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SARGENTO INTRODUCES FULL FLAVOR LINE OF REDUCED SODIUM NATURAL CHEESES

Twenty-five percent reduced sodium line of cheese is first-of-its kind to debut in the dairy case nationwide

PLYMOUTH, Wis. (March 2, 2010) – Sargento Foods Inc. announces the introduction of a new series of *Reduced Sodium* cheeses that offer great flavor for health-conscious consumers looking to indulge their passion for cheese, without having to sacrifice taste. With 25 percent less sodium, the new cheeses are worthy substitutes for regular natural cheese in both cooking and snacking. The six new varieties include Colby-Jack slices, Provolone slices, Colby-Jack snack sticks, String snacks, Mild Cheddar shredded cheese and Mozzarella shredded cheese. With National Nutrition Month in March, the launch of the *Reduced Sodium* line comes at a time when consumers are seeking healthier food options.

"With almost 50 percent of consumers reading food labels for sodium content, we're responding to their interest in lowering their daily intake by offering *Reduced Sodium* Sargento cheeses," said Chris Groom, marketing director. "However, we only wanted to launch the line if we could still provide the great tasting natural cheese that consumers love, which this line does successfully."

Consumers, regulators and health groups are increasingly watching sodium intake as public service organizations are referring to high sodium diets as the single greatest problem in the American diet. The average daily sodium intake is now 4,000 milligrams, which is about twice the government's recommended amount for the average person. Health experts claim that as little as a one gram sodium reduction in the American diet per day can help, which is equivalent to 25 percent less, matching the decrease in Sargento *Reduced Sodium* cheeses.

The *Reduced Sodium* line was created with the needs of today's consumer in mind. "People often assume when salt is taken out of food, it becomes bland and tasteless," said Rebecca Maine, senior sensory and taste expert at Sargento. "When we were developing the new line of reduced sodium cheeses we took into consideration our consumers' demand for flavor and taste as our highest priority."

The release of the *Reduced Sodium* line is the latest innovation brought to consumers by Sargento as they continue their commitment toward ingenuity in the better for you cheese category with full flavor cheese options for health-conscious people. This launch marks another category-first introduction to dairy cases nationwide for Sargento. In addition to the new *Reduced Sodium* cheeses, Sargento offers a variety of full flavor natural *Reduced Fat* cheeses.

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Available in slices, shreds and snacks, the new *Reduced Sodium* cheeses will be on grocery store shelves nationwide in March. Product information, recipes and snack ideas featuring the *Reduced Sodium* cheeses are available on Sargento.com.

Sargento Foods Inc. has demonstrated its passion for cheese and cheese-based solutions throughout its history. Founded in 1953 in Plymouth, Sargento is a leading manufacturer, packager and marketer of natural shredded, sliced and snack cheeses, cheese appetizers, ingredients and sauces. Sargento is owned and operated by the Gentine family, and has net sales of more than \$900 million.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting Krista Cortese at 312-755-6205 or via email at kcortese@wheatleytimmons.com.

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