

# More items planted in Disney Garden

Most of the new products come from Church Bros.

By David Mitchell  
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HOUSTON — Disney Garden just keeps growing

Indianapolis-based Imagination Farms LLC and its grower partners introduced more than 40 new stock-keeping units during the Produce Marketing Association's Fresh Summit 2007, Oct. 12-15 in Houston.

"We're launching a tremendous amount of product this year," said Imagination Farms marketing director Melinda Goodman. "We spent a lot of time looking at how we're marketing vegetables to children."

The results include small sizes, characters engaged with the product on packages, easy recipes, games and activities, healthy facts and interactive Web sites.

Though several shippers are involved, the majority of new products are from Church Bros. LLC. The Salinas, Calif.-based grower-shipper signed an agreement with Imagination Farms last year, but developmental delays with packaging pushed its product launch back several months, said Church Bros. spokeswoman Katy Blowers.

The company primarily had been a foodservice company — until now.

"It's very exciting for us," she said. "We've been in retail in a limited basis, but this is one big jump into retail. We decided this was a good way to expand our business."

Church Bros. — and its value-added division, True Leaf Farms LLC — will pack a wide array of vegetables from California and Arizona under the Disney Garden label, with year-round supplies starting in late October, Blowers said.

The products include a line of bagged Veggie & Sauce kits featuring Mickey Mouse characters on the packaging. The items include Threezy Cheezy Broccoli Bites, Lemon Butter Blast Broccoli Bites, Pizzalicious Broccoli Bites, Sunny Honey Orange Carrot Coins and Totally Teriyaki Sugar Snap Peas. The products range from 8.5 ounces to 14 ounces.

For Foodles, another new product, Church Bros. will pack the vegetable items, and Cashmere, Wash.-based Crunch Pak LLC will handle the fruit

items. Foodles are sealed snack trays in containers shaped like the easily recognizable Mickey Mouse head. The packages feature Mickey Mouse characters.

"The exciting part is the value-added items like Foodles, products that truly engage kids," Goodman said. "It's a product that's just for them."

Here are the Foodles items: celery, peanut butter and raisins; carrots, celery, tomatoes and ranch dip; carrots, celery, pretzels and cheese dip; apples, cheese and crackers; apples, caramel and cheese; apples, peanut butter and raisins; and apples, grapes and cheese. Products range from 4.25 ounces to 5.5 ounces.

Instructions on the packages tell kids how to make fun shapes out of the ingredients — Foodle Doodles — before they eat the product.

"We're trying to make it in a way that makes sense to kids and make it relevant to them," Blowers said.

Crunch Pak and Church Bros. also will split up the vegetable and fruit supplies for Lunch Box Snacks. Church Bros. will pack 2.25-ounce carrots and 2-ounce celery with five bags per clamshell. A third clamshell offering will include three of the carrot bags and two 1.5-ounce bags of sugar snap peas. Those products feature characters from "Cars" and "Pirates of the Caribbean."

Crunch Pak, meanwhile, will offer five 2.8-ounce bags of sliced apples per clamshell with "The Incredibles" characters.

Single-serve Quick Snacks featuring celery and peanut butter in a 2.75-ounce container will feature characters from "Pirates of the Caribbean," and carrots and ranch dip in a 3.25-ounce container will feature "Cars" characters. Apple slices and caramel dip in a 2.75-ounce container will feature "The Incredibles."

Church Bros. also will ship organic leafy greens featuring "Winnie the Pooh" characters.

"We want to make it attractive to moms and to kids," Blowers said.

The bagged organic offerings include 5- and 11-ounce spring mix, 10-ounce spinach and three-pack romaine hearts.

Conventional product will feature Mickey Mouse characters. Bagged product includes size 24 and 36 celery stalks, size 18 celery hearts, three-count romaine hearts, 10-ounce baby spinach, 10-ounce broccoli crowns, and 8-ounce



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**Katy Blowers, spokesperson for Church Bros. LLC, Salinas, Calif., displays two of the new products the company launched under the Disney Garden brand during PMA Fresh Summit 2007.**

sugar snap peas.

Other offerings include head romaine, red leaf, green leaf and iceberg lettuce, broccoli crowns and cauliflower.

"To date, we have over 300 SKUs," Goodman said. "In the past year since PMA, we've introduced 100 to 125 SKUs."

Here are the other news items:

► Hugh H Branch Inc., Pahokee, Fla., and Prima Bella Produce Inc., Tracy, Calif., have expanded the Pixie Sweet corn line featuring Tinker Bell with four-count cobettes, four-count tray packs and single ears. All three items will be available with bicolor, yellow or white corn.

Branch partner Dan Shiver said product will be available year-round from Florida, California, Georgia, Ohio, Colorado and Missouri.

► Stellar Distributing, Inc., Fresno, Calif., plans to offer six-count trays of kiwifruit with 20 trays to a case. The trays, which feature "Pirates" characters, also include a spoon in the shape of a sword. A 1-pound bag will include a tattoo for kids. Bulk product will feature Price Look-Up stickers.

► Seal Sweet International LLC, Vero Beach, Fla., will offer Pixie Sweet South African mandarins with Tinker Bell on 5-pound boxes. The late variety is available from mid-September to late October, said Seal Sweet foodservice sales manager Steve Marinello.

► West Pack Avocado Inc., Temecula, Calif., plans to offer avocados year-round starting in December. "Pirates" characters will adorn PLU stickers for bulk product and five-count bags.