

A Making It In Michigan **SUCCESS STORY**

A DECADE OF CREATING OPPORTUNITY AND ACCELERATING INNOVATION



JOHNNY B'S COOKIES

One day John Buda and his wife Susan just wanted a really great cookie to eat. Susan had a lifetime of experience in the food service industry so they researched several chocolate chip cookie recipes and pulled from all of them what they felt was the best. After several iterations, Susan decided to add toffee bits and they had found their perfect cookie. John and Susan gave them out as gifts during the holidays and received many comments that they should try to sell them.

This was in a time frame where both needed jobs after John's career as a stockbroker, and they wanted their own company. They put the packaging together and set out to sell the cookies to grocery stores. They had immediate response – one store referred them to several others. After becoming licensed, they moved production to a banquet hall and started making "Crispy Chocolate Chip Chewy's" there.

Two years later they received financing to open their own 1,500 square foot retail space in St. Clair Shores where they currently produce Johnny B's Cookies. Currently, they have seven employees, four convection ovens, a cookie machine, a 60-quart mixer and a walk-in freezer and refrigerator. They have a small portion of the space dedicated to retail where they have two display cases and other Michigan-made products. Johnny's B's Cookies product line also includes premium bars, baked goods and cut-outs customized to the seasons.

Johnny B's Cookies are independently distributed to about 70 grocery stores primarily located in southeast Michigan, along with online sales at www.johnnybcookies.com. Future plans include gearing up for larger distribution with help from the MSU Product Center.

"Our affiliation with the Michigan State Product Center has proven to be a great source for us to go to for advice and direction," states Owner John Buda.

"John and I have known each other for over 12 years. I have watched his perseverance and admired his determination to succeed. His lemon bars are my absolute favorite! Johnny B's is not only my client - he is family."

Becky DeYoung Innovation Counselor, MSU Product Center Food • Ag • Bio



Owner John Buda



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