

FDA Testimony
September 10-11, 2007

Good afternoon. I'm here today on behalf of Hannaford Supermarkets, home of Guiding Stars, our storewide nutrition navigation system. Hannaford is a 160-store supermarket and pharmacy chain located in the Northeast, with stores in Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Massachusetts, and Vermont.

In 2008, Hannaford will be celebrating its 125th year in business. One of the reasons we have continued to grow and thrive is because of our strong connection to our customers.

Three years ago we asked more than 3300 of those customers to identify food-related issues that were of interest or concern. Responses varied but one thing those surveyed had in common was that they were confused. They found the plethora of information in the media regarding "good" and "bad" foods overwhelming and occasionally, conflicting. They viewed the proliferation of symbols on foods as unclear and sometimes self-serving. While they read nutrition labels anywhere from rarely to fairly often, they agreed that that they were unsure about how to interpret the information.

Based on the responses, Hannaford developed and tested a series of concepts. What was then called "Three Stars to Health" was the clear winner.

It subsequently became Guiding Stars, a simple, easy-to-use tool to help our customers find the most nutritious foods in our stores quickly and easily. Guiding Stars is a system that rates the nutrition of foods on a good, better, best basis. It is a storewide system because that's how customers shop. They're not comparing an Oreo with an apple, for instance. They're comparing an Oreo with a graham cracker. This is also a shelf tag program primarily, not a front of package program.

Before we introduced the program in our stores we tested four versions of the concept.

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