

## **Certified-sustainable food firm filling pumpkin shortage**

*Truitt Bros. sourcing from Food Alliance-certified Stahlbush Farms*

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A lackluster pie pumpkin harvest for two years running has meant a short holiday supply of pumpkin puree and pie filling for producers, including multinational food giant Nestle, which produces nearly all U.S. canned pumpkin supplies under its Libby's brand.

Not so for Salem, Ore.-based food processor, Truitt Bros., Inc.

The company said it has created a new Food Alliance-certified supply chain for the central ingredient in its new foodservice Pumpkin Pie Mix, the latest addition to its line of farm-to-table, shelf stable items.



Portland, Ore.-based Food Alliance certifies farms, ranches and food processors for sustainable agricultural and production practices.

These include safe and fair working conditions, reduction of pesticide use and toxicity, healthy and humane care for livestock, no genetically modified crops or livestock and no hormones or non-therapeutic antibiotics.

Certified operations are able to use the Food Alliance seal on products.

Truitt's new pumpkin mix comes from Oregon-grown pumpkins from this year's harvest, sourced from nearby Food Alliance-certified grower, Stahlbush Island Farms, which was not affected by poor weather and fungus decimating pumpkin crops in the Midwest, where the vast majority is grown.

Stahlbush is also the nation's largest producer of organic canned pumpkin under its Farmers Market Organic brand.

The pumpkin mix is seasoned with cane sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, cloves and allspice and packed in shelf stable, easy-to-use and store pouches, free of additives and preservatives.

Truitt said the new mix is perfect for foodservice kitchens, bakeries or dining halls and each 104-ounce pouch is enough to make seven pumpkin pies or a ready-to-use ingredient for a harvest pumpkin soup, pumpkin pancakes or a variety of baked goods, such as pumpkin biscuits, cornbread scones and custards.

The narrow profile of the pouch packaging offers efficient shelf stable pantry storage, the company said.

Last month, Truitt's Special Products division received Food Alliance certification for its manufacturing equipment and packaging facility where it creates a variety of custom, shelf stable products for foodservice and restaurant customers.

The certification is the food producer's second from Food Alliance. The company's cannery operations were the first to be certified as sustainable by Food Alliance in 2006.

"Buying locally-grown produce protects the livelihoods of family farmers," said Peter Truitt, president and co-founder of Truitt Bros. "Preserving products for year-round use through safe natural methods and no additives or preservatives means that the product remains true to its real flavor and texture. Being awarded the Food Alliance certification continues our focus on quality, innovation and sustainability."