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**SARGENTO DECLARES AUGUST NATIONAL PANINI MONTH**  
*A month-long celebration of hot grilled sandwiches perfectly partnered with  
new sliced natural cheese varieties*

**PLYMOUTH, Wis. (July 6, 2009)** – The trend of hot gourmet panini has yet to cool, and consumers continue to look for ways to replicate and enjoy the same bold flavors and premium ingredients of these restaurant grilled sandwiches in the comfort of their own homes. One of the key ingredients of a panino is cheese, and with nearly 82 percent of consumers listing natural cheese among their favorite fillings in hot grilled sandwiches/panini\*, Sargento is declaring August as National Panini Month. The celebration will honor the popularity of panini and showcase how sliced natural cheese, like Sargento *Vermont Sharp White Cheddar*, new Sargento *Sharp Provolone* and new Sargento *Reduced Fat Pepper Jack*, can enhance panini.

“Sargento does not offer individually wrapped processed cheese, we only offer natural sliced cheese that provides consumers with a variety of flavor options when preparing panini or hot grilled sandwiches at home,” said Stephanie Scholz, marketing manager at Sargento. “The prevalence of panini is too widespread to be ignored, and because cheese is such an important part of any grilled sandwich, we wanted to take the initiative to declare a month in its honor.”

National Panini Month is recognized by the “Chase’s Calendar of Events,” and as part of the celebration, Sargento has partnered with Jason Denton, professional chef and author of “Simple Italian Sandwiches” and “Simple Italian Snacks,” to offer consumers new panini recipes for each day in August with an online Panini Month Calendar at [www.sargentocheese.com](http://www.sargentocheese.com). All of the recipes incorporate varieties of deli-quality Sargento natural cheese, including new

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Sargento *Sharp Provolone* sliced cheese, new Sargento *Reduced Fat Pepper Jack* sliced cheese, and the first “Limited Edition” Sargento variety that is now a permanent fixture in the dairy case, Sargento *Vermont Sharp White Cheddar* sliced cheese.

“Making the perfect panino is all about selecting the right ingredients,” said Denton. “We are seeing a trend of consumers choosing to cook with natural cheeses versus processed cheese because of the varieties, great melt and flavor complexity natural cheeses offer.”

Sargento continues to bring deli-quality natural cheese to the dairy case through the introduction of its latest varieties and encourages consumers to eat natural cheese instead of processed alternatives. New Sargento *Sharp Provolone* sliced cheese is aged 60 days and boasts a bold taste, along with a smooth and creamy texture, while new Sargento *Reduced Fat Pepper Jack* sliced cheese is the only national brand of sliced cheese available in dairy cases nationwide to combine the great bold flavors of both jalapeños and habaneros. According to recent survey results, 73 percent of consumers list Cheddar cheese as their preferred cheese to eat on hot grilled sandwiches/panini\* and with a creamy texture and naturally aged full bodied taste, the newly permanent *Vermont Sharp White Cheddar* sliced cheese is the perfect premium ingredient for the at-home cook. This former Sargento “Limited Edition” cheese has been reintroduced to grocery stores nationwide as a permanent item as result of popular consumer demand.

Sargento Foods Inc. has demonstrated its passion for cheese and cheese-based solutions throughout its history. Founded in 1953 in Plymouth, Sargento is a leading manufacturer, packager and marketer of natural shredded, sliced and snack cheeses, cheese appetizers, ingredients and sauces. Sargento is owned and operated by the Gentine family, and has net sales of \$900 million.

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\*Impulse Research survey of more than 1,000 consumers conducted in 2007