

Food Safety Updates

Volume 6, Issue 1, December 2016

OCTOBER, 2016 marked the 10th Anniversary of The Starting Block, celebrated with an Open House. **THANKS** to our producers, grantors and donors, board members, local food processors, the community, City of Hart and all our partners for continued support of our efforts to build an entrepreneurial community and supply locally-made foods!

The Starting Block offers training to new food entrepreneurs and to start-up kitchen incubators, and a job training certificate in food processing. As a training center, conference rooms and classrooms are available for trainings/meetings, and our kitchens are open to individuals and to local food processors for R & D. As a non-profit, donations are welcome, including used equipment to use in our kitchens or to fix and sell for extra income.

The Inside Track *KANDY POTTER OF KANDYLAND DAIRY*

Kandyland Dairy: the building of an educational destination creamery

It all started with too much milk.

Kandy Potter of Kandyland Dairy had a few goats and more milk than she knew what to do with. Before long, she was making Chèvre and Feta at home. After some trial and error she had mastered a recipe and people were asking how they could get more of the fine goat cheeses she produced. Kandy progressed to offering herd-shares of unpasteurized goat dairy products from her Grade A licensed goat farm in Scottville, complete with milk house and parlor.

Kandy knew she had a good thing going and was looking to expand when she came across the Starting Block. Equipped with a vat pasteurizer and dairy equipment, The Starting Block was the ideal place for Kandy to come with an idea for expanding her small business.

“The best part about being an entrepreneur is meeting customers one-on-one and getting ideas about new products” said Kandy. She loves the opportunity to talk to customers about ethical treatment of animals and where food comes from.

Kandyland Dairy products are now sold at farmer’s markets, Hansen Foods, Beir Kamp in Ludington, and Port City Organics and Iron Works Café in Manistee. Customers are primarily tourists and high-end buyers looking for a local goat cheese.

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Kandy and Steve posing with one of their 100 goats

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WELCOME!

PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING OUR LATEST ENTREPRENEURS TO THE STARTING BLOCK, LICENSED SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER , AND CURRENTLY IN PRODUCTION HERE

HARINEE SAMPATH OF PRAYANI, INDIAN SAVORY YOGURT

ALEX, SARAH, AND CRAIG HARDY OF ARCTIC FOODS

JAKE HAMBRIGHT OF LUCKY BEACH STOUT MIX

JANET BOARDWELL OF JOY FILLED CATERING

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Top Food Safety Tips

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), roughly 85% of all foodborne illness could be prevented if food is handled properly.

- **Hand Washing:** The most important aspect of handling food is clean hands! Take the extra time to continually educate your family about the importance of hand washing throughout the day. Always wash hands thoroughly with soap under warm water for at least 20 seconds before handling food and after handling raw products.
- **Use a Food Thermometer:** The only way to truly confirm the elimination of pathogenic bacteria from food is to cook it to a safe minimum internal temperature. Beef, pork, veal, and lamb should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 145 °F (ground meats should be heated to 160 °F), while all poultry products should be heated to at least 165 °F.
- **Keep Prep Tools and Surfaces Clean:** Use separate prep tools and cutting boards for raw meat and poultry. Use hot, soapy water to wash countertops, cutting boards, refrigerator shelves, doors and handles, and cooking utensils.
- **Pre-Meal Storage:** Wrap raw meat and poultry in sealed containers or plastic bags and place on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator to prevent raw juices from spreading to other foods. Use an appliance thermometer to measure that the refrigerator is cooling to below 40 °F and that the freezer is set to 0 °F or below.
- **Leftover Storage:** Perishable foods have an increased risk for microbial contamination if left at room temperature for more than two hours. Refrigerate or freeze in the two hour time span, or throw the leftovers away. Use air-tight containers or thoroughly wrap the food in plastic wrap so that none of the food is exposed to the air. When reheating leftovers, always heat to a minimum internal temperature of 165 °F.

- Silliker Blog, 2015, Food Safety & Quality

KANDYLAND DAIRY *CONTINUED*

In September 2016, Kandy won the Mason County Momentum Business Plan Competition Award of \$50,000 after presenting her business pitch. "This award is not just about getting money, but about getting board members behind you who are actively helping, asking what they can do, giving ideas on different avenues to go down, and constantly thinking of how to work things out for the business," Kandy commented.



Kandy in The Starting Block Dairy Kitchen

Kandy and Steve are using the prize money to build their own creamery, with the first batch of cheese planned for production on March 1, 2017. The creamery, which will feature an observation area with huge windows where visitors can see the manufacturing process, an aging room and a store, will serve "as a destination for visitors and school-children," Kandy said. "So many kids nowadays—and adults too—don't put their phones down and interact. We'll encourage tourism, bringing families together to sit at picnic tables along the pasture to interact with the animals and with each other."

"The biggest challenges I face now are the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's (MDARD's) licensing process, and purchasing the needed dairy equipment," said Kandy.

Kandy is already mentoring the 2017 Momentum Business Competition Award applicants to help them overcome some of the challenges she solved. Applicants can apply from any geographic area as long as they move to Mason County within three years of receiving the award.

"The best part about being an entrepreneur is meeting customers one-on-one and getting ideas about new products."

Given her tremendous progress to date, it is no doubt that those she mentors will benefit in their businesses and help establish more entrepreneurship in West Michigan. Find Kandyland Dairy online at www.kandylanddairy.com

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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