



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*\*Image Attached\*\***

## **We Can See Clearly Now:** *Ready Pac Discusses Efforts to Keep Up with Consumer Label Perceptions*

**Irwindale, Calif. (September 5, 2013)** – The word ‘transparency’ has undergone a substantial transformation during the past year. Previously identified by synonyms like *one-dimensional* or *thinly veiled*, possessing transparency has quickly gone from *taboo* to *chic*, thanks to recent consumer trends demanding brands to revise product labels in order to expose ingredients and production processes perceived as misleading or harmful to our health. But as regulations continue to change and marketers take advantage of key industry buzz words, healthy brands like Ready Pac are facing new challenges as it becomes increasingly *unclear* whether or not this trend has helped or hindered consumers’ outlook on product safety and health claims.

As a packaged salad and fresh produce producer, Ready Pac Foods, Inc. is a leader in healthy meal options and has paid close attention to this shift in consumer awareness in order to differentiate themselves from the growing number of brands promoting suspicious or misleading product claims. “It’s definitely a double-edged sword” explained Tristan Simpson, Senior Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications at Ready Pac. “In some cases, you have consumers who simply don’t have the knowledge base and are confused by the misdirection of all of these claims, so we want to be careful not to overwhelm them. On the other end of the spectrum, you see consumers who believe themselves to be nutritional gurus and have quickly become skeptical - critical even – of any new ‘superfood’ or improved recipe claims. But rather than throwing their hands up in defeat, Ready Pac believes it’s all about consistency and providing natural, healthy options in the most straight-forward way possible.”

While total new food product introductions declined significantly from 2007 to 2011 in response to the recession, new product launches that were due solely to new packaging increased 72% during that same timeframe, according to Mintel’s 2013 study, *Food Packaging Trends*. Although ergonomic and sustainable material innovation played a role in this overhaul, a growing demand for easy-to-understand health and nutrition information is leading the trend. Understandably, this surge has caused a plethora of claims that, in many cases, contradict consumer perceptions of the good and the bad. According to Mintel’s survey, a full 85% of primary and shared shoppers think it’s important for food packaging to communicate product traceability and nutrition information. However, 64% are confused by claims and only 38% trust what brands say on food labels. Although results have been mixed, the tendency has been to suggest that too little information is worse than too much, thus paralleling the public policy of

greater disclosure. In terms of the most necessary and straight-forward product claims that factor into consumers' purchase decisions, analyses through Symphony IRI found that sales of products with "better for you" and "dietary restriction" claims led among five macro health claim categories, accounting for 36% and 33% of total health claim sales, respectively.

Ready Pac Bistro® Bowl Salads are a great example of both clean health and product transparency. These on-the-go, chef-inspired bowl salads have fewer than 300 calories and include fresh, nutritious ingredients in every recipe. Ready Pac Bistro® Bowls are produced in facilities that are USDA certified with daily USDA oversight and quality assurance checks present from inception all the way to the produce aisles, and all finished products are identified by product expiration date and a designated lot number for complete traceability. "Knowledge is power", Simpson explains. "We are committed to providing all the clarity we can so our consumers know that every Ready Pac product they buy provides them with the clean, straight-forward nutrition they have come to expect from us. It's as simple as that."

For complete information about Ready Pac's thorough involvement with food safety, quality assurance, nutrition and sustainable initiatives, visit <http://www.readypac.com>.

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COMPANY BIO: California-based Ready Pac is a premier producer of convenience fresh foods, including fresh-cut produce. With processing facilities throughout the United States, Ready Pac's award-winning salads, snacks, fresh-cut fruit and vegetables are distributed in supermarkets and restaurant chains across North America. For more information, visit [www.readypac.com](http://www.readypac.com)

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