



Three Award-Winning Own Brands Products Showcase Innovation Across Candy, Beverage and Fresh Categories

October 21, 2026

Innovation starts with understanding what customers want and transforming those insights into products that deliver value, quality and excitement. That commitment to innovation was recently recognized through multiple industry awards, with three Own Brands products earning honors from the [2026 Store Brands Editors' Picks Awards](#) and [PLMA's 2026 Salute to Excellence Awards](#).

Spanning fresh produce, beverage and confectionery categories, the winning products demonstrate how Own Brands teams continue to identify emerging trends, enhance customer experiences and bring differentiated products to market.

Reimagining a Candy Category Favorite

Among the products recognized by the 2026 Store Brands Editors' Picks Awards was the AUSA Private Brand Candy Collection, a refreshed assortment of customer favorites including jellybeans, peach rings, sour worms and gum drops. The collection was recognized for its colorful packaging redesign and cohesive visual identity, which helped transform a traditional value offering into a more engaging, shopper-friendly experience.

The redesigned packaging introduced vibrant colors, stronger branding and improved shelf visibility, helping the collection stand out in a highly competitive category. The result was a 20% year-over-year increase in sales, demonstrating the impact thoughtful brand development can have on customer engagement and business performance.



Bringing Nostalgia to the Soda Aisle

Also recognized by the Store Brands Editors' Picks Awards was the limited-edition Shirley Temple Inspired Cherry & Cranberry 2-Liter Soda. Inspired by growing consumer interest in Shirley Temple beverages, the product brought a classic restaurant favorite into customers' homes through a refreshing blend of cherry flavor and a hint of cranberry.

Originally launched at Stop & Shop before expanding to Giant Food and The GIANT Company, the limited-time offering generated strong customer demand and achieved near-complete sell-through during its initial run. Its success highlights how Own Brands teams can respond to trends with innovative products that create excitement and deliver memorable experiences for customers.



Elevating Fresh Through Innovation

In addition to the Store Brands recognition, Nature's Promise™ Greenhouse Grown Spring Mix recently earned a 2026 PLMA Salute to Excellence Award in the Salad Mixes & Prepared Salads category. The recognition came in a year when more than 900 products were nominated by U.S. retailers, making it the largest and most competitive field in the program's history.

Launched across Ahold Delhaize USA companies in mid-2025, Nature's Promise™ Greenhouse Grown Spring Mix is grown in a controlled greenhouse environment designed to support consistent quality, taste and year-round freshness. Produced without pesticides or herbicides and verified as non-GMO, the product provides customers with a fresh, convenient option that aligns with growing interest in thoughtfully sourced foods and everyday wellness.

The award recognizes how the product brought a differentiated private brand offering to the packaged salad category while reinforcing Nature's Promise™ as a trusted destination for accessible, better-for-you options.



A Reflection of Our Innovation Mindset

These awards represent more than product achievements. They reflect the collaboration, creativity and customer-first thinking that drive innovation across Own Brands.

"This award is a great reflection of the innovation happening across Own Brands," said Greg Mankus, Manager of Grocery Category Development. "It shows that innovation isn't just about creating something new. It's about rethinking what's possible and delivering better value, quality and experiences for customers."

From introducing new flavors and experiences to enhancing packaging and elevating fresh offerings, Own Brands teams continue to develop products that help differentiate our brands and strengthen connections with customers. These industry honors are a testament to the innovation, partnership and passion that help bring those products to life every day.