

Food Safety Updates

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The Inside Track Dee & Mike Freestone's Good Life Granola

Out of the blocks and full speed ahead has been Good Life Granola's trajectory since getting its official start at the Starting Block in 2009.

Dee Freestone, co-founder of Good Life Granola with her husband Mike, first started making her granola recipe for family and friends. Positive feedback and the granola's popularity led the couple to think about making granola commercially. "We had a good response and saw it as a good opportunity to sell to stores," said Mike.

Since beginning commercial sales, Good Life Granola has retained a "personal touch." There continues to be "a lot of love put into the product," with each batch made by the founders themselves. The company's three flavors, Apple Crisp, Original, and Nut-free are all made using natural ingredients without additives to ensure that "the ingredients speak for themselves."



Dee & Mike with Good Life Granola

The catchy motto, "Life is short so eat what's good!" and a bright green label compete with a smiley face to contribute to the visual appeal of Good Life Granola, thanks in part to Mike and Dee's marketing know-how. "When people build brands nowadays it is important to leverage social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs," Mike advises other entrepreneurs. "There's so much you can do nowadays you couldn't do years ago, and if you're not doing it, you're missing out." (CONTINUED Next Page)

Food Safety Checks Keeping You on Track in the Kitchen

- ✓ Be sure to unplug all equipment you use in the kitchen, including the scale and sealer
- ✓ Turn off all lights, including the light in the other kitchen if you turn it on
- ✓ Be sure to turn off all ovens

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WELCOME!

PLEASE JOIN US IN
WELCOMING
RECENTLY MDA
LICENSED KITCHEN

USERS:

**LUCHI NELSON
AND MARIFE
VANDERSCHUUR**

OF

EGGROLL QUEENS,

**DAN & BONNIE
BLACKLEDGE OF
B&B FARMS,**

**AND KAREN
HAMPSHIRE OF
KARENZ KRAZY
SALT**

Health and Hygiene Impact on Food Safety

Foods can become contaminated by employees who do not properly wash their hands especially if they have a gastrointestinal illness or an infected lesion.

- √ Employees should be excluded from the immediate food processing environment when they are ill.
- √ Proper hand washing is the most effective way to reduce the spread of microorganisms in a food facility.
- √ Visitors to food facilities should adhere to the same personal health and personal hygiene practices as employees including exclusions, handwashing, jewelry and clothing.

- HACCP Manager Training, Version 4.0

**Online, 24/7 answers
to your food safety
questions!**

Visit:

[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/
Food_Safety_Education/
Ask_Karen/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Ask_Karen/index.asp)

Additional Resources

- US Department of Agriculture
-www.foodsafety.gov
-blogs.usda.gov
- Type FDA What's New in Food into Google search

(The Inside Track, Good Life Granola, continued)

Even with all of the marketing tools and opportunities available today, establishing a new business is a challenge. "It's not easy," said Mike. "It's a lot of work and you will put a lot of hours into building up your brand and building a following." Still, he encourages those with entrepreneurial ideas to "give it a try, because you can be the captain of your own ship."

Mike and Dee have learned the value of selling in more intimate, smaller stores, which often function as excellent provisional sales representatives "because they can personally vouch for the product." Farmers markets, another friendly venue, "are a lot of fun, too."

Recently, Good Life Granola was successful in getting into select Meijer stores when Meijer was looking for a locally made granola. Looking down the next stretch, Good Life Granola anticipates 30 more Meijer stores in the new year.

Any last advice from one of Good Life Granola's co-founders? "Really have a passion for your product. We love our product. We eat it everyday. I think that has translated into a loyal following."

Check out Good Life Granola's website, www.goodlifegrnola.com

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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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