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SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2008 | 50¢



## Demos takes on the big boys at expo

**Editor's note:** Camera Business Writer Alicia Wallace is covering the Natural Products Expo West in Anaheim, Calif., this weekend, keeping tabs on more than 40 local companies exhibiting at the expo and catching up with other residents attending the three-day event.

For a list of the companies attending, visit [dailycamera.com](http://dailycamera.com). Wallace also will be blogging about the industry's largest trade show at [dailycamera.com/blogs](http://dailycamera.com/blogs).

### Former head of White Wave sets up shop with new venture, 3-year-old NextFoods

By Alicia Wallace  
Camera Staff Writer

ANAHEIM — With an 11-foot-tall GoodBelly probiotic shot blimp behind him and a swarm of people throwing back multivitamin- and probiotic-laden juice drinks, Steve Demos just smiled.

"Right now, I'm a happy guy," he said.

The White Wave founder, who

helped turn soybean juice into a multimillion-dollar business, was at the first day of the 2008 Natural Products Expo West in his new role: chairman and co-founder of Boulder-based NextFoods.

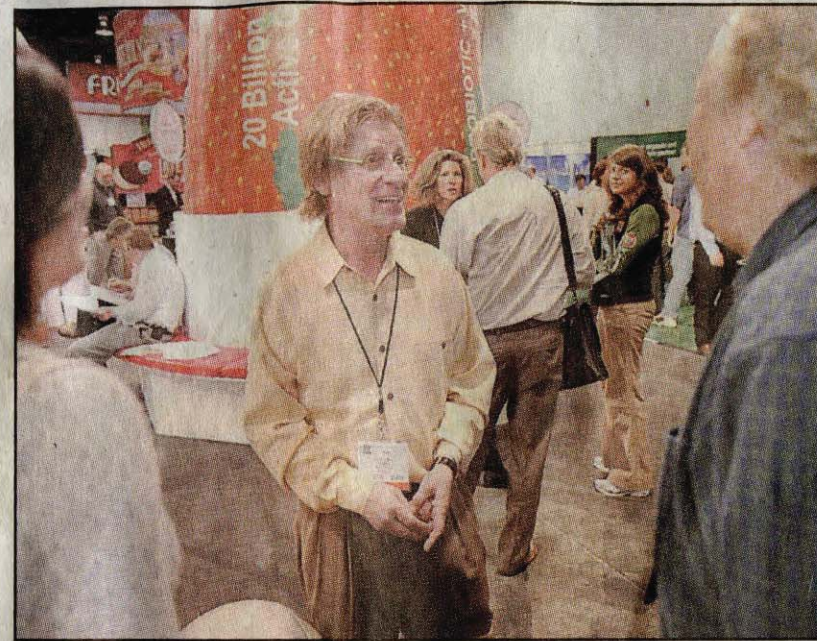
The company was incorporated in 2005, according to state business records, brought on a team of people last year and has had its products on the shelves of Whole Foods stores for about two months.

NextFoods is one of the younger area businesses exhibiting at the trade show. But the startup appeared to be far from the stereotypical boot-strapped, starving, fledgling company.

The company's blimp-anchored exhibition space — about six times the standard 10-by-10-foot booth — was similar in size to that of Stonyfield Farm, an organic yogurt company that was celebrating its 25th year in business.

"We're rubbing two sticks together here," Demos said jokingly to a longtime friend and colleague who stopped by the booth.

NextFoods' space was a stone's throw from a large Silk soy milk display at WhiteWave Foods, the result of Dallas dairy giant Dean Foods' acquisition of Demos' Boulder-based



Mike Schwartz | For the Camera

Steve Demos, center, talks to attendees at the 2008 Natural Products Expo West in Anaheim, Calif., on Friday.

White Wave vegetarian food company.

The booth for WhiteWave Foods — which includes both the Silk and locally founded Horizon Organic brands — showed off the newly

launched lactose-free Horizon Organic milk and some new yogurt offerings.

