

Tariq Farid

Tariq Farid is Founder & Chief Executive Officer of Edible Arrangements International (“EAI”), the industry leader in providing high quality, artistically designed fresh fruit arrangements. Tariq is responsible for setting the company’s strategic direction and for the licensing of new franchises across the United States and internationally.

Tariq launched the first Edible Arrangements® store in 1999 in East Haven, Connecticut. He was inspired by the convergence of three trends: Americans' growing consumption of fresh fruit, the robust growth in the specialty food market and the increasing amount of money Americans were spending on gifts. Edible Arrangements® was named one of America’s fastest-growing privately held businesses in America by *Inc. Magazine* and has been ranked first in its category by *Entrepreneur Magazine’s* Annual “Franchise 500” Ranking for the past seven consecutive years. In 2011 Edible Arrangements was ranked 9th on Forbes.com ‘Top Franchises for the Money’ listing. Edible Arrangements has U.S. patents for proprietary fruit-cutting equipment that Tariq and his brother, Kamran Farid (COO) designed.

In February of 2009, Tariq was named “Entrepreneur of the Year” for 2008 by the International Franchise Association, whose members include more than 1,300 franchise systems, 11,000 franchisees and 500 suppliers. This award is presented to an individual who is building a successful business venture, demonstrates innovative management skills and is active in the community.

In June 2009 Tariq was awarded the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2009 Award in the Retail and Consumer Products category in Metro New York. This award recognizes entrepreneurs who are building and leading dynamic, growing businesses and who demonstrate exceptional innovation, financial performance and personal commitment to their businesses and communities. In 2011, Tariq was designated a *Certified Franchise Executive* by the Board of Governors of the Institute of Franchise Executives.

As a teenager, Tariq worked in a local McDonald's for several years and it was here that he learned the power of business systemization. His entrepreneurial experience began in the late 1980s, when, at age 17, he used a \$5,000 loan from his parents to purchase a local flower shop. Within two years, Tariq was operating four highly successful stores.

The first Edible Arrangements® franchise opened in 2001 in Waltham, Massachusetts. In eleven years, Edible Arrangements® has grown to over 1,000 stores located throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain, Turkey, Italy, Hong Kong, India and China. Tariq’s involvement with franchisees has been a hallmark of the Edible Arrangements® franchise success story. He spends time with franchisees and employees in the stores to stay in regular contact with customers, and to understand the day-to-day realities of running a retail store in an ever-changing marketplace and travels the country visiting stores and conducting owner’s meetings.

In 2006, Tariq launched an all natural fresh fruit grab-and go concept for Edible Arrangements. The menu includes a variety of delicious fruit treats that are made fresh right in front of the

customer, including fresh juices; fruit salads & sundaes; chocolate dipped fruit and Fruithy®, Edible Arrangements' fresh fruit smoothie. Products are made from a combination of fresh fruit and other all natural ingredients. The concept grew throughout the United States and internationally in high traffic shopping malls and other major metropolitan areas. Originally conceived as an add-on concept, "Edible To Go®" has been expanded to include additional fresh fruit products and is now an integral component of the Edible Arrangements franchise system.

A self-taught computer whiz, Tariq designed all the computer systems that Edible Arrangements franchisees use in their day-to-day operation, including order processing, training manuals, production and profitability tracking, and supply chain management. In 2001, he founded Netsolace, Inc., a computer software distributor for the franchise industry.

Tariq Farid was born in Pakistan in 1969 and immigrated to the United States in 1981 at the age 11. He grew up in West Haven, Connecticut and became a U.S. citizen in 1986. He developed the Salma K. Farid Academy, a non-profit learning and community center, to honor the wishes of his late mother whom he credits as the inspiration for his success, and the Salma K. Farid Foundation to provide for those in need.