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Mentors-

With the launch of the platform, we are thrilled to introduce all of our esteemed Mentors to one another in a Mentor Digest. Bob Burke, Founder of Natural Products Consulting and member of the Board of Advisors of AccelFoods, kicks things off telling us a bit about what he's on the hunt for, what he thinks about pouches, and his admiration for the Aztecs.



Bob Burke
Founder, Natural Products Consulting

What products are you on the hunt for?

Products that have unique and defensible points of difference that are responsibly sourced, taste amazing, healthy or indulgent, have great gross margins, the potential for eye popping velocities in multiple channels - from smart, passionate entrepreneurs

What trend are you most excited about?

Interest in protein is a strong trend that cuts across a lot of categories - has implications in weight management, for baby boomers and is becoming available in more sustainable forms.

What are you most excited about working with AccelFoods?

Great energy and purpose and a wonderful sense of community. Jordan, Lauren and the AccelFoods team have pulled together an impressive array of mentors, strategic partners, and investors - in an impossibly short amount of time, and are attracting some of the most innovative entrepreneurs in the space. Happy to be part of it and know that it is destined to be successful.

What can you tell us that isn't in your professional bio?

A few summers ago I did a 96 mile canoe trip in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway in Maine with my 17 year old son. It was great experience on many levels. The most terrifying (and pathetic to admit) part of the trip was not the bears, rapids or moose but the thought of going dark/being off the grid for 7 days which I am happy to report was a non-event.

Who do you think has been the biggest innovator in food to date?

Well..."to date" could include the Aztecs and chocolate, whoever decided to roast, grind and run hot water through coffee, and let's not forget Louis Pasteur. But more recently a great innovation has been from all the folks who put stuff

in pouches from Saffron Road and Fronterra in sauces, Happy Family, Plum and Ellas in baby foods and now Mamma Chia and Stonyfield in more adult snacks. They are lighter, have a better carbon footprint, lower cost, sell better and don't shatter when you drop them.

For more information about Bob, please check out his biography below:

Bob Burke

Founder, [Natural Products Consulting](#)

Board of Advisors, AccelFoods

As a consultant since 1998, Bob Burke provides assistance in bringing natural, organic and specialty products to market across most classes of trade. This includes work in strategic planning, growth strategies, writing sales, marketing and business plans, budgeting, pricing, building distribution, broker selection and management, organizational development, strategic options, financing, branding, trade spending management and assistance around M&A, due diligence and venture strategy groups. He is also the co-author and co-publisher of the Natural Products Field Manual, Sixth Edition, The Sales Manager's Handbook and Staking out Space on the Supermarket Shelf. Prior to consulting, Bob was with Stonyfield Farm Yogurt for 11 years as Vice President, Sales & Corporate Development and Vice President, Marketing & Sales. He has held marketing positions with Colombo, Inc. and Sperry Top-Sider. He received an MBA from Babson College.

Clients: Have had the privilege of working with and learning from exciting companies such as: Annie's Homegrown, Oregon Chai, Snyder's of Hanover, UNFI, No Pudge!, Kraft Foods, Bayer Consumer Care Division, ConAgra, Kellogg's, General Mills, Stacy's Pita Chips, Kettle Cuisine, Small Planet Foods, New Hope Natural Media, Bushes Beans, Equal Exchange, Stirrings, Immaculate Baking, Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, Dancing Deer Bakery, The Natural Dentist, Rice Select, EcoFish, PMO Wildwood, S.C. Johnson, Blake's All Natural Foods, Megafood/BioSan, Mighty Leaf Tea, Lesser Evil Snack Co., Theo Chocolate, The Jane Goodall Institute, Kashi, Project 7, Vermont Butter and Cheese, Yoghund, Bord Bia, American Halal, Orgain, Turtle Island, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Bausch + Lomb, Boehringer Ingelheim, Harbar LLC, Rhino Foods, Popcorn Indiana, Stonehouse 27, The ProBar, Hail Merry, Mamma Chia, 479 Popcorn, Heel USA, Nature's Path, Pfizer, E & A Industries, Dave's Gourmet, Via Sana, Sopexa USA, Mavea, New Zealand Trade & Enterprise, Bob's Red Mill, New England Natural Bakers and others.

He currently serves as an outside director for EcoFish, American Halal, Orgain and FoodState Inc. He serves on the advisory boards of Galaxy Nutritional Foods, Mamma Chia, Runa LLC, and Accel Foods. He is a former director of Stonyfield Farm, Equal Exchange, Stirrings, Wildwood, Nutrabella, and the Specialty Food Association. He is the Co-Chair of the Specialty Food Association's Natural and Organic Council. He also serves on the Editorial Advisory Board of Nutrition Business Journal. He is also on the board of directors of the Boy's and Girl's Club of Lawrence, Massachusetts.

Bob was named one of the "Top 25 Business Builders of the Natural Products Industry for the last 25 years" by Natural Foods Merchandiser Magazine.

He has been qualified as an expert witness in federal court on the subject of the sales and marketing of natural, organic and specialty products.

Bob has delivered presentations, seminars and moderated panels at leading trade shows and conferences such as Natural Products Expo East & West, The Specialty Food Association's Winter and Summer Fancy Food Shows, OTA's "All Things Organic Trade Show and Conference", Nutrition Capital Network, International Keynote speaker at Innovest in Auckland, New Zealand, Natural Products Europe in London, Bord Bia in Dublin, Canadian Consulates in Boston and Chicago, Quebec Delegation in Boston, Kosherfest in New York, The Soyfoods Conference, Agrifood Trade Services in Nova Scotia, Saskatoon and Quebec, the CHFA Expo East in Toronto, BevNet Live in New York and Santa Monica, the Global Access Advisors conference in Melbourne, Australia, the National Health Store Conference in London, New Zealand Trade & Enterprise educational programs throughout New Zealand, and has been a featured trainer and speaker at Management Venture Institute forums. He is also a presenter and panelist at the Stonyfield Entrepreneurial Institute Boot Camp. He authored the NASFT's White Paper on Trade Promotion.

He also runs full day seminars and networking events on "Becoming a more Effective Sales Manager in the Natural and Specialty Channel" and "Financing your Natural and Specialty Products Company."

Bob lives in Andover, MA with his wife, Kathy and four children: Conor, Caitlin, Devin and Rory.

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