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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Welch’s says 2018 could be the Year of the Concord Grape   
as ‘mindfulness’ is named the top food & beverage trend**

Welch’s Global Ingredients Group has welcomed the news that ‘mindful choices’ is set to be 2018’s top food and beverage trend – and says it believes this could be the Year of the Concord Grape as a result.

Research company Innova Market Insights has picked mindful choices as its #1 trend for 2018[[1]](#footnote-1), predicting that this year will see more consumers buying food and beverage products that address concerns relating to both body and mind. In this holistic approach to making purchase decisions, consumers are drawn to brands that are natural and healthy (body) and produced in ways that respect the world we live in (mind). Explaining the trend, Innova Director of Innovation Lu Ann Williams said: “Consumers are more conscious than ever about making responsible food choices, and increasingly want to know what is in their food and how it is produced.”

Kevin Kilcoyne, VP and General Manager, Global Ingredients Group at Welch’s, said that in order to meet this trend manufacturers faced the challenge of sourcing raw materials that could satisfy those demands – and suggested that Welch’s Concord grape ingredients offer a solution. Suitable for use in beverages, smoothies, snacks, bakery products, confectionery, yogurts, ice cream and desserts, Welch’s Concord grape ingredients include 100% fruit juices and purées, as well as FruitWorx real fruit pieces and fruit juice powder.

Mr Kilcoyne explained: “Our Concord grapes are the complete mindful superfruit, delivering health benefits for the body and peace of mind in terms of how they’re produced. They were first cultivated in Concord, MA nearly 170 years ago and today continue to grow on family-farmer-owned vineyards in North America. Welch’s is a cooperative, and the profits generated by our ingredients division go back to our grower-owners. This model helps to ensure that our members’ businesses remain viable in the long term, which is positive for their families, their employees and the community in which they live and operate their businesses.”

Welch’s Global Ingredients Group is part of Welch Foods, Inc. (Welch’s), which is owned by the National Grape Cooperative, a member organization made up of approximately 900 grape growers located across northern regions of the USA and in Canada. Welch’s growers have established and adopted a range of sustainability measures that encompass environmental stewardship, community wellbeing and economic viability. Specific measures include soil management and water efficiency, as well as investment in sustainable business practices for the long-term.

Mr Kilcoyne said: “The vineyards where our farmers grow Welch’s Concord grapes have been in their families for generations. They live on the land, which strengthens their connection with it and, in turn, heightens their respect for the environment. With our range of ingredients for the food and beverage sector, manufacturers can now harness the taste, nutrition and backstory of the Concord grape to create products that will strike a chord with mindful consumers. In fact, with mindfulness named as Innova’s top trend for 2018, we believe that this will be the Year of the Concord Grape.”

The Concord grape is a unique dark purple variety that’s delicious and naturally sweet. It is different from standard table grapes with its thick, vibrantly colored skin and crunchy seeds, which is where you’ll find the plant nutrients (polyphenols) behind this grape’s superfruit goodness. In fact, research says that, thanks to the Concord grape, 100% grape juice helps support a healthy heart and may offer benefits for a healthy mind too.

**ENDS**

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**About Welch’s Global Ingredients Group**

Established in 2014 as a division of Welch Foods, Inc. (Welch’s), Welch’s Global Ingredients Group offers grape juice expertise and solutions to companies across the globe. Our primary ingredients are made in the USA and include Concord and Niagara grape single-strength juices, juice concentrates and purées, as well as a range of powders and fruit bites. Our sales territories are North, Central and South America; Asia, with special emphasis in Japan, Korea and China; and EMEA. In EMEA and China we operate through our distribution partner, WILD. For more information, visit [www.welchsgig.com](http://www.welchsgig.com).

Welch’s is the processing and marketing subsidiary of the National Grape Cooperative. Located across America and in Ontario, Canada, the cooperative’s approximately 900 family farmers own the company and grow the delicious and inherently healthy Concord Grape used in Welch’s juices and other grape-based products. Welch’s is committed to research and development that will meet the growing demand for products that address consumers’ health and nutrition needs. Welch’s products are sold throughout the United States and in approximately 40 countries around the globe. Welch’s is an Equal Opportunity Employer – Minorities/Female/Disabled/Veterans. For more information, visit [www.welchs.com](http://www.welchs.com).

1. *www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/mindful-choices-the-key-food-driver-for-2018-says-innova-market-insights-656335853.html* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)