



Food Safety Updates

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Food Safety Checks *KEEPING YOU ON TRACK IN THE KITCHEN*

- ✓ Label all food in the refrigerator and freezer with your name, the name of the food if it's not already on the package, and the use-by date.
 - ✓ All food items in dry storage need to be away from the walls and at least 6 inches off the floor. No items may be left directly on the floor or against the wall.
 - ✓ When using the bathroom, be sure to take off your apron and hang it on the hook outside the door.
 - ✓ Be sure to clean all kitchen equipment you use thoroughly inside and out, including convection ovens, sealer, stove, and large coating pan.
 - ✓ Only eat, drink, smoke, and chew gum in designated areas.
 - ✓ Do not eat, drink, smoke, or chew gum at any of these times:
 - When prepping or serving food
 - When working in prep areas
 - When working in areas used to clean utensils and equipment
- Small droplets of saliva can contain thousands of pathogens. In the process of eating, drinking, smoking, or chewing gum, saliva can be transferred to hands or directly to food being handled.

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The Inside Track

Food Recalls

WELCOME!

**PLEASE JOIN US IN
WELCOMING NEWLY
LICENSED
ENTREPRENEURS TO
THE STARTING BLOCK!**

**WELCOME TO
NEWLY LICENSED
KITCHEN USERS**

**BRIDGET HENLEY OF
NORTH BEACH FOODS
VEGAN BRIE EN CROUTE**

**CHAD WILDE OF
RED CHEF BAKERY
BAKED GOODS**

The Inside Track *NAILAH ELLIS OF ELLIS ISLAND TEA*

Inspired by a family recipe that was passed down by her great grandfather with the instruction "sold not told," Nailah Ellis decided to start her own business, Ellis Island, making and selling her family's Jamaican hibiscus tea.

After a couple of years studying business in college, Nailah realized that in this economy she was not guaranteed to have a job when she graduated. Having always had an interest in entrepreneurship, she decided to leave her studies and focus on starting her own business.

Nailah started brewing the tea in her kitchen and received very positive feedback from all her friends who tried it. This gave her the confidence to pursue her entrepreneurial dreams. "Once I started," she said "there was no stopping me." (Continued on page 2)



Nailah labeling her tea bottles

Food Recall Plan

Food Product Recall Guidance for the Michigan Food & Dairy Industry

All food firms should have a recall plan in place, in order to act promptly and effectively in the event of a recall. Being prepared reduces the risk of potentially harmful or hazardous foods from reaching consumers, which could have devastating effects on human health, the food businesses involved and the economy. The food product recall guide will help food companies develop an effective recall plan.

To read the food product recall guide go to <http://michigan.gov/mdard>, click 'Food Safety,' then click 'Food Recalls.'

Additional Resources

- www.foodsafety.gov
- Blogs.usda.gov, click Food Safety
- Type **FDA What's New in Food** into Google Search

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ELLIS ISLAND TEA CONTINUED

Marketed to consumers who are health conscious and look at the nutrition facts rather than price, Ellis Island hibiscus tea is high in antioxidants and vitamin C. What sets her tea apart from many other bottled teas is that Ellis Island is brewed with herbal tea rather than black, and it is made with hibiscus flowers. Nailah emphasizes that hibiscus is well known all over the world, except in the US, and it has health benefits.

*“Once I started,
there was no
stopping me.”*

The tea comes in both sweetened and unsweetened varieties, and can be enjoyed hot or cold. Nailah has managed to get her product into at least 16 stores, including Whole Foods Markets. She hopes to expand to a national brand, and she believes that Whole Foods is her “ticket to do so.” In order to boost the marketing of her Ellis Island Tea, Nailah demos her product at stores, where she also receives feedback from her customers. It was from one of these demos that she received the

feedback to start making an unsweetened tea in addition to her sweet tea.

For Nailah, the perk of being an entrepreneur is knowing that at the end of the day, she has the freedom to do what she wants with her business.

The most difficult thing that Nailah has encountered as an entrepreneur is the need for her business to evolve. In order for her business to grow, she needs to continue to pursue stores to sell her product, and as her business grows, she has to evolve to supply enough of her product to all those stores. Nailah is moving on from The Starting Block to her own plant in Detroit. There she will have the capacity to produce the quantities of tea she needs for her ever-growing market.



Ellis Island Tea ready for market

The Starting Block is West Michigan's Non-Profit Regional Kitchen Incubator and Entrepreneurial Center. Our Mission is to incubate and support the entrepreneurial spirit by providing licensed commercial kitchen facilities, entrepreneurial education, and peer-to-peer networking to new and expanding businesses. The Starting Block will be the premier regional resource for growing any new idea into a profitable, local and wealth-creating business.

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