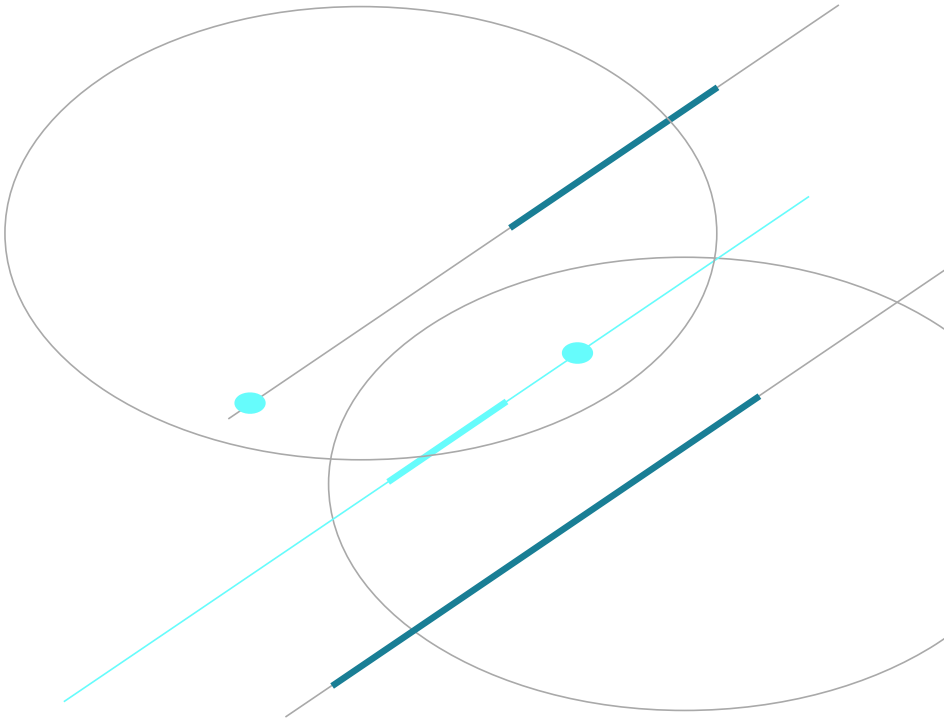
HEIDRICK & STRUGGLES



Confidential Candidate Report

Cardinal Harvest Naturals

Chief Executive Officer

Candidate: Michael Alvarez
May 7, 2026

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The evaluation contained in this report represents a composite of information furnished by the candidate for discussion purposes. It should be used in conjunction with other sources, including consultation and commentary provided by Heidrick & Struggles.

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Personal

Michael Alvarez

President, Organic Snacks Division
Cardinal Harvest Naturals

Career Summary

Cardinal Harvest Naturals

2019 - Now President, Organic Snacks Division
2015 - 2019 President, Cereal Division

Farm & Field Organics

2012 - 2015 Vice President, Branding

Prior to 2012

2026 - Now Positions of Increasing Responsibility, including branding, supply chain, operations, and management

Education

MBA

Unverified

The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

BS, Psychology and Food Science

Unverified

Cornell University

Heidrick Comments

The presentation below is submitted without benefit of detailed reference checking. The candidate's qualifications are submitted according to the information provided to us by the candidate to date. Should the client and the candidate reach a preliminary understanding relative to employment, Heidrick & Struggles would expect to conduct additional reference checking.

Summary

Michael Alvarez is a senior operating executive with more than 25 years of experience across branding, supply chain, operations, and general management within the natural and organic foods sector. He currently serves as President of the Organic Snacks Division at Cardinal Harvest Naturals ("CHN"), the company's largest and highest-performing business, representing more than 40% of enterprise revenue and approximately $2 billion in annual sales across a 50-brand portfolio.

Michael was appointed to lead the Organic Snacks Division in 2019 during a period of heightened competition, supply chain volatility, and increasing need for cross-divisional coordination. In the role, he maintains full P&L responsibility across sourcing, manufacturing, food safety, quality, supply chain, marketing, innovation, and commercial operations, leading multi-site manufacturing and cross-functional operating teams across the value chain. Under his leadership, the division became the company's strongest-performing business while maintaining industry-leading food safety and quality standards. He strengthened supply chain resilience and improved cost structure through disciplined sourcing and manufacturing practices while also leading the integration of two competitor snack businesses, including systems, organizational structures, and operating culture. Internally, Michael is viewed as a transparent, execution-focused operator who has successfully unified previously siloed teams under a more cohesive operating model.

Prior to his current role, Michael served as President of CHN's Cereal Division from 2015 to 2019, where he led the turnaround of an underperforming business and restored the division to profitability through operational redesign and stronger execution discipline. He redesigned supply chain architecture to improve reliability and cost performance, modernized brand positioning to restore competitiveness within the category, and established clearer accountability mechanisms across functions.

