

GENERAL FOODS CORPORATE TIMELINE

- 1895 Charles William (C.W.) Post makes his first batch of Postum cereal beverage in a little white barn in Battle Creek, Michigan. With that step he enters the new retail cereal industry.
- 1896 Post's company incorporates as The Postum Cereal Company, Ltd.
- 1897 C.W. Post introduces Post Grape-Nuts cereal, one of the first ready-to-eat cold cereals.
- 1914 C.W. Post dies and ownership of the business passes to his daughter, Marjorie. The Postum Cereal Company continues to follow the formula for success which C.W. established: selling high-quality, nutritious cereal products through marketing and advertising techniques that appealed to the common man and woman.
- The company invests over twelve million dollars in advertising between 1895 and 1914.
- 1922 The company reorganizes as the Postum Cereal Company, Incorporated.
- By 1923 The company's executive offices are located at 342 Madison Avenue, New York with manufacturing facilities in Battle Creek, Michigan and Windsor, Ontario.
- 1923 The Postum Cereal Company, Inc. establishes an employee stock plan.
- 1924 An Educational Department is formed and one of its principal activities is providing consumer nutrition education. The department publishes nutrition stories for children and a nutrition handbook on school lunches for use by teachers, health workers and food service directors. In 1931, the department name is changed to Consumer Services.
- The Postum Cereal Company posts sales of over \$24 million.
- The company's executive offices are now located in the Postum Building at 250 Park Avenue, New York City.
- 1925 The Postum Cereal Company acquires the Jell-O Company for \$67 million in cash and stock.
- 1926 A "Food Chart" (later named the "GF Food Chart") is first distributed marking a pioneering effort in the nutrition field in the U.S. The chart lists 123 widely-used foods and indicates the calories, relative vitamin values, and protein and mineral content of average servings in terms of the percentage of an adult's total daily requirement. It also includes a meal-planning section.
- Minute Tapioca Company is acquired by the Postum Cereal Company.
- 1927 The company name changes to Postum Company, Incorporated.

Postum Company acquires Franklin Baker Company, a manufacturer of coconut products, and also purchases the assets of chocolate maker Walter Baker & Company, Ltd.

1928 *Maxwell House* coffee joins the Postum Company portfolio when Postum purchases the assets of Cheek-Neal Coffee Company for \$40 million and names its new division Maxwell House Products Company.

Calumet baking powder business becomes part of Postum Company, Inc.

1929 Birdseye Frosted Foods, including the rights to Clarence Birdseye's revolutionary new quick-frozen foods process, is acquired by the Postum Company. One of the assets acquired with Birdseye is a small company named General Foods.

Postum Company acquires the assets of Certo Corporation, makers of *Certo* pectin.

On 24 July, Postum Company changes its name to General Foods Corporation to reflect the diversified nature of its business.

1930 General Foods now has 20 nationally advertised products, handles more than 60 other branded products, and has 49 factories located in 40 cities.

1931 General Foods establishes a radio kitchen program called "Cooking School of the Air" where Frances Lee Barton – a fictitious character - prepares dishes using General Foods products. The program is produced in a combination kitchen and radio broadcasting studio at the company's 250 Park Avenue, New York City location.

1932 General Foods Corporation purchases the Sanka Coffee Corporation, established in the U.S. by Dr. Ludwig Roselius in 1923. Dr. Roselius is the creator of the first decaffeination process for coffee

1934 General Foods sells the largest physical volume of food products in its history. The previous record year was been set in 1929.

General Foods installs its co-operative Retirement Income Plan for employee in November. Eight days after the plan's announcement, 95% of General Foods' eligible employees had voluntarily applied for participation.

General Foods Corporation engineers design the first in-store retail freezer cabinet.

1940 The company begins publishing a monthly "GF News Letter" for employees in January. It is mailed to their homes.

1944 General Foods Corporation purchases *Yuban* coffee (introduced in 1905 by John Arbuckle) from the Paton Corporation.

1947 General Foods Corporation begins advertising in a new medium – television.

General Foods joins Ford Motor Company in sponsoring the Brooklyn Dodgers home games at Ebbets Field over WCBS-TV. If you are within 70 miles of New York you

could watch 77 games from April through September. General Foods products are advertised on half the programs and Ford cars on the others.

