



Chopt Creative Salad Company Receives Significant Investment From Catterton And Hain Celestial

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Groundbreaking Partnership to Accelerate Growth and Explore New Product Offerings

GREENWICH, Conn., LAKE SUCCESS, N.Y. and NEW YORK, Nov. 2, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Chopt Creative Salad Company ("Chopt" or "the Company"), a pioneer in the fast casual salad segment, today announced that Catterton, the leading consumer-focused private equity firm, led a significant investment in the Company, joined by The Hain Celestial Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: HAIN), a leading organic and natural products company. This unique partnership represents three best-in-class specialists with a shared vision for how Americans will eat in the future - combining Catterton's deep experience in the restaurant and consumer space, the strength of Hain Celestial's innovation and leadership position in natural foods and the lines-out-the-door popularity of Chopt salads and craveable dressings. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

"I have had the great opportunity to get to know the Catterton team through their other restaurant investments, serving on the board of Mendocino Farms Sandwich Market with Catterton Partner Jon Owsley, and I have long been impressed with their strategic approach to building great brands," said Nick Marsh, Chief Executive Officer of Chopt. "Similarly, Hain Celestial has been a critical partner to Chopt for years. In support of our belief that 'Better Tastes Better', Chopt was one of the first restaurant companies in our segment to serve natural antibiotic-free Free-Bird® Chicken, BluePrint® Juice, Terra® Chips and other Hain Celestial products. They have demonstrated a commitment to natural, local and organic food that matches the Chopt philosophy. We look forward to adding more of their products to our restaurants. As a team, we believe that this group can grow Chopt in unique ways."

Founded in 2001 by Tony Shure and Colin McCabe, Chopt is a leader in the rapidly expanding fast casual salad category, with 32 restaurants in New York, Washington, D.C., and North Carolina. In a statement, Shure and McCabe said, "We created Chopt 15 years ago with the vision that salad restaurants could find a place in the fast food landscape. We aspired to reinvent salad in an exciting and flavorful way in the effort to recruit people into eating a more balanced diet without sacrificing flavor or convenience. We thought salad and vegetables had the ability to fix what was broken in traditional fast food. We are on a quest to explore the world's most craveable seasonal ingredients, best local farmers markets and craftiest neighborhood specialists. These are the people and places that inspire us to take salad places it has never gone before. We are extremely excited to continue this journey with Catterton and Hain Celestial as our partners as their passion is as unlimited as our own."

"We are excited about the alignment of culture and vision between Hain Celestial, Catterton and Chopt and the tremendous new opportunities that this partnership creates," said Irwin D. Simon, Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer of Hain Celestial. "Whether it is innovating new products to bring to in-store or retail distribution, learning about our shared customers, or the opportunity to support Chopt growth with additional Hain Celestial brands, our partnership with Chopt represents a continuation of Hain Celestial's mission to provide its consumers with 'A Healthier Way of Life™' and further supports our continued leadership in the organic and natural area. We are also pleased to be expanding our out-of-home product offerings, as Millennials and other consumers increasingly are seeking more wholesome dining experiences away from home. We look forward to partnering with Nick, Tony, Colin and the Catterton team to help support Chopt's growth and expansion."

"Chopt's flavor-forward approach to delivering fantastic, high-quality, craveable offerings has made it the leader in the fast casual salad category," said Jon Owsley, a Partner at Catterton. "Nick, Tony and Colin are three of the most innovative and dynamic leaders in the restaurant space today, with a unique vision to change the future of fast food. We are excited to partner with the team and with Hain Celestial, a leader in the natural and organic movement, and look forward to a great partnership."

About Chopt

Chopt Salad, the massively popular, lines-out-the door salad concept was created in 2001 by best friends Tony Shure and Colin McCabe. Chopt has 32 restaurants in New York, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Virginia, and North Carolina. For information about Chopt, visit www.choptsalad.com.

About Catterton

Catterton is the leading [consumer-focused private equity firm](#) with more than \$4.0 billion currently under management and a twenty-six year track record of success in building high growth companies. Since its founding in 1989, Catterton has leveraged its category insight, strategic and operating skills, and network of industry contacts to establish one of the strongest private equity investment track records in the middle market. Catterton invests in all major consumer segments, including Food and Beverage, Retail and Restaurants, Consumer Products and Services, Consumer Health, and Media and Marketing Services. Catterton's investments include: Restoration Hardware, CorePower Yoga, Sweaty Betty, Outback Steakhouse, Plum Organics, Mendocino Farms, Noodles & Company, PIADA, Hopdoddy, Protein Bar, Bruxie, Snap Kitchen, Frederic Fekkai, Baccarat, PIRCH, Build-A-Bear Workshop, Wellness pet food, Nature's Variety pet food, Kettle Foods, Odwalla and P.F. Chang's, to name a few. More information about Catterton can be found at catterton.com.

About The Hain Celestial Group, Inc.

The Hain Celestial Group (Nasdaq: HAIN), headquartered in Lake Success, NY, is a leading organic and natural products company with operations in North America, Europe and India. Hain Celestial participates in many natural categories with well-known brands that include Celestial Seasonings®, Earth's Best®, Ella's Kitchen®, Terra®, Garden of Eatin'®, Sensible Portions®, Health Valley®, Arrowhead Mills®, MaraNatha®, SunSpire®, DeBoles®, Casbah®, Rudi's Organic Bakery®, Gluten Free Cafe™, Hain Pure Foods®, Spectrum®, Spectrum Essentials®, Walnut Acres Organic®, Imagine®, Almond Dream®, Rice Dream®, Soy Dream®, WestSoy®, The Greek Gods®, BluePrint®, FreeBird®, Plainville Farms®, Empire®, Kosher Valley®, Yves Veggie Cuisine®, Europe's Best®, Cully & Sully®, New Covent Garden Soup Co.®, Johnson's Juice Co.®, Farmhouse Fare®, Hartley's®, Sun-Pat®, Gale's®, Robertson's®, Frank Cooper's®, Linda McCartney®, Lima®, Danival®, Joya®, Natumi®, GG UniqueFiber®, Tilda®, JASON®, Avalon Organics®, Alba Botanica®, Live Clean® and Queen Helene®. Hain Celestial has been providing A Healthier Way of Life™ since

1993. For more information, visit www.hain.com.

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To view the original version on PR Newswire, visit:<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/chopt-creative-salad-company-receives-significant-investment-from-catterton-and-hain-celestial-300170082.html>

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