Happy New Year to everyone from Valdez Spice! In this issue, we are going to focus on all things related to Mardi Gras. Anything from Cajun appetizers to full on dinner options. We have all the seasonings you are looking for this upcoming Spring! See page 3 for our Favorite Cajun Dish’s. On our last page take a look at a letter from our President regarding the shortage of domestic garlic this year.

We are also proud to announce that we have passed our yearly SQF –Level 2 audit.

Check out our new and improved website! www.valdezspice.com
Mardi Gras History

Mardi Gras began thousands of years ago in medieval Europe. What began as a pagan celebration of spring and fertility was changed by Christianity later on into a celebration full of binge eating before the beginning of lent. In France, the term “Mardi Gras” was first coined as the name for this lavish celebration. Later on, this holiday was brought to America, and more specifically, to Louisiana by French explorers in 1699.

Today, the celebration continues and is still full of street parties, parades, tons of celebration and lots of signature delicious food. Mardi Gras is especially known for the unique style of Cajun and Creole foods that are served including, Gumbo, Jambalaya, and many more. See our take on Mardi Gras dishes below.

What’s Cooking in R&D – Today’s Edition: Cajun Meals

**Cajun Fried Pickle Seasoning** – Fat Tuesday is right around the corner, the perfect opportunity to try this flavorful seasoning with a zesty twist! The Cajun seasoning pairs well with mouthwatering fried dill pickle chips. Serve with a cool ranch dip for maximum enjoyment.

**Jalapeno Hush Puppies Batter Mix** – This appetizer is definitely a crowd pleaser at parties this Mardi Gras. The Jalapenos in the batter will add a burst of zing to the traditional hush puppy. Just mix the batter with buttermilk and fry until golden brown and crispy. Enjoy with a refreshing glass of sweet iced tea.

**Jalapeno Cheddar Biscuit Mix**: Start your morning with a delicious and warm jalapeno cheddar biscuit. The jalapeno will give you the much needed spicy kick in the right direction to start off the day. While the buttery cheddar will just make the biscuit melt in your mouth.

**Crawfish Boil Seasoning**: As warmer weather begins to roll in welcoming in the spring this means crawfish season is around the corner. Season your crawfish with this blend of aromatic herbs and spices to have a scrumptious meal to enjoy at any family gathering.

**Boudin Mix**: A savory mix that includes green onions and variety of spices to make traditional Cajun Boudin. Perfect to just add your choice of meat and stuff into a casein or roll into Boudin Balls to fry.

**Beignet Mix**: A just add water mix that will deliver the sweet and fluffy pastry that everyone loves. Powdered sugar will be the only thing needed to top it off.
Our **Favorite** Cajun Dish

Berenizes (spring intern): Cajun Jambalaya Pasta

Miriam (QA Mgr): Gumbo with sweet cornbread

Monica (RD Mgr): Red beans and rice

Cynthia (RD Tech): Stuffed bell pepper w/kidney beans and sweet potato

Sandra (Office Admin.): Gumbo

Cindy (AP): Shrimp Etouffee

Mike (owner): Blackened Tilapia Pontchartrain

Nikki (AR): Shrimp & Grits

Gary (CFO): Cajun Pasta

Laura (QA intern): Cajun blackened chicken pasta

Please email Monica Tomlinson for more information or sample requests!
Please allow two or more weeks for samples. Minimum orders may apply.
If you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please reply to this email with your request.
Dear Domestic Garlic Customer:

Valdez Spice has been a proud partner for many decades with Advanced Spice and Sensient Natural Ingredients. Sensient has been our sole source of domestic garlic during this time and is really the only source left offering 100% domestic garlic. I share this information, because due to crop issues and yields with garlic, they have been forced to make some very tough decisions that affect us directly and our customers of domestic garlic. Effective immediately, Sensient has placed all customers on a deep allocation, until new harvest is produced and available for sale in September 2017.

What does this mean you ask? Unfortunately it means that Valdez Spice has no choice but to withdraw from supplying domestic garlic until that time. This situation, on top of the tight Chinese market this past year, which caused Chinese material to hit unprecedented high levels of price, exceeding domestic pricing, makes this situation very unattractive.

Here is what we can offer to our customers. We can offer Chinese garlic, and will do everything we can to help with pricing. Chinese garlic is currently higher than domestic product. The second option we can provide is garlic oleoresin. The oleoresin can be used in small percentages to replace a large amount of garlic in a formula. Due to the limited amount of garlic we have in stock, all blends will contain a mix of domestic garlic and Chinese garlic in order to get us through this difficult period.

Again, we sincerely regret the situation we have been put in regarding availability of the domestic material. We know the bind this puts on you. We will do everything we can to help with alternatives in this situation. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further discussion.

Best Regards,

Mike Hanks
President