



MEKHALA
wholesome natural living

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Home-grown organic food brand to launch Asian pastes in 400+ Whole Foods Markets stores nationwide in the US

Singapore, **2 May 2019** – “Be kind, take risks and make a difference. That was our father’s advice to us,” says Daphne Hedley, co-founder of Mekhala, a Singapore-Thai organic food company run by two Singaporean sisters. “He passed away at the young age of 48 from pancreatic cancer, the same cancer that Steve Jobs succumbed to. He was a very successful, enterprising man, and remains our inspiration.”

Daphne co-founded Mekhala was born in 2012 in response to her and co-founder Jang Bauerle’s fruitless search for quality, natural Asian products for their friends and family. The brand has its roots in Singapore and Thailand, and offers organic, vegan, gluten and nut-free Asian cooking pastes and sauces that are delicious and easy to use. Sadly, Jang too passed away, and Diane, Daphne’s younger sister, quit her accounting job to take on the role of COO.

“To ensure the best quality product, we produce everything out of our own factory in Chiang Mai,” says Diane. “Our facility is free from gluten, nuts and animal content, so customers can be rest assured when they purchase a Mekhala product that they are in safe hands.”

From their humble beginnings, Mekhala is now distributed in Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia and the US. But the journey has been long and challenging, as the two sisters explain. With no experience in food manufacturing (Daphne was in finance for most of her career), the girls and their team learnt through trial and error. They hired consultants to advise them on their processes, and Daphne even sought out a former colleague of her father’s for tips on manufacturing.

“Our father was the MD for an American aerospace company, and in that industry, like in food, there’s little room for error,” says Daphne. She learnt how to establish SOPs and quality control procedures for their facility, and to manage bottlenecks and other operational challenges. And that was only the beginning.

The ladies understood that to win over customers in a brutally competitive category, they had not only to create the best product, but also a brand that would resonate with their target audience. So, guided by the philosophy of Mindfulness, the company’s ethos was -integrity, empowerment, customer service and sustainability, was established, and this is reflected in Mekhala’s brand, products and their dealings with employees, customers and suppliers alike. They also created a symbol system to hire illiterate Burmese Shan women and later this year, plan to launch an internship programme with Burmese children from the Schools of Hope, which was co-founded by Jang.

As regional business grew, in order to meet the demands of customers, Daphne raised funds to move the production to a bigger facility and is aiming to achieve international food safety standards.

“We set our sights early on the US market. It’s the biggest organic market in the world, and there’s a huge gap for clean ethnic products,” says Diane. “That’s why we are certified USDA NOP organic, and did our homework visiting trade shows and speaking to the right people.”

Their efforts paid off this year as Mekhala was taken on by United Natural Foods, one of the country’s biggest natural and organic distributors. Launching in 100 stores on the West and East Coast recently, they will soon be found in Whole Foods Markets stores around the nation.

“It’s amazing to think that a Singaporean brand could be in Whole Foods. Our desires are simple - we want to be the number one Asian condiment for people who want to live and eat well,” says Daphne. “I think our father would be proud.”

More information will be available at www.mekhalaliving.com.

Contact Information:

Mekhala Pte Ltd
1002 Jalan Bukit Merah, Singapore 159456
(65) 64668270
www.mekhalaliving.com

For press enquiries, please contact:

Daphne Hedley

CEO/Director

E: Daphne@MekhalaLiving.com

M: +65 9137 1983

Diane Wong

COO

E: Diane@MekhalaLiving.com

M: +65 91522493

###