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Pepper category getting hot new offerings

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Mastronardi Produce is igniting the pepper category again with a hot new flavor set to hit store shelves in early 2021. Yowzers!, a red chili pepper that is tipping the SUNSET scales on heat, joins the lineup of unique and flavorful SUNSET pepper products including Shazam! shishito pepper and Kaboom! black jalapenos.

“For years, the pepper category remained stagnant without much in the way of offerings outside of standard Bell peppers and jalapenos,” said Peppe Bonfiglio, vice president of sales at Mastronardi Produce. “We saw the need to innovate and heat things up, so we started revolutionizing the category with unique and flavorful products in the hot pepper category.”

The results have proven to be a massive success. Hot peppers continue to drive double-digit growth, with a huge increase in sales for packaged hot peppers. Consumers are searching for products that are convenient, safe, and full of flavor, but that are also unique and trendy.

Upon launching Shazam!, shishito peppers were among the top five fastest growing categories of produce across restaurants. Shishito pepper consumption has more than doubled year over year, with retail sales of Shazam! up nearly 150 percent in the U.S over the last year. Fixed weight packaged hot peppers are also seeing significant dollar growth, up over 60 percent year over year, and demands a nearly triple price premium versus bulk hot peppers. With its bold color and explosive flavor, Yowzers! will give customers another unique offering in the category and is sure to see the same trends in growth.

“Yowzers! has the heat of a traditional jalapeno but also explodes with sweet flavor,” said chef and SUNSET Culinary Director Roger Mooking. “The first few bites are surprisingly sweet but these chili peppers offer the ultimate flavor experience, taking your taste buds on a ride from sweet to heat in just a few seconds.”

SUNSET is also introducing two new innovations in the sweet pepper category. Wild Wonders mini peppers, a mixed variety pack of 6 different colors, and seedless One Sweet peppers are the latest additions to SUNSET’s innovative lineup of sweet pepper offerings, which also includes Aloha striped peppers and Wild Wonders long sweet peppers.

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