

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**RUSTIC CRUST HELPS NATURAL RETAILERS TAKE A SLICE  
OUT OF \$3 BILLION HOME PIZZA CATEGORY**

*Old World Ready Made Pizza Crust Brand Rockets to #1 in Less Than Six  
Months, Accounts for More Than 57% of Category Growth*

**Pittsfield, NH, (October 5, 2006)**—Rustic Crust today announced that since the September 2005 launch of its all-natural, Old World line of crusts and flatbread pizzas, the company has rocketed to become the number one brand in Pizza Shells & Focaccia, a subcategory of Bread & Baked Goods, and accounts for more than 57% of category growth, according to SpinScan. As a result, Rustic Crust has helped retailers take back business from the \$3 billion Home Pizza category.

“Only one year ago, we set out to attain a two-pronged goal: to grow our business and to create a new pizza category for natural retailers,” said Brad Sterl, Crust Crusader, founder and president of Rustic Crust.

“A significant alternative to ready-made pizza crusts didn’t exist in the natural foods trade,” continued Sterl. “I got into this business to not only give consumers a delicious, all-natural choice, but also to help retailers turn a sleepy category into a high growth category. The strategy seems to be working.”

Shortly after a rebranding and packaging enhancement prior to its September 2005 launch, Rustic Crust was voted as one of the top five Most Innovative brands at the Natural Products Expo East Show. Rustic Crust then leveraged this platform to not only transform its own top line, but also the natural pizza shell segment.

According to SpinScan, the retail sales of Rustic Crust are up more than 600% and the brand has rocketed to the number one brand in the natural Pizza Shells & Focaccia category in the first year. The company now has a 21% market share in the U.S. natural market and a 35% share in the northeast, where the company has focused distribution efforts.

The Pizza Shells & Focaccia sub-category is now trending towards \$5 million dollars in the natural channel alone, according to SpinScan.

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“We’re just beginning,” continued Sterl. “There’s absolutely no reason why the natural Pizza Shell & Focaccia category can’t be a \$20-30 million dollar category.”

According to the National Association of Pizzeria Operators, Home Pizza is a category now over 2.8 billion and the average family eats pizza “at home” 30 times a year.

Rustic Crust specializes in all-natural, Old World crusts and flatbread pizzas that are as convenient as they are delicious. Using traditional baking methods, each Rustic Crust and flatbread is formed by hand, allowed to slowly ferment, double proofed, and then baked in custom ovens for rich flavor.

Rustic Crust is committed to using the highest quality, all-natural ingredients, such as whole grain flour, fresh herbs, cold-pressed olive oil, vine-ripened tomatoes, handpicked vegetables, and farm-fresh cheese. No artificial preservatives, trans fat acids, hydrogenated oils, GMOs, or sugar is added. Fresh, ready-made crusts include Cheesy Herb, Italian Herb, Tuscan Six Grain, Classic Sourdough and Ultimate Whole Grain, in two different sizes. Frozen, all-natural flatbread pizzas include Basil Pesto & Roasted Red Pepper, Ultimate Cheese & Herb, and Cheese & Vine-Ripened Tomato.

Rustic Crust products are the only ready-made, Old World crusts that store for up to 120 days in a pantry naturally. All-natural oxygen absorbers preserve freshness without the need of artificial preservatives commonly found in other shelf-stable products.

Rustic Crust recently launched a line of USDA certified organic Old World pizza crusts, including Great Grains, featuring nine whole grains such as omega-3 rich flax, and Pizza Originale, with authentic organic whole wheat.

**About Rustic Crust**

Rustic Crust is a New Hampshire based bakery specializing in all-natural, Old World crusts and flatbread pizzas that are as convenient as they are delicious. Rustic Crust was founded on the belief that time-honored tradition mixed with whole grain health bakes the best crusts and flatbreads. Rustic Crust is committed to using the highest quality, all-natural ingredients such as whole grains and fresh produce. No artificial preservatives, trans fat acids, hydrogenated oils, GMOs, or added sugar. For more information, visit [www.rusticcrust.com](http://www.rusticcrust.com).

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