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G.L. MEZZETTA, INC.
"The Taste of Success"

For over seventy-five years, the G.L. Mezzetta company has brought delicious and healthful foods from the Mediterranean to the American table. Like so many American success stories, this one has its roots in Italy, where delicious food and wine were central to the family experience.

Giuseppe Luigi Mezzetta, founder of G. L. Mezzetta, immigrated to America from Italy to start a new life. Working as a window cleaner in New York City, he eventually saved enough money to bring his new wife, Columba, to San Francisco where their son, Daniel, was born in 1918. Giuseppe continued to work hard, and was soon able to earn a better wage as a janitor for two large import/export firms in downtown San Francisco.

In 1935, father and son decided to open a small storefront in San Francisco's Italian North Beach district. The new company began importing Italian peppers, olives and other staples of the Mediterranean table. Over the years, their business proved solid. The Mezzetta attention to quality, value and service earned the trust and loyalty of their customers. Like many ventures of that era, the business was operated for years in typical "mom-and-pop" fashion providing a modest but comfortable living for the owners and their employees.

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In 1973, Daniel's son, Ron Mezzetta, became General Manager. An imaginative and dynamic entrepreneur, he understood the importance of creating an identity for their products. Ron decided to package their olives and peppers under the Mezzetta name, and the Mezzetta brand was born. He also coined the slogan "Don't Forgetta Mezzetta" as a way to remind consumers not to overlook Mezzetta products when they filled up their grocery carts. The catchy slogan crept into consumer consciousness and helped make Mezzetta a household name on the west coast. As business flourished under Ron's leadership, the company found itself in need of a larger production facility and moved from North Beach to Sonoma, California in 1980. In the early 90s, Ron noticed the growth of awareness and interest in Pacific Rim and Asian-style flavors and Mezzetta purchased Kona Coast Sauces & Marinades to capture a piece of that market. Ron's son, Jeff Mezzetta, who had "grown up" in the family business, officially joined the

company in 1993, working alongside his father.

Jeff brought a new generation of vision, passion and skills to the company. While Ron preferred to stay close to operations, Jeff spent much of his time traveling. He visited markets across the United States and came to realize that there was potential for the company to grow well beyond any previous expectations. He also visited dozens of production facilities, farms and orchards of every shape and size in Italy, France, Greece, Spain, Morocco, Latin America and beyond, talking to producers and building relationships with suppliers. This experience gave him invaluable perspective and sparked creative new ideas. Construction of a new state-of-the-art facility in American Canyon (located at the southern end of Napa Valley) was completed in 1997.



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In 2004, Ron Mezzetta appointed Jeff Mezzetta President. Under his leadership, company sales and volumes have doubled in size. New product innovation, packaging improvements, investment in human resources, better efficiencies in production, and aggressive sales strategies have taken G.L. Mezzetta to a new level.

In the same year of taking the reins, Jeff created the Napa Valley Bistro brand, featuring the only specialty pasta sauces and olives made with premium Napa Valley appellation wine. The popular product line dramatically expanded the Mezzetta presence in the gourmet marketplace and is now one of the top five specialty pasta sauces in the country. Mezzetta is the number one producer of specialty peppers and olives in the United States, with distribution in Canada, the United Kingdom and the Pacific Rim.* The company produces over 100 different SKUs. In addition to importing and packing specialty food products, Mezzetta sources a variety of fresh vegetables from local California farms for processing throughout the harvest season.

In its fourth generation as a family-owned and operated company, the full potential of G.L. Mezzetta as a top specialty foods brand is just beginning to be realized. The mission which launched the company—to produce the best quality products from the finest ingredients and make them available at an affordable price—remains the same. But the focus is sharper than ever, and, with a marketplace full of discerning savvy and discriminating consumers seeking the next exciting, new food experience, the opportunities continue to grow.

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