While a lot of younger companies

See DEMOS, 3A

## Demos debuts products at expo in Calif.

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use the expo to build brand awareness and ink distribution deals, the more-established WhiteWave Foods said the show is an important opportunity to further relationships with customers, said spokeswoman Sara Loveday.

"Being such a big part of the community, you almost have to be here," she said.

NextFoods notched agreements with five large grocery chains, including Safeway, to sell its GoodBelly probiotic, multivitamin juice products. Growing at the rate it is now, NextFoods' products could be in half of the U.S. markets by the end of the year, Demos said.

Demos attributed the out-of-the-gate success to starting out in the natural products hub of Boulder and, especially, he said, to the team running the company. NextFoods' board of directors and the company's management — well-represented by White Wave veterans — have a cumulative 200 years of experience and 75 years of working together, he said.

The team includes Todd Beckman and Mary Adams, veterans of White Wave and the subsequent Dean Foods-owned WhiteWave Foods.

The day exceeded expecta-

### Blogs from the expo

#### Ed Begley Jr. hangs with Gaiam

Last year, actor Ed Begley Jr. hung around with Pangea Organics — a Boulder-based company that this year opted not to exhibit at the Natural Products Expo West. The body-care company instead chose to focus its efforts on further establishing its current customers. Pangea has experienced so much growth that the emphasis, at least for now, is on nurturing.

At this year's expo, Begley Jr. was in Broomfield-based Gaiam's booth Friday signing copies of the first-season DVD of his "Living With Ed" series. Gaiam makes yoga and fitness products and organic goods.

I chatted with Begley for a bit about his latest endeavors and his connection to Boulder.

He asked about Tulagi, and I had to break it to him that the music venue was no longer around. He just slumped back in his Gaiam ball chair, shook his head and muttered an, "Oh, man."

Tulagi was where he had his first stand-up performance. He

tions, Adams said, adding that the company planned to only launch one product at the show — its GoodBelly probiotic shot — but ended up launching two.

Originally intended for the eyes and taste buds of a select

was a resident of Boulder for one year — 1971 — and he said he looks back at the time fondly.

#### Sensory overload

I wish I had comfortable shoes on.

The Anaheim Convention Center is crazy. You just have to get used to the Bumpy-McBump-a-lots and the impatient I'm-going-to-step-on-your-foot-and-not-care people.

It's sensory overload here. There's a giant inflatable probiotic shot, some guy/gal walking around dressed up as Elmo, some girls wearing pink hot pants, and I just saw a Berenstain Bears-related booth and mascot.

I haven't eaten much today, so I figure I'll graze through the halls. There are so many samples here, it's a nice free lunch, but it's also a bit like Russian roulette.

Still, I do have to say that some of the oddest stuff here doesn't compare with the samples given out at a low-carb expo I covered a couple of years back.

— Camera Staff Writer  
Alicia Wallace

### Local company tracker

Early into his company's first day of exhibiting at the expo, Philip Anson, founder and "Phil" of Phil's Fresh Foods, took a cab to Target and came back with two new microwaves. Apparently, the young company suffered a microwave meltdown when zapping burritos earlier in the day.

The Hain Celestial Group displayed a variety of its Celestial Seasonings products, including the new line of gourmet, whole bean coffee and its "Cool Brew teas."

Karen Harbour, co-founder and director of sales for the Boulder-based Tea Spot, was spotted giving an interview to one of the many television and film crews that filled the convention center halls on the first day.

Earth Balance, the Boulder-based division of spread company Smart Balance, did get a little backlash from a couple of customers in the vegan retail community when the firm — previously known for its vegan spreads — added products that included dairy. "Once you explain the benefits and the value ... to the non-vegan consumers," those retailers understand, said Rickard Werner, vice president and general manager of Earth Balance.

group of retailers, NextFoods' probiotic, multivitamin fruit juice line was launched, and well-trafficked, by the masses.

"I just hope we have enough product for Sunday," Beckman said.