NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2008 Sofi™ Gold Winners of Annual National Association for the Specialty Food Trade Competition Announced

Rutgers Food Innovation Center Client Blackwell’s OrganicWins Coveted Industry Honor

Judges ‘Sweet’ On Organic Raspberry Sorbetto

BRIDGETON, NJ (July 23, 2008)—Blackwell’s Organic, a Redbank, NJ-based organic gelato and sorbet producer and client of the Rutgers Food Innovation Center (FIC), was one of 33 recipients of the Gold sofi™ Award given annually by the National Association of the Specialty Food Trade (NASFT) to recognize outstanding specialty food and beverage products.

Presented by chef and cookbook author Jacques Pépin at the 54th Annual Summer Fancy Food Show on June 30, 2008 at the Jacob Javits Convention Center in New York City, the top award in the category for Outstanding USDA-Approved Organic Product went to Blackwell’s Organic for its Raspberry Sorbetto.

“To be recognized for excellence by your peers is the utmost honor,” said Marcia Blackwell, Founder and President of Blackwell’s Organic, LLC. “This award is even more significant because it is our first year as a member of the NASFT and our first year as an exhibitor at the show.”

Blackwell’s Organic was one of more than 2,100 original entries narrowed to 150 Silver Finalists over four days of judging by an independent panel of specialty food experts last spring. From there, more than 400 retailers and foodservice buyers attending the summer’s Fancy Food Show selected gold winners in 32 categories.

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When circumstances led Tom and Marcia Blackwell to combine their love for gelato and their need for more satisfying nondairy desserts, the Blackwell’s sought advice and assistance from Rutgers FIC located in Bridgeton, NJ.

Marcia’s advice to new entrepreneurs “is to spend the money needed to get professional advice and assistance; it will save you money and time in growing your business.”

The FIC staff assisted the Blackwells in refining product formulations, designing packaging and labeling, developing marketing and promotional materials, and implementing marketing plans. Local and area suppliers and distributors also helped the entrepreneurs work toward their goals.

The FIC enhances business growth through development, research, training, and support. Since its conception in 2001, it has been a strategic tool for more than 800 businesses.

MORE ABOUT RUTGERS FOOD INNOVATION CENTER (FIC)

The Bridgeton-based Center, which is an off-campus research and extension center of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, helps:

- Farmers and cooperatives creating new businesses based on value-added agricultural products or considering new markets for their existing commodities.
- Start-up food companies coping with challenges such as financing, technology, regulations, market development and other infrastructure requirements.
- Existing small and mid-sized food companies seeking to access new technologies, upgrade quality assurance capabilities, enter new markets, or expand and improve their operations.
- Retail and food service establishments looking for ways to improve their operations and purchase locally grown New Jersey products.

FIC sponsors quarterly “Food Business Basics” seminars for would-be food entrepreneurs. For more information, to meet with an FIC expert, or tour the new 23,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility, call 856-459-1125 or visit www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu.

MORE ABOUT BLACKWELL’S ORGANIC

Blackwell’s Organic is New Jersey’s first and only certified organic, dairy-free gelato and fruit sorbetto manufacturer. They are also the only US frozen dessert company to have at least one FairTrade Certified ingredient in every flavor. Marcia and Tom Blackwell founded the company, headquartered in Red Bank, NJ, in 2005. Blackwell’s Organic is dedicated to using ingredients that come from farmers and
suppliers devoted to sustainable agriculture, resource conservation, and fair wages.

The classic, healthful frozen desserts are handmade in the Italian tradition, using the highest quality certified organic ingredients, including Fair Trade Certified™ cocoa, chocolate, coffee, and evaporated cane juice. Blackwell’s Organic is distributed in NY, NJ, PA and CT. To learn more about Blackwell’s Organic, the products, and upcoming events, visit these websites: www.blackwellsorgainc.com and www.gelatobymail.com.

ABOUT NASFT
The NASFT is a not-for-profit trade association established in 1952 to foster trade, commerce and interest in the specialty food industry. Today there are more than 2,800 members in the U.S. and abroad. For further information on the NASFT and its Fancy Food Shows, go to www.specialtyfood.com.

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