross Organic Technical Sales Representative or info@rossorg.com to receive a sample, prototypes, formulation guides and technical information.



Apple Pie Cookies (from SmittenKitchen.com)

Yield: 24-30 2 1/2-inch cookies

Crust

- 2 1/2 cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting surfaces, dipping fork
- 2 tablespoons (25 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) table salt
- 2 sticks (225 grams, 8 ounces, 16 tablespoons or 1 cup) unsalted butter, very cold
- 1/2 cup (118 ml) water, very cold

To finish

- 1 large egg
- Coarse or granulated sugar for garnish

Filling

- 3 medium apples, whatever you like to bake with
- Squeeze of lemon juice (optional)
- 1/3 cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
- Few gratings fresh nutmeg
- A pinch of any other spices you like in your apple pie

Make your pie dough: Whisk together flour, sugar and salt in the bottom of a large, wide-ish bowl. Using a pastry blender, two forks or your fingertips, work the butter into the flour until the biggest pieces of butter are the size of small peas. (You'll want to chop your butter into small bits first, unless you're using a very strong pastry blender.) Gently stir in the ice water with a rubber spatula, mixing it until a craggy mass forms. Get your hands in the bowl and knead it just two or three times to form a ball. Divide dough in half. Wrap each half in plastic wrap and flatten a bit, like a disc. Chill in fridge for at least an hour or up to two days.

Next line up five small dishes. In the first one, pour some water. Leave the second one empty; you'll use it for your apples in a bit. In the third one, mix the sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg and any other spices you like in your pie, such as a pinch of cloves. In the fourth one, whisk an egg with one teaspoon of water until smooth. In the last one, add some coarse or regular sugar for decorating the tops of the pies.

On a well-floured counter, roll out your pie dough pretty thin, a little shy of 1/8-inch thick. Lift and rotate your dough as you roll it, to ensure that it rolls out evenly and so you can be sure it's not sticking in any place. Use the larger of your two cookie cutters [mine was 2 1/2-inch] to cut as many rounds as you can from the dough. Transfer them to parchment-lined baking sheets and keep them in the fridge until you need them. Once you've finished the first packet, repeat the process with the second packet of dough.

As soon as your dough softens, transfer whatever you're doing to the freezer for two minutes to chill it again. Soft dough is hard to work with.

Prepare your apples: Peel your apples. Cut thin (1/8-inch thick) slices from one side of whole apple, stopping when you hit the core. Repeat on opposite side. I got about 10 usable slices from each side of my small-medium-ish apples. Use the smaller of your two cookie cutters (mine was about 1 2/3 inches) to cut the apples into cute little discs that will fit inside your pie cookies. Place them in your second bowl, covering them with a few drops of lemon juice if you find that they're browning quickly.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Grab your first disc of chilled dough and lightly dampen it on one side with the water. This is to help it seal. Take your first disc of apple and toss it in the cinnamon spice sugar. Place it on the damp side of the bottom disk. Place a second disc of dough on top; I found it easiest to seal it by picking the whole thing up (if the dough is soft and getting sticky, chill it until it's easy to pick up) and press the tops and bottoms around the apple with your fingers. Back on the floured counter, cut decorative slits in your "pies". Dip your fork in the flour and use it to create a decorative crimp on the sealed edges. Brush your cookie with egg wash and sprinkle with coarse sugar. Replace on baking sheet and chill while you prepare the others.

Bake your apple pie cookies for 20 -25 minutes, or until puffed and bronzed and very pie-like. Transfer to a cooling rack to cool before eating them...





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