

Current: 76°
84° / 66°
Complete Forecast

Adrienne Arsht Center
for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County
FORMERLY: CARNIVAL CENTER
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

The 2008 Audi A4 2.0T
\$339/mo.

A4 @ \$339/mo., \$3164 at inception, \$1875 down pymt, \$339 1st mo., \$375 security dep, \$575 acq. fee. Excludes taxes, title, and dealer fees. Based on approved credit, 36/mo. 10K miles per year., \$0.25 p/mi. thereafter. Purchase opt. at lease end, A4 \$17,822. Photos are for illustration purposes only. See dealer for more details. The Collection is not responsible for typographical errors.

Search: News Archives Web Search powered by **YAHOO! SEARCH**

Welcome **Guest**
[Login](#) | [Register](#)

NEWS | SPORTS | ENTERTAINMENT | BUSINESS | TROPICAL LIFE | OPINION | JOBS | CARS | REAL ESTATE | SHOPPING | CLASSIFIEDS | [ELNUEVOHERALD.COM](#)
Business Monday | National | International | Personal Finance | Technology | Small Business | Friday Business Report

SUBSCRIBE TODAY
The Miami Herald
Subscriber Services

Health investments could be beneficial

Adding a health theme to an already diversified portfolio would be beneficial in a recession.

Posted on Sun, Feb. 24, 2008 [email](#) [print](#) [reprint](#) [AIM](#) [del.icio.us](#) [Digg](#)

BY DESONTA HOLDER
dholder@MiamiHerald.com

Take a good look at the people you see walking down the street, sitting in the airport or working in the cubicle across from you. Did you notice that many of them are either overweight or obese? This isn't a U.S. issue; it's worldwide. In fact, according to the World Health Organization, more than 1 billion adults are overweight, and 300 million of them are obese, with an increased risk for problems such as diabetes, stroke and some cancers.



ANDREW ULOZA/MIAMI HERALD FILE, 2007

Mort and Carol Schomer, retired healthcare professionals in North Miami Beach, show their pantry lined with vitamins and mineral supplements. The Schomers are among U.S. shoppers who spend more than \$50 billion on natural and organic products each year.

Investors have taken notice.

"In general, we're interested in the healthcare sector," says Mari Adam, president of Adam Financial Associates in Boca Raton. "We feel it's an industry that will hold up well if there is a recession -- you're willing to buy medicine and go to the hospital. We also feel this is one area that isn't overvalued."

Maria Figarola Arazoza also favors healthcare because "governments around the world are promoting better nutrition and lifestyles." As vice president and international financial advisor for Merrill Lynch -- Private Client Group in Coral Gables, Arazoza recommends adding a health theme to an already diversified portfolio.

When the stock market is volatile, as it has been so far this year, you'll have some protection by spreading your assets among many sectors.

For example, although the Standard & Poor's 500 Index was down 9.3 percent this year through Friday, the healthcare sector had declined 7.4 percent compared with 16.9 percent for telecom/information technology index.

A health theme has staying power because of the global component, Arazoza says. "It was thought that being overweight was primarily a U.S. problem, but it is now, more so than before, a global issue."

Some key areas to consider include organic foods, medical devices, biotechnology, antioxidants, bariatric surgery and pharmaceuticals, despite the recent rough times with drugs being recalled. Before you invest, Adam advises, ask yourself: Is this a discretionary purchase people will make if they're broke?

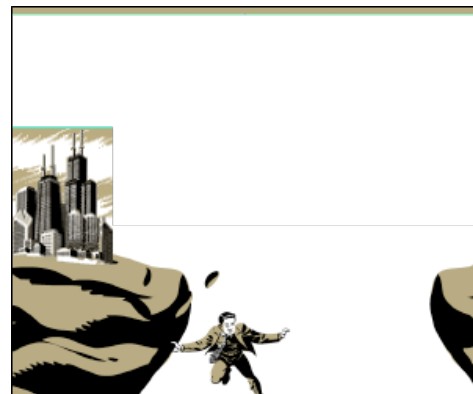
Will organic products continue to thrive? Sales have risen at least 20 percent each year since the 1990s.

The fastest-growing segment was fish and seafood, which grew by more than 67.4 percent in 2005 to \$114 million.

This organic trend "is moving unbelievably huge and fast," says Lisa Schachter, a registered dietitian and owner of Diet Design in South Miami.

