

The Bright Leaf Hot Dog Turns 75 “Making Kids Smile Since 1941”



Smithfield, NC – June 29, 2016 –

On June 24, 1941 John A Jones Sr. and several local businessmen formed Carolina Packers Incorporated. From the very beginning Carolina Packers created a much needed livestock market for Smithfield area farmers, many of whom became charter stockholders in the company. The company was not only an asset to area farmers, but to the overall economy; it was the first plant of its kind in all of NC and provided much needed jobs for Johnston County residents. For the next 50 years Carolina Packers processed locally grown beef and pork into ham, bacon, country link sausage and our famous family of “Bright Leaf” hot dogs, bologna, red hots, and smoked sausage. In 1997 slaughtering operations were discontinued to concentrate on the “Bright Leaf” product line. The late John A (Buck) Jones Jr. and his wife, the late Jean Lassiter Jones were the driving force behind the company and the Bright Leaf brand growth for the last 39 years.



“Our 75th Anniversary marks a major milestone for our company,” says Kent Denning, Carolina Packers President and General Manager. “On behalf of our Bright Leaf Family, it has been an honor and privilege to serve the residents of NC; our wonderful customers are the key to our success.”

Seventy-five years of hard work has paid off for the company. In February 2011, *The National Provisioner* magazine named the Carolina Packer Bright Leaf hot dog one of the top 20 most popular hot dogs in the United States. Articles about the iconic Bright Leaf brand have been written all over the country from *Our State* magazine to *The Colorado Springs Gazette*. Carolina Packers, Inc. has garnered several awards over the years, including receiving the inaugural Johnston County Industry Appreciation Award in 2014. The most recent recognition came from the Johnston County Farm-City Committee in 2015. The Committee recognized Carolina Packers for their significant contributions to agriculture and agribusiness in Johnston County. Carolina Packers is a member of the NC Meat Processors Association,

NC Pork Council, North American Meat Institute and works closely with the NC Goodness Grows Program.

“We want to celebrate this milestone achievement with our customers,” says Denning, noting that the company will be doing product giveaways with local radio stations until October of this year. “So listen to the radio and you might be a winner. We appreciate the support of our longtime local customers, and we want newcomers to try our product and get a taste of a real Eastern NC tradition.”

Carolina Packers has undergone many changes over the years, but the company has remained loyal to the traditions that have made the Bright Leaf brand a family favorite on the dinner table for 75 years. Like the famous Bright Leaf hot dog recipe, the company’s commitment to providing good tasting, wholesome products has not and will not change.

Picture above: back row from left to right: Randy Eglund, Charlie Oats, Lisa Beasley and Donnie Moore. The middle row from left to right: Chris Moore, Elaine Byrd, Jimmy Butler, and Johnny Hayes. The first row from left to right: Kurt Byrd, Sharon Holloman, Elizabeth Ennis, Delcie Crumpler and Kent Denning

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