

# Cibo Vita Partners with Citation Capital for Future Growth and Innovation



TOTOWA, N.J., Oct. 11, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- [Cibo Vita](#), an award winning company at the forefront of the smart snacking movement, announced today that [Citation Capital, LLC](#), a next generation private equity firm specializing in founder and family-led businesses, will acquire a majority interest in its company. Citation will become Cibo Vita's first outside shareholder. Cibo Vita's co-founders Emre Imamoglu (CEO) and Ahmet Celik (President) will continue to hold a significant ownership interest.

Since 2009, Cibo Vita has created natural and functional snacks for supermarkets, big box chains and warehouse clubs nationwide. The company is a leader in producing high-quality, innovative, value-added products. Cibo Vita is headquartered in Totowa, New Jersey, with three manufacturing facilities and employs over 900 individuals.



[Nature's Garden](#) is the company's flagship brand and an industry leader in innovating the smart snacking category with its national presence, focusing on better-for-you snacking.

Together, Cibo Vita and Citation will advance the company's growth trajectory while delivering on the mission of providing smart snacking choices for every household. Citation will work shoulder-to-shoulder with Cibo Vita for continued growth and success.

"Our vision in founding Cibo Vita was to bring healthier snacking options to all families, inspired by our Mediterranean roots," said **CEO, Emre Imamoglu**. "Throughout our history, we have experienced phenomenal growth, attributed to our innovation capabilities, commitment to quality, and a drive to meet the needs of consumers increasingly seeking healthier functional snacking. We sought out a strategic partner that could help ensure that we stay on the forefront of innovation and who is aligned with our personal core values."

**Ahmet Celik, President of Cibo Vita**, asserts the importance of seeking a strategic affiliate that aligns with the company's identity, "We found a differentiated partner in the Citation team, given their resolute focus on performance and deep understanding of the importance of values and culture in founder-led businesses."

"Emre and Ahmet started from an idea, believing that they could bring better snacking habits to North American consumers, and put everything they had into building Cibo Vita into a highly innovative, profitable business that provides value-added services and products to some of the most coveted customers in North America," said **Tiffany K. Hagge, Citation Founder and Managing Partner**. "Cibo Vita exemplifies Citation's investment philosophy in backing fundamentally strong, defensible businesses with exceptional cultures and shared values, helping them to become 'best in class' in their segment through strategic partnership, operational excellence, and a relentless focus on execution."

"With its reputation for continuous innovation, exceptional management, and great-tasting products, Cibo Vita is a leader in better-for-you foods. We are thrilled to join Emre, Ahmet and their team on this journey to further unlock growth opportunities for Cibo Vita's customers, employees, and suppliers for years to come," added **Lydie Hudson, Co-Founder and President of Citation**.

Nelson Mullins served as the Company's legal advisor. Gibson Dunn acted as legal advisor to Citation. Wells Fargo, Bank of America, and American Ag Credit will lead the committed financing to support the transaction. Closing of the transaction is

expected later this year and is subject to customary regulatory and other conditions. Additional terms were not disclosed.

### **About Cibo Vita**

Co-founded in 2009 by Emre Imamoglu and Ahmet Celik, Cibo Vita began by producing private label healthy snack products which consisted of dried fruit and nut combinations for supermarkets nationwide. Nature's Garden is the company's flagship brand that launched in 2011, focusing on better-for-you snacking. Cibo Vita features over 1,000 SKUs with various combinations of nuts, seeds, dried fruit, trail mixes, coated nuts, and confectionary. Cibo Vita products are sold in supermarkets, big box stores, drug chains, specialty retailers, and convenience stores as well as warehouse clubs nationwide. The company has won many industry snack food awards including Sofi and Nexty Awards. Imamoglu was awarded with Ernst & Young's NJ *Entrepreneur of the Year Award* in 2022. Cibo Vita holds the following certifications: Keto, RSPO, UTZ, Kosher, Organic, Paleo, and Gluten-free. Cibo Vita employs over 900 employees in its headquarters and SQF Level II & USDA Organic certified facilities located in Totowa, NJ. For more information, please visit <https://www.cibovita.com/>.

### **About Citation**

Citation is a next generation private equity firm specializing in control investments in founder and family-owned businesses across the Services, Consumer and Industrial sectors in North America. Founded in 2023, the Firm is built on shared values and a relentless focus on performance, generating value through a hands-on, differentiated approach. Citation is headquartered in Dallas, TX with an office opening in Greenwich, CT. For more information, please visit <https://www.citation.capital>.

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