- 1948 General Foods decides to utilize a new portrait image of the fictitious character known as Frances Barton to aid consumers and to identify the company's consumer service material such as recipes.
- 1949 Gross sales of General Foods passed the half-billion dollar mark for the first time in company history.
- General Foods now makes over 250 branded products. The company has locations in more than half of the states in the U.S. with a total of 64 plants, 7 warehouses and 71 sales offices. It also owns 10 plants in Canada, England, Mexico and the Philippines.
- 1951 General Foods enters daytime television with its advertising sponsorship of The Bert Parks Show.
- 1953 General Foods Corporation acquires Perkins Products Company, maker of *Kool-Aid* powdered soft drink mixes.
- Sales reach \$701 million for an increase of 257 per cent in a decade
- 1954 General Foods Corporation sets up business in West Germany. The first product the company markets is instant coffee.
- General Foods moves its corporate offices from New York City to White Plains, New York in March.
- A New Products Development Department is established in fiscal year 1954.
- 1956 Gross sales reach a significant milestone in fiscal year 1956 when they exceeded \$1 billion dollars for the first time.
- General Foods products are now sold in 71 countries.
- 1957 General Foods Corporation dedicates a new research center at Tarrytown, New York – the largest and most modern food research facility in the world.
- There are 21,300 regular employees employed worldwide by General Foods.
- 1958 Net sales of General Foods for the first time pass the \$1 billion dollar mark in fiscal year 1958. General Foods is the 48th American corporation to report net sales volume in excess of one billion dollars.
- The General Foods Fund Matching Grants Program is established in October in an effort to get more individual General Foods employees interested in supporting education and to encourage greater giving.

- 1959 A General Foods Kitchens seal begins appearing on packages, recipe booklets, in print and television advertising. The new seal is directed to the grocery trade as well as the consumer to signify GF Kitchens approval.
- 1961 General Foods Corp acquires a controlling ownership interest in Krema Hollywood Chewing Gum Co. S.A. of Paris, France including its *Hollywood* chewing gum brand. [On 24 May 2000, Kraft Foods France announces the proposed sale of its chewing gum - including *Hollywood* chewing gum brand - and candy businesses to Cadbury Schweppes.]
- 1965 A new, consolidated Jell-O Division plant at Dover, Delaware is dedicated. With over 20 acres under one roof, the plant required the largest single capital outlay in the company's history.
- 1969 After a ten year absence, General Foods returns as a major program sponsor with its decision to sponsor the NBC-TV nighttime network program called "Julia".
- 1971 *Gevalia* coffee becomes part of General Foods Corporation with the purchase of Victor Theodore Engwall & Co., Sweden's largest coffee company.
- 1973 General Foods forms a joint venture with the Toyko-based Ajinomoto Company, one of the largest food companies in Japan.
- 1974 Through its Corporate Contributions program, General Foods gives a total of \$1.6 million worldwide in financial aid to local and national causes.
- 1979 HAG AG of Bremen, Germany - and its *Kaffee Hag* coffee - is acquired by General Foods Corporation.
- 1981 General Foods Corporation acquires Oscar Mayer & Co.
- 1983 General Foods Corporation opens a new corporate headquarters in Rye Brook, New York.
- Annual sales of more than \$8 billion make General Foods the biggest U.S.-based company operating solely in the food and beverage business.
- Worldwide, General Foods has some 65,000 employees, with more than 35,000 of them working in the U.S.
- General Foods has operating subsidiaries or joint ventures with other firms in 21 countries outside the U.S. and exports to more than 100 nations around the world.
- 1984 General Foods establishes joint ventures in the People's Republic of China to produce *Tang* powdered beverage and for the sale of *Maxwell House* coffee.
- General Foods unveils a new corporate logo in November at the Management meeting held at its Rye Brook, New York headquarters. The logo is created by noted graphic artist Saul Bass.

- 1985 General Foods acquires a controlling interest in Saimaza, Spain's most successful regional coffee roaster.
- In India, construction begins on a soluble coffee and powdered beverage plant, the first facility of the Kothari-General Foods joint venture.
- Philip Morris Companies Inc. acquires General Foods Corporation. General Foods Corporation then operates as a subsidiary.
- 1987 General Foods Corporation purchases the Kenco Coffee Company to form the biggest ground coffee company in the U.K.
- General Foods Corporation reorganizes into three operating companies: General Foods USA, General Foods Worldwide Coffee & International, and Oscar Mayer Foods.
- 1989 Philip Morris Companies, Inc. merges General Foods Corporation with its new subsidiary Kraft, Inc. to form Kraft General Foods, Inc. making it the largest U.S. food company.