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Ready Pac Introduces Consumers to In-House Chef with New Fall Recipes

Chef Helsel Creates Healthy, Delicious and Easy Recipes with Fresh-Cut Produce

Irwindale, Calif. (October 31, 2012) – Temperatures are cooling, the leaves are changing colors and the holidays are just around the corner. Fall is upon us. Ready Pac Foods, Inc. is welcoming the change in seasons with a new selection of fall-inspired recipes featuring their fresh-cut produce. At the same time, Ready Pac proudly introduces these delicious creations from– Chef Thomas Helsel, PCIII, C.E.C., C.R.C. who has earned certification from The Culinary Institute of America, The American Culinary Federation and The Research Chefs Association. Tom also has an extensive culinary background, including degrees from The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, NY, and Pennsylvania State University as well as working in both food service and corporate product development. His former positions include Campbell Soup Company, Subway, Trump Plaza Casino in Atlantic City, Häagen Dazs Stores, Marriott Corporate Services, Sodexo Corporate Services and others.

To craft Ready Pac’s healthy, great tasting meal solutions, Tom begins by reviewing reference books, conducting internet searches, researching flavor combinations and looking through cookbooks for inspiration. He then considers the fresh-cut produce products available to consumers and begins creating. Throughout this process, Chef also consults with the Ready Pac Research and Development team, many of whom also have culinary backgrounds.

“I am of the philosophy that there are flavors which naturally taste good together, and the ongoing creative momentum of cooking should stay grounded to what has already been proven as a starting point and move forward from there,” said Chef Helsel. “Sometimes convenience or a spontaneous twist determines the direction of a meal. For example, when I discovered chefs were using spinach as a pesto base, I was inspired to create a recipe tailored to our product.”

Ready Pac is focused on giving consumers healthy, better tasting meal solutions that are simple to make when utilizing Ready Pac fresh-cut and packaged produce. Chef Helsel creates each recipe using cooking methods that incorporate nutritional, fresh-cut produce, require minimal oil and minimize high heat damage.

“I am very excited about the new fall recipes,” Tom continued. “Considering the change in climate and seasonality, this season I focused on warm versions of slaws and stews. My favorite new recipe is the Wilted Spinach with Rosemary Honey Glazed Roasted Pineapple Spears (*recipe & image below*). The flavor of the cooked pineapple with the sweet glaze, slight Tabasco hit, green pine-like aromatics of the rosemary and slight saltiness goes very well with the earthy green quality of the spinach in that recipe.”

A full list of new fall recipes from Ready Pac is available online at <http://www.readypac.com/recipe-category/new-fall-recipes/>. Chef Helsel’s favorite recipe is included below:

Wilted Spinach with Rosemary Honey Glazed Roasted Pineapple Spears

Ingredients:

½ bag [Ready Pac® Spinach](#)
½ package [Ready Pac® Pineapple Spears](#) (approx. 1 lb.)
1 package [Ready Pac® Diced Tri Pepper](#)
1 cup Honey
3 tsp. Fresh Rosemary Leaves
2 tsp. Olive oil
Salt and Pepper (to taste)
Dash Tabasco® Pepper Sauce



Instructions:

Roasted Pineapple with Honey Glaze

In a bowl, gently toss Pineapple spears with 1 tsp. olive oil, salt and pepper, ½ c of honey and 2 tsp. fresh minced rosemary leaves. Place Spears on a foil lined cookie sheet and roast in a 350F oven until golden brown.

Honey Rosemary Dressing

In serving bowl, whisk remaining Honey, olive oil, minced fresh rosemary leaves, salt and pepper (to taste) and dash of Tabasco® pepper sauce. (Dressing may be thinned slightly with any roasting pan juice, or pineapple juice.)

Salad

Toss together [Ready Pac® Spinach](#) and [Ready Pac® Diced Tri Pepper](#) with the Honey Dressing careful to lightly coat the leaves, the warm roasted pineapple will add additional flavor.

Serving size: 4

COMPANY BIO: California-based Ready Pac is a premier producer of convenience fresh foods including fresh-cut produce. With processing facilities throughout the United States, Ready Pac's award-winning salads, snacks, fresh-cut fruit and vegetables are distributed in supermarkets and restaurant chains across North America. For more information, visit www.readypac.com, on [Facebook](#), on Twitter @ReadyPacTweets.

ABOUT CHEF HELSEL: Chef Helsel has been involved in the food service industry since the age of eight, working for his family's business. He attended the Culinary Institute of America, earning an Associate Degree in Culinary Arts and a Bachelor's Degree in Culinary Management. Chef Helsel has achieved dual certifications as a Certified Executive Chef and a Professional Chef Level III from the American Culinary Federation and the Culinary Institute of America. He has also earned certification as a Certified Research Chef from the Research Chefs Association. Before joining the Ready Pac team, Chef Helsel worked for companies including Campbell Soup Company, Subway, Trump Plaza Casino in Atlantic City, Häagen Dazs Corporation, Marriott Corporate Services.

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