



Reinventing Innovation at General Mills



.....> General Mills is opening new avenues for innovation.

From flour to submarines, from toys to restaurants, General Mills has been delivering innovation to make a difference in people's lives since 1866.

Today, as one of the world's leading food companies, General Mills operates in more than 100 countries and markets more than 100 consumer brands, including Cheerios, Häagen-Dazs, Nature Valley, Betty Crocker, Pillsbury, Green Giant, Progresso, Yoplait, and more.

The company has 33,000 employees with the shared mission of Nourishing Lives – making lives healthier, easier and richer.

General Mills is the sixth largest food company in the world. But we realize that our continued success depends on faster, bigger and more profitable innovation.

So we've reinvented innovation at General Mills.

We imagine what's possible and then connect people inside the company or across the globe to create solutions. We nurture partnerships and creativity. We drive success by uncovering what consumers truly value. Each aspect of developing, making, distributing, marketing and selling a product is collaborative and connected.

Innovation Intersection

Visit our
Innovation
Intersection
website.

At General Mills, we believe that innovative breakthroughs don't only happen in the laboratory. So we connect employees, inventors, entrepreneurs, suppliers, customers and consumers from around the world to tap external expertise, drive internal scale and generate solutions. As you'll see in the following examples, the results are not measured in sales alone.





New Products

Yoplait entered a new aisle in the grocery store with the launch of Yoplait Smoothie kits – convenient pouches that include real frozen fruit and frozen Yoplait yogurt chips. When blended with milk, each pouch makes two smoothies. The technology behind this product was inspired by the frozen vegetables and frozen cheese chips used in Green Giant products, and the idea came to General Mills from a long-time supplier.



Improving Health Benefits

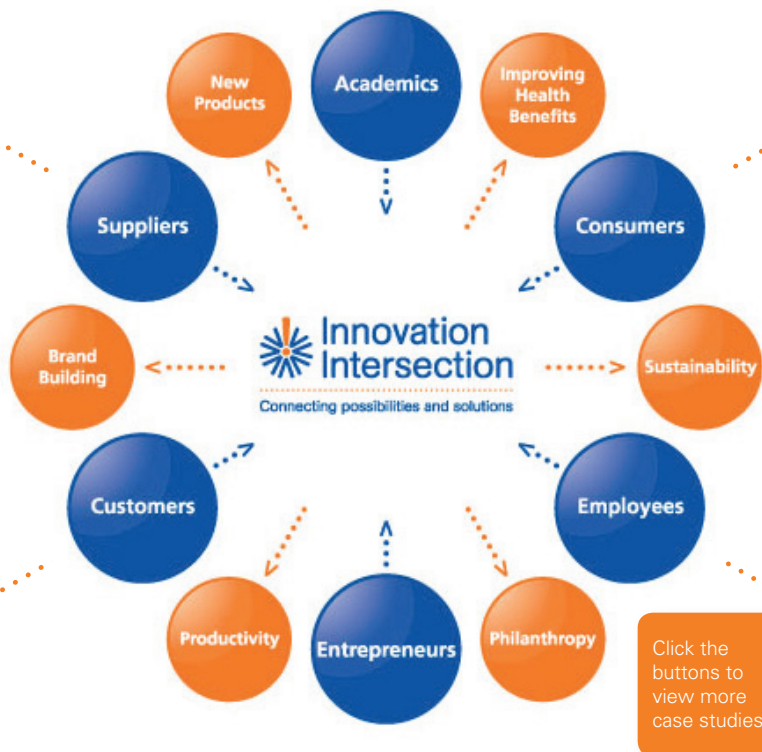
When General Mills decided to switch all Big G cereals to whole grain in 2004, taste was just one challenge. The change also required innovation in everything from sourcing to product mix to cooking processes. Today, our Big G cereals deliver about 37.5 million whole grain servings per day – a 46 percent increase in whole grain servings over 2005. Big G cereals are the No. 1 source of whole grain at breakfast and provide America with more whole grain at breakfast than any other breakfast food from any other food company.



Brand Building

Our successful

Qué Rica Vida initiative seeks to build relationships between General Mills brands and newly acculturated Latinas. The cornerstone of Qué Rica Vida, which translates to “what a rich life,” is its free quarterly lifestyle magazine and website of the same name, www.QueRicaVida.com. Qué Rica Vida recently launched its first Spanish-language application for the Apple® iPad platform, which provides Spanish-speaking consumers with instant access to more than 900 Latin-inspired recipes.



Sustainability

We harness the power of alternative energy sources like the sun, the wind – and oat hulls. The hulls, which are left over from the milling process for Cheerios and other foods, offer 80 percent of the energy of coal. So we installed a biomass burner at our oat-milling facility in Fridley, Minnesota, that produces nearly all of the steam needed to heat the plant and make oat flour.



Productivity

In January 2010, Nature Valley granola bar cartons became smaller and thinner. General Mills shrank the width of the cartons by half an inch and the depth by a quarter inch – while maintaining the same size granola bars. In the process, the company is saving an estimated 6.2 million pounds of paperboard per year. These cartons now use 13 percent less carton material than the earlier design.



Philanthropy

Partners in Food Solutions is a General Mills-driven nonprofit that links the technical and business expertise of volunteer employees at General Mills and other food companies to small and medium-sized mills and food processors in Africa. The goals of Partners in Food Solutions are to improve the ability of those companies to produce high-quality, nutritious and safe food at affordable prices, and to increase demand for the crops of small-holder farmers who supply those businesses.

Click the buttons to view more case studies.

Where innovators meet opportunities.

To learn more about our connected approach to innovation and how it has driven our company's strong business performance, visit General Mills online at **www.GeneralMills.com**.

Inventors or entrepreneurs interested in partnering with General Mills may visit **www.GeneralMills.com/Win** to learn about the General Mills Worldwide Innovation Network's partnership opportunities.



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