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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New Diet Drink to be Unveiled at the NYS Agricultural Experiment Station**

by John Zakour and Linda McCandless

**GENEVA, NY:** A group of entrepreneurs from Katonah, NY, will demo a new line of diet shakes they have developed with the help of food scientists at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, at a "Drink and Shrink" forum and taste testing, from 11 a.m.-noon, on April 29, 2003.

The event will take place in the Jordan Hall Auditorium, on the Experiment Station campus, in Geneva, NY.

Margery "Boo" Grace, Len Shofer, Eve Lenel and Rena Northrup have been working with Cornell University food scientists Andy Rao and Herb Cooley, as well as members of the Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship (NECFE), at the Station, to develop four flavors of canned diet shakes they call "Drink & Shrink."

Grace, a fitness and nutrition expert, developed the shakes as part of a "fullness diet" plan, in the early '90s. The inspiration came while watching a nature series on TV.

"The show focused on how an animal regulates and fine-tunes its weight," said Grace. She explained that a bear goes into a famine mode as winter and hibernation approach. Knowing food resources will not be available during hibernation, the bear hoards nutrition in the form of fat, which it uses during hibernation. During spring and summer, the bear shifts into repletion mode, evacuating excess food and returning to a more slender form.

"Humans tend to get stuck in famine mode, and constantly hoard food in the form of fat, in order to prepare for potential bad times ahead that never come," said Grace. Her goal was to create a diet plan that would be nutritious and low in calories but still taste good and leave a person feeling full-thus avoiding the famine mode.

Grace and her associates came up with the formulation, and then were directed to Cornell University and the Experiment Station for development of a safe process.

The work the Station did for "Drink & Shrink" was multifaceted. Rao and Cooley conducted studies to develop



Herb Cooley, with LogTec control panel in the Pilot Plant. This device simulates continuous cookers used by industry to process canned foods.

Credit: Hickey/NYSAES/Cornell

a safe process for the manufacture of four flavored formulations. Thermal processing tests were conducted at the pilot plant to confirm the adequacy of the process. They also conducted rheological studies to ensure that all four flavored products had the same consistency.

Several aspects of product quality, from the standpoint of both flavor and appearance, were examined. Paramount was the procedure to mix the liquid ingredients in the fastest manner so as to inhibit settling after the heat treatment was completed. The product is shelf stable for over one year, and requires no refrigeration until after opening.

A companion product to the ready-to-consume canned drink has also been developed, and the powdered form studied in a similar manner for safety and quality assurances. Grace plans to develop a companion product in a bar form that will meet the same high standards.

Grace hopes to produce the diet products in upstate New York processing plants, and to introduce the "Drink & Shrink" brand nationally via a direct response TV campaign, in the fall of 2003. She expects to compete against other popular diet programs, like Slim Fast. The product launch will be coordinated by the TOBO Marketing Group, Inc.

When asked what it was like to work on such a product, Herb Cooley said, "As a food research technologist, it is very rewarding to work with people from New York on a New York State food product, that has the potential to have a positive impact on the health of the nation. Secondly, as this product develops, I hope it will create new business opportunities and jobs for New Yorkers. In my opinion, those are two of the many reasons why the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station exists."

"The dedicated staff at Cornell were the heart and soul of our project from the beginning," Grace said. "The very core of everything we did was guided by Dr. Andy Rao, Herbert Cooley, and Dr. Olga Padilla-Zakour. Without them, we just wouldn't be."

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**FMC FoodTech**  
Process Management System

LOG-TEC

TEMPERATURE: 70.6  
PRESSURE: 0.0  
TIME: 10:28:5

513 Shake Drink - ITC 211x414  
This Process is For A ROTARY Simulation

ALARM	A	B
7	8	9
4	5	6
1	2	3
ENTER	Y	Z

