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## MAGGIE BEER RISES TO THE TOP OF THE PLANT FOOD CHAIN

Leading gourmet foodie Maggie Beer appears to have risen to the top yet again, her well known name replacing that of the multi-brand food company which bought her business.

In a little noticed development the Longtable Group, which bought the Maggie Beer businesses netting her \$25 million in the process, changed its name to Maggie Beer Holdings last week.

At the time of selling, Beer was widely interviewed telling journalists that at 74 she wanted to take a back seat and pass on the business to others.

While she is a shareholder and director of Longtable/Maggie Beer Holdings, there seems little doubt she could not resist working hard in the business, while bringing back the Maggie Beer name was too big an attraction for the septuagenarian.

Since day one it has been the Maggie Beer brand, one of three in the former Longtable portfolio, that has driven innovation, diversification and sales growth in the business.

In rationalising the portfolio the company to save \$2 million a year, head office was centralised to Maggie's home Barossa Valley, while her original Maggie Beer staff are now 'working across the group'.

Beer products grew EBITDA 10 per cent in Longtable's first year of ownership, dwarfing the contribution from Saint David Dairy and especially laggard brand, Paris Creek Farms.

And in the time Beer products expanded their ice cream, cheese and nutritionally enhanced milk ranges for children.

This week she launched three new varieties of 'Maggie's Food for Life' ready to eat meals nationally through 400 Coles stores.

The new varieties are all vegan and plant-based, typically positioned at the top of the pack, with CEO Chantale Millard remarking that new ready to eat varieties were on the way.

Maggie Beer OA began her career at her Pheasant Farm in the Barossa Valley in 1979, and will be front and centre for a long time yet.