

Real Foods appoints ex-CEOs Kevin Hedderwick and Antony Ball

Former Famous Brands group chief executive Kevin Hedderwick has joined the Real Foods board as group strategic director, while Antony Ball, the former co-founder, CEO and major shareholder of Brait, has also joined the Real Foods board as of 1 October 2018.



Kauai

Real Foods is a multi-brand group focused on natural food, taking advantage of the global trend towards health and wellness. The company owns Kauai, Nü Health Food Café and Kohu as well as Highveld Honey, the largest honey supplier in South Africa

Dean Kowarski, Real Foods CEO, comments that the company is delighted to welcome both Hedderwick and Ball to the board as the business continues to experience strong organic growth and also embarks on an acquisitive growth strategy.

“It is a compliment to us and our business model that Kevin, who is so highly respected in the food industry, has chosen to join Real Foods above the many options available to him. Kevin believes that the growth of the natural foods sector is exceptional and that Real Foods is best positioned to take advantage of this growth.

“Kevin is a highly experienced and well-regarded business leader and we have no doubt that his expertise will bolster the ambitious growth and potential future listing plans that we have for the group,” he said.

Hedderwick is credited with turning the Steers Holdings family business with a market capitalisation of R105 million in 2000 when he joined, into the R14 billion Famous Brands company that it grew to become on his watch. The business comprises a fully integrated food services business of brands underpinned by significant manufacturing and logistics operations.

Hedderwick comments, “Real Foods’ passion for authentic, premium quality real foods is attractive and I am optimistic about the company’s success in a high growth segment. After spending much time in the listed corporate environment, I look forward to being part of the dynamic, agile and entrepreneurial, yet uncompromisingly results-driven culture at Real Foods.”

Speaking on Ball's appointment, Kowarski, who has a background in corporate finance, says “Ball is known as a pioneering

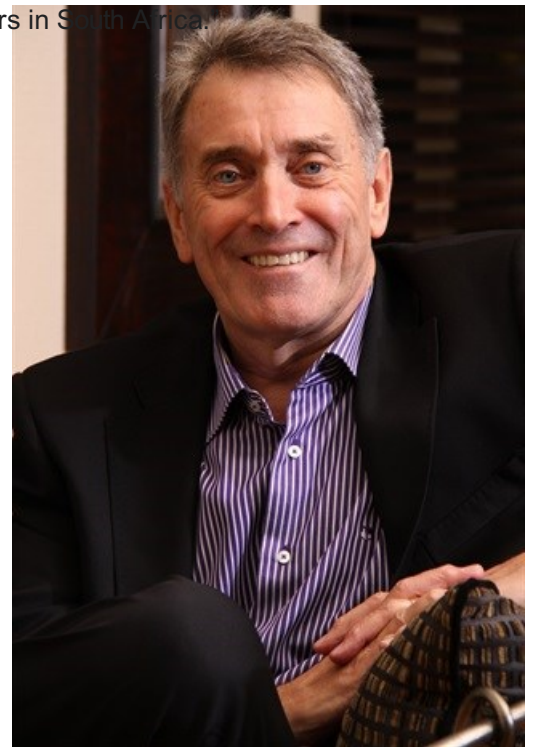
private equity practitioner and as one of the most astute and respected investors in South Africa.

During his tenure at Brait, the company successfully raised four funds, listed on the JSE and the company completed many successful transactions including Pepkor and Net1.

He left Brait in 2011 to pursue other opportunities and is currently the chairman of Value Capital Partners where he sits on the board of PPC Limited and Altron Limited. Ball has invested in a number of other private companies including Real Foods via Illovo Limited.



Antony Ball



Kevin Hedderwick

Growing natural food movement

Kowarski describes the natural food movement as the future of food, and compares its growth potential with the technology companies of twenty years ago. “Natural foods are still in their infancy in South Africa. Real Foods is well capitalised and we have over 160 stores with our Kauai, Nū and Kohu brands. In addition, we recently introduced a range of Kauai retail products into Checkers stores,” he says.

Real Foods also supplies clean-eating, healthy products into retail environments. “We operate in a premium food space and we develop own branded products with a focus on healthy, authentic products. Healthy food is not a fad; it is a growth sector here to stay. In the South African market, Real Foods is a dominant player with over 22 years of experience through Kauai. For this reason, retailers looking to increase the availability of high-quality, healthy foods for their customers are partnering with us,” concludes Kowarski.

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