Earlier in his career, Michael served as Vice President of Branding at Farm & Field Organics from 2012 to 2015, overseeing company-wide brand strategy during a period of rapid expansion in natural and organic foods. He developed partnerships with organic farmers to strengthen sourcing relationships and directed multiple successful product launches while creating integrated brand frameworks aligning marketing strategy, sourcing practices, and sustainability commitments.

Across his career, Michael has established a reputation as a disciplined and execution-oriented operator with strong cross-functional credibility and deep familiarity with CHN's culture, portfolio, and operating model. His experience includes large-scale manufacturing and sourcing oversight, integration leadership, operational turnarounds, and sustained leadership in regulated environments. Internally, he has been viewed as a long-term CEO successor candidate based on the performance of the Organic Snacks Division and his growing enterprise leadership exposure. Areas for continued development include broader external stakeholder management, investor engagement, and enterprise-level leadership experience beyond his current divisional scope.

Areas to Probe:

Michael has been identified by the current CEO as the heir apparent for enterprise leadership within a 3–5 year window; it would be beneficial to probe his current readiness for the position and determine continued development in enterprise-wide exposure and external stakeholder engagement.

Pivotal Expertise & Business Impact

Knowledge and skills that demonstrate a record of achievement

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets Expectations
- Needs Development
- Not Rated

Operational Leadership & Financial Acumen

Role Requirement: *Leads complex P&Ls across sourcing, manufacturing, supply chain, and commercial functions. Balances operational stabilization with long-term growth and builds accountable leadership teams.*

Michael currently leads CHN's largest and highest-performing division, representing approximately $2 billion in annual revenue and more than 40% of enterprise sales, with full P&L oversight across sourcing, manufacturing, supply chain, food safety, quality, marketing, innovation, and commercial operations. He has improved supply chain resilience and cost structure within the Organic Snacks Division while previously restoring profitability in the Cereal Division through operational redesign, stronger accountability mechanisms, and supply chain transformation.

Food Safety and Quality Leadership

Role Requirement: *Deep understanding of food safety, quality, and risk systems across complex food businesses. Leads remediation efforts, strengthens standards, and communicates credibly during scrutiny.*

Michael has maintained industry-leading safety and quality standards across CHN's Organic Snacks Division while overseeing complex manufacturing and sourcing operations in regulated food environments. He has received external recognition through the Food Safety Innovator Award, though his profile reflects more operational stewardship than direct enterprise-wide recall remediation or public-facing crisis leadership.

Shape Strategy

Role Requirement: *Combines growth orientation with operational discipline and trust restoration. Understands natural and organic consumer trends and translates them into actionable growth strategies.*

Michael has demonstrated the ability to balance operational discipline with growth through acquisition integration, brand modernization, and supply chain redesign initiatives across multiple CHN businesses. His earlier branding leadership experience at Farm & Field Organics also provides direct exposure to evolving consumer trends in natural and organic foods.

Enterprise Integration & Portfolio Complexity

Role Requirement: *Experienced leading multi-brand organizations with operational and cultural complexity. Aligns teams around common standards while protecting strong businesses and improving challenged areas.*

Michael has led complex multi-brand operations across a 50-brand portfolio and directed the integration of two competitor snack businesses, including systems, organizational structure, and cultural alignment. He is viewed internally as effective at improving coordination across previously siloed teams and functions.

Pivotal Expertise & Business Impact

Knowledge and skills that demonstrate a record of achievement

(Continued)

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets Expectations
- Needs Development
- Not Rated

Public Company Experience

Role Requirement: *Experienced partnering with Boards, investors, and stakeholders during transition or scrutiny. Communicates progress through clear operational, financial, customer, and culture metrics.*

While Michael has gained broader enterprise exposure through leadership of CHN's largest division and strategic integration initiatives, his direct experience with investors, public company governance, activist environments, and Board-facing leadership remains limited.

Culture Impact

Styles and values that impact organizational culture

Team Leadership

Role Requirement: *Visible, collaborative leader who aligns divisions around safety, quality, growth, and culture.*

Michael has a strong internal reputation for building alignment, elevating standards, and creating accountability across teams. He has successfully unified previously siloed organizations and improved cross-functional coordination within large operating environments.

Personal Characteristics

Role Requirement: *High-integrity and resilient leader with strong judgment, empathy, curiosity, and frontline presence*

Michael is viewed as disciplined, transparent, and execution-focused with strong integrity and operational rigor. He demonstrates resilience through turnaround and integration assignments and is regarded as a collaborative operator with strong internal relationships.