

Spam on Table for Hispanics

Hormel to Expand Ad Effort Nationwide

BY JASON FARGO

HORMEL FOODS CORP., the meat processor best known for its flagship Spam luncheon meat, is expanding its first-ever Spanish-language advertising campaign, which was launched in California in late 2005.

The Austin, Minn.-based company spent \$2.5 million to advertise its processed meat products through television, billboards, radio and print ads in Los Angeles, and plans now are under way to expand the effort to additional cities in 2007.

A separate campaign focused entirely on Spam is scheduled for this month.

Eric Steinbach, Hormel's senior product manager, says the advertising campaign is meant to build brand awareness for Hormel among Hispanic consumers, many of whom are not

very familiar with the company.

"We recognize that the Hispanic community is one of the fastest-growing segments of the population, something that has generally been ignored by meat-products companies," he says.

Steinbach says the goal is to position Hormel in Hispanics' minds as a premium, high-quality brand.

The cornerstone of the marketing effort is a TV commercial developed by Chicago-based The San Jose Group. "El Comelón (The Eater)" features a little boy running around a family party, stealing meat products without adults noticing and eating the goods under the table.

"We know that children are huge drivers in family shopping practices," says Santiago Torres, account group director for The San Jose Group. "So we included

that element along with a very catchy and relevant soundtrack within an environment that is an everyday Hispanic occurrence."

The San Jose Group is also working on a separate campaign for Herdez, a well-recognized brand of food and spices among Mexicans, and also a Hormel brand. A new Herdez campaign is expected to break this month.

Initially, Torres says, the Hormel spot went live in Los Angeles at the end of last year. However, in April it was re-launched in conjunction with billboards and free-standing inserts in local newspapers. Steinbach says that initial plans call for the commercial to air for a month, followed by a two-month break, and then another month of airplay. Hormel will then conduct market research to gauge consumer response in August. Phone surveys



➔ **EL COMELÓN** The campaign, launched last year in L.A., is set to go nationwide.

of Hispanic consumers will be conducted before and after the commercial airs.

The campaign will focus on shows that women are most likely to watch. "We are looking to reach the Hispanic mom," says Torres. "So you'll see it during novelas, news and some prime-time programming." ■

ABC Takes Over Hispanic Awards

Alma Nets Glam Host, Sponsors Aplenty

WHO DOESN'T LOVE EVA? That's the thinking behind ABC and the NCLR Alma Awards joining together for the annual fest honoring Latino achievements in TV, film and music. When the special airs Monday, June 5 (9:30-11:30 p.m. ET/PT), it will be the first prime-time outing for the show on a major mainstream network. It's also a first for Eva Longoria, the star of ABC's *Desperate Housewives*, who hosts and produces.

"ABC has changed. It is much more understanding," says Executive Producer David Chavez. It helps, he says, that Longoria is part of ABC's runaway hit and "is bringing her friends, her talent

and her wisdom to the show."

The special, however, will not air live when luminaries gather at the Shrine Auditorium in L.A. on May 7, but Chavez says that day will come. He sees the prime-time slot as a step up from years when the ceremony aired on both Fox and ABC at 7 p.m. on a Saturday, presumably when most are enjoying time outside their homes.

Chavez notes the importance of airing the event on an English-language channel. "The mission is to impact non-Latinos. On Spanish-language television, we're not even reaching half our mission."

The awards show was created in 1995 by the National Council

of La Raza, the Hispanic civil rights and advocacy group, which is also responsible for bringing traditional ad buyers, Hispanic agencies and large corporations on board, says Chavez. He adds that the special will cost \$3.7 million.

"If the NCLR doesn't sell the commercials, they lose money," he says.

Several corporations are taking advantage of sponsorship tiers: Gold Level includes two 30-second spots and a billboard during the show, to the tune of \$300,000.

AARP, American Airlines, Ford Motor Co., Frito-Lay, General Motors, Pepsi-Cola, Johnson & Johnson and Prudential have signed on.

Silver Level sponsors Bank of America, Coors, McDonald's, Verizon and Wal-Mart will net one 30-second spot for \$150,000.

Chavez says ABC has discounted time buys for the show. By press time, NCLR was close to reaching its goal.

Chavez says, "We're about two commercials away."

— Nancy Ayala



➔ **LENDING SUPPORT** Longoria hosts/produces Alma Awards.