

Rebranding Right: Don't Just Tweak... Transform

5 Things Produce Leaders Should Know Before Rebranding



A fresh perspective on fresh produce packaging, branding, and strategy.



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Executive Summary

In the fresh produce industry, every rebrand is announced as a success. Trade press releases celebrate new logos, packaging, and colors with 100% positivity. Yet, when you look more closely, most rebrands are cosmetic tweaks.

Logos are modernized. Fonts updated. Packaging refreshed. But the deeper questions — about strategy, positioning, and future relevance — often go unasked. And that's the real missed opportunity.

A rebrand is not just a design exercise. It's a chance to rethink your strategy, clarify your positioning, and ensure your business is relevant to tomorrow's consumers and markets. If you don't use the rebranding conversation to address those issues before you spend the money, then the investment is wasted.

This paper outlines five things every fresh produce leader should know before rebranding. They are grounded in my 30+ years of global experience and supported by the Persuasive Packaging Pathway™ — my framework for turning packaging from protection into persuasion.

“A rebrand is not just a design exercise. It's a chance to rethink your strategy.”



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5 Rebranding Tips for Produce Companies

1. Strategy First, Always

A rebrand is never just about logos, colors, or fonts. If your business strategy hasn't been reviewed in years, your rebrand will be cosmetic at best.

Rebrands must start with clarity:

- Where is the category going?
- How is consumer behavior changing?
- What role does your brand want to play in the future?

Only then should packaging and branding execute the strategy.

2. Future-Proof, Don't Just Refresh

Too many rebrands are about fixing today's problems. The best ones anticipate tomorrow's consumer, market shifts, and competitive threats.

A rebrand should:

- Anticipate Gen Z and Millennial expectations (functional + emotional benefits).
- Align with future retail realities (online, DTC, omni-channel).
- Build flexibility for future product extensions.

The goal isn't just to look better today. It's to stay relevant for the next 10 years.

3. From Legacy 1.0 to Legacy 2.0

Milestone rebrands (25th anniversary, family succession, generational leadership changes) often lead to "safe" tweaks. But safe doesn't drive growth.

Legacy 2.0 requires boldness:

- New positioning that resonates with younger consumers.
- Updated consumer story built on insight, not history.
- Courage to break away from design elements that no longer serve you.

Great rebrands respect history, but don't get trapped by it.



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5 Rebranding Tips (cont)

4. Balance Emotion with Insight

Leadership often wants change because “it feels time.” But feelings don’t drive sales.

The strongest rebrands balance emotional instinct with research-driven insight:

- Trade interviews to uncover channel perceptions.
- Consumer insight to identify purchase drivers.
- Competitive benchmarking to expose white space.

Anchoring emotional instincts with data saves money, builds alignment, and ensures packaging communicates what matters most.

5. Don’t Tweak. Transform.

Most fresh produce rebrands are cosmetic: a logo refresh, a color tweak, or a packaging update. By the time you’re at the design stage for these changes, it’s already too late.

The rebranding conversation itself is your chance to pause and ask:

- What’s changing in our market and category?
- What positioning will make us relevant to tomorrow’s consumer?
- What story will justify premium value and loyalty in the future?

If you start with tweaks, you’ve wasted the money. If you start with transformation, you turn a rebrand into a strategy for growth.

“The most successful rebrands come from insight, strategy, and courage — not design tweaks.”



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Lessons From The Field

Rebranding Success Stories

- ***Love! Kumara™* (NZ):** Reframed a commodity into an award-winning consumer brand. Result → 200%+ increase in pack returns.



- ***Winter Sweetz™* Grapefruit (USA):** Repositioned grapefruit with clear consumer cues (“sweet, winter, tree-ripened”). Result → new brand territory, stronger retailer excitement.



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Conclusion

In fresh produce, rebrands are always celebrated. But the real measure of success isn't whether your new logo looks good in a press release — it's whether your rebrand future-proofs your business.

Cosmetic change is easy. Strategic transformation takes courage.

If you're considering a rebrand, the decision isn't about design. It's about strategy, positioning, and relevance for the future.



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About the Author

Lisa Cork is a fresh produce brand and packaging strategist with more than 30 years of experience helping companies create packaging that sells. She is a marketing award winner and was named as one of 35 industry vanguards for her work on fresh produce branding and packaging.

As an Adjunct Professor of Produce Marketing at Cal Poly State University, Lisa brings unique insight into the mindset of next-generation consumers and has advised leading growers, marketers, and retailers on packaging strategy, brand differentiation, and market positioning.



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