

Hit or Miss? Roast beef, pizza and more

Every week, 'Today' show food editor Phil Lempert reviews some of the new items hitting supermarket shelves near you.

By Phil Lempert

"Today" Food Editor

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It takes a lot for a food product to succeed. In fact, out of more than 30,000 new food items that were introduced in 2003, less than 5 percent were hits. (And less than 10 percent of all new products are still on supermarket shelves three years after they launch.) To help you avoid spending money on the likely failures, here are this week's Hits and Misses.

HITS

Fuze Mega Energy Lime Mojito

In September, we wrote about this company's energy drinks, giving them more praise than we usually do when it comes to "energy" drinks. We like it that they don't use high fructose corn syrup, and the taste was pleasant compared to most products of this kind. Now they've introduced a new flavor. The Cuban mojito cocktail has been trendy for the past couple of years, making appearances in "Sex in the City," "Gilmore Girls," and the James Bond film, "Die Another Day." Although it does taste a little too sweet to be a mojito, it is surprisingly pleasant to drink. Retails for \$1.99 for a 16-ounce can. www.drinkmegaenergy.com

Applegate Farms Organic Roast Beef

If you haven't ever tried organic deli meat, you're missing out. Bottom line, it tastes better than deli meats that are not organic. Seasoned with sea salt and crushed pepper, it tastes so fresh, you'll feel like it was just sliced. No nitrates or nitrites added. You'll have to pay a little more, but the quality of the product makes it worth the price. Retails for \$6.99 for a 7-ounce package. www.applegatefarms.com

Maya Kaimal Indian Coconut Curry

The popularity of ethnic foods is on the rise, and we're beginning to see more and more products like these available. Other varieties are Tikka Masala and Vindaloo. Made with sweet coconut milk, fresh ginger and fragrant curry leaves, this curry represents the tropical flavors of South India. Add chicken, seafood, or vegetables to this simmer sauce for a medium heat, authentic Indian dish made in your home kitchen. This sauce is all-natural, vegan, and delicious! Retails for \$6.99 for 15 ounces. www.mayakaimal.com

CONSUMER NOMINATED HIT

Amy's Whole Wheat Crust Cheese & Pesto Pizza

Here's what Brent B. from Fulton, Ill. had to say about this product: "I have enjoyed the Amy's brand of food products for many years, and it is especially gratifying to see their whole wheat pizza available in supermarkets.

"It is such a rare occasion to find one made with whole grain flour, I just had to share it with you and your readers. This one has plenty of tasty organic ingredients, including tomatoes, olive oil, basil, red onions, and garlic. How much more could you ask for? Invite Amy's to your next pizza party." Thanks, Brent! Your SupermarketGuru tote bag is on the way!

MISS - CONSUMER NOMINATED MISS

Kellogg's Raisin Bran Crunch

Here's what Rosalin from Verona, N.J. had to say about this product: "I was elated when I found this single serve package on the shelves in my local drug store. The size [2.8 ounces] was just perfect, unlike a lot of those other packages, so I bought a few. But then I got home and read the nutritional facts label — 67 grams of carbs and 30 grams of sugars! Why can't Kellogg's reduce the sugars in all their cereals, not just in Frosted Flakes? This is a miss and a product I will never buy again until they reformulate." Thanks, Rosalin! Your SupermarketGuru tote bag is on the way!

Phil Lempert is food editor of the "Today" show. He welcomes questions and comments — as well as nominations for "hits" and "misses" in this column — which can be sent to phil.lempert@nbc.com . If he selects your nomination for publication, he'll send you a SupermarketGuru.com Tote Bag!

You can also visit his Web site at www.supermarketguru.com.