"And in the antioxidant area, juices -- açai berry and pomegranate -- are all over the place." You can find them at Whole Foods Market as well as at Publix . . . and in Mort

southmotors.com
BMW HONDA INFINITI MAZDA MINI SUZUKI VW
Two miles of savings on the strip.
72-hour sales event
RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES



QUICK JOB SEARCH

Enter Keyword(s):
 Enter City:
 Select a State:
 Select a Category:
[Search by Category](#)
 [Advanced Job Search](#)

BUSINESS NEWS VIDEO

BUSINESS

- Letters to the editor
- Enter the 2008 Business Plan Challenge
- Business Plan Challenge enters 10th year
- Serial entrepreneur sees green with Purple drink
- Miami Children's CEO aims to raise standards
- Know basics before spending on marketing
- More

MOST POPULAR STORIES

- Obama's success tied to his eloquence
- Top defensive lineman make tough choice for Dolphins
- 2 killed, 2 wounded in Miami Gardens
- Former Cane arrested in Miami fracas
- McFadden boosts stock with 4.33 in 40
- Some stadium 'yes' votes really 'no'
- Dave Barry: A journey into my colon -- and yours
- New Cuban leader adds military loyalists to team
- UM has right mix to thrive in the big dance
- Cuba-policy issue enlivens S. Florida congressional race

NEWS ON THE GO

- News by Mobile
- News by Email
- RSS feeds
- Podcasts

Schomer's refrigerator.

Schomer, 79, and his wife, Carol, 77, have nearly 10 bottles of juice -- ac,ai, blueberry, grape, pomegranate, cranberry -- in their North Miami Beach home.

"We use a little bit of each and mix with water and other supplements every morning," says Mort, a retired optometrist. "The ac,ai and the others are good sources of antioxidants."

The Schomers are just a tiny snippet of the big picture. U.S. shoppers spent more than \$51 billion on natural and organic products in 2005, according to the Natural Food Merchandiser.

And although retail sales of organic foods and beverages fetch only about 3 percent of total food sales, "that number is growing and projected to continue growing," Arazoza says.

Look for established companies to add to your portfolio, she advises.

Think about cereals, yogurt, granola bars. "Higher quality is a safer bet than newer companies."

Another area continuing to grow is bariatric surgery, which is geared toward the severely obese. Weight-loss surgeries have increased nearly sixfold from 1990 to 2000, according to a study by the Department of Surgery at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center.

"They will continue to skyrocket for several reasons," says Dr. Nestor de la Cruz-Muñoz, surgical director of the Surgical Weight Loss Institute in Miami.

"We do it laparoscopically with less complications. Studies show medical advances, and it's a life-saving surgery."

Also, an Australian study published in January showed that 22 of 29 diabetes patients went into remission after undergoing weight-loss surgery, specifically laparoscopic gastric banding. Only four of 26 patients who received standard care achieved remission.

That effect on diabetes is "something we've known for a long time," de la Cruz-Muñoz says.

When looking at bariatric surgery, consider some of the materials involved: hydraulic operating room beds, laparoscopic equipment, digital and high-definition technology, titanium staples and disposable equipment.

As for the industry making vitamins specifically for bariatric patients, "it's overkill," de la Cruz-Muñoz warns. "The regimen is a kid's Flintstones vitamin with iron and two calcium tablets a day."

Other investments opportunities Arazoza suggests:

- Drugstore chains that have an increasing percentage of sales in herbal, vitamin and holistic products. Superstores, not niche retailers, carrying an increased amount of those products.
- Any company focusing on exercise, especially if it provides something that does not already exist.
- Pharmaceuticals with cutting-edge research on weight-related health issues.
- School lunch manufacturers.

Just remember, it's best to avoid putting all your eggs in one basket. Health-related investments should be one segment of a diversified portfolio.

"When building that portfolio, keep in mind that these trends are long-term trends, not something to make a ton of money in the first two months of the year," Arazoza says.

And Adam advises, "If you're looking at individual stocks, subject them to the same thing you would anything else. These are businesses. How well are they executing? How well are they pricing? How do you translate that into making money?"

Join the discussion

The Miami Herald is pleased to provide this opportunity to share information, experiences and observations about what's in the news. Some of the comments may be reprinted elsewhere in the site or in the newspaper. We encourage lively, open debate on the issues of the day, and ask that you refrain from personal comments and remarks that are off point. In order to post comments, you must be a registered user of MiamiHerald.com. Your username will show along with the comments you post. Not a registered user? Its Free! [Register here](#). Thank you for taking the time to offer your thoughts.

Recent Comments

Be the first to post a comment using the form below

Post Your Comment

Name: