



General Mills

history of innovation

Green Giant



The Green Giant brand was introduced in 1925.

The kind and gentle *Green Giant* has presided over his fertile valley with a watchful eye for nearly a century, as his deep resonant voice echoes “Ho, Ho, Ho” from hill to dale.

The Minnesota Valley Canning Company, *Green Giant’s* predecessor company, was founded in 1903 in Le Sueur, Minn. By capitalizing on canning technology that allowed vegetables to be shipped greater distances, 11,750 cases of canned, white cream-style corn were sold in the first year alone.

Four years later, canned Early June Peas were introduced by the company and quickly became a hit with American consumers.

In 1924, a golden, cream-style yellow corn was launched, featuring a sweeter, more tender corn, followed by the *Green Giant* brand in 1925. That same year, *Green Giant* introduced an unusually large pea that had flavor, sweetness and tenderness that Early June Peas couldn't match and the name *Green Giant* became associated with the new peas.



The Green Giant company began canning vegetables in Minnesota.



Ad for Niblets Whole Kernel Corn, the first vacuum-packed corn.

The original *Giant* appeared in advertising for the first time in 1928. The flourishing company expanded operations and added canning facilities in Cokato, Montgomery and Winstead, Minn. — the heart of farm country.

To ensure its continued success, the company began investing twice as much in research than the average food company. The researchers developed corn seeds that yielded taller, more tender kernels, that were easier to cut from the cob. The new corn led to the introduction of the first vacuum-packed corn — *Niblets Whole Kernel Corn*.

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Researchers discovered that tender peas floated when placed in a liquid of a certain density. In 1933, this discovery led to gravity separators, which delicately measured the nuances of peas, and allowed them to be separated into 10 distinct grades.

At harvest time, the peas arrived at the cannery in droves. When one researcher perfected the “heat unit theory” of ripening, field men who coordinated the harvests were able to “program” vegetables to arrive at the cannery on an orderly schedule. By 1937, production crews began harvesting day or night, which inspired the advertising slogan: “Picked at the fleeting moment of perfect flavor.”



Green Giant introduced the first frozen corn on the cob in 1969.

Eventually the *Green Giant* came to symbolize not only the pea, but the company as well. In 1950, the Minnesota Valley Canning Company vanished behind the trademark it had created and officially became the Green Giant Company.

When *Green Giant* launched vegetables frozen in butter sauce and in a flavor-tight pouch, the tasty, convenient offering accounted for the largest part of the company’s \$15 million sales increase in 1963. Building on its reputation as a company of firsts, *Green Giant* marketed the first mushrooms in a glass jar in 1969 as well as the first frozen corn on the cob. In 1979 *Green Giant* merged with The Pillsbury Company.

In 1993 *Green Giant* introduced *Create a Meal!* brand meal starters, to help busy cooks prepare healthy meals fast. The brand’s most recent product introduction, *Complete Skillet Meal!* makes mealtime quick and easy, too.



Complete Skillet Meal! is Green Giant’s most recent product introduction.

