

Success Stories

FINDLAY'S ORGANICS

(Caro) Findlay's Organics has been certified organic since 1998 but the family farm has been in operation in the Thumb of Michigan for over 100 years. The Findlay family grows corn, spelt, snap beans and dry edible beans. They have added processing capacity to add value to their bulk beans and grains by cleaning and bulk packaging. They added additional value by creating a retail ready "Beans in a Box" product that has moved this innovative farm another link up the value chain. The creative packaging of Beans in a Box rather than a plastic bag leads to improved convenience in handling and storage of beans on store and pantry shelves.



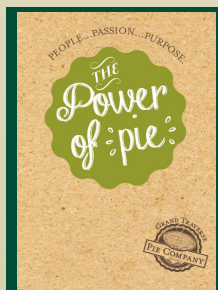
CHERRY MARKETING INSTITUTE (CMI)

(Dewitt) CMI is an industry funded organization established to expand sales of North American tart cherries

through promotion and research. Since 2011 the Product Center has assisted CMI in ongoing industry strategic planning activities. The Product Center supports CMI's efforts to improve demand for North American tart cherries by providing relevant and timely research on market and trade trends and in-depth analysis on long term supply and demand dynamics within and external to the industry.

GRAND TRAVERSE PIE COMPANY.

(Traverse City) Grand Traverse Pie Company (GTPie) has been "Warming Hearts and Community through Pie" since 1996. From its first pie store in Traverse City with six employees it now has 15 Pie shops across Michigan and Indiana. With this business growth and product development came numerous challenges in making viable business decisions while maintaining core company values in place and brand Identity. The MSU Product Center has worked with the Grand Traverse Pie Company in the development of the company's "Power of Pie" vision and strategy which aligns both internal and external stakeholders around improving the lives of those that GTPie serves in each of their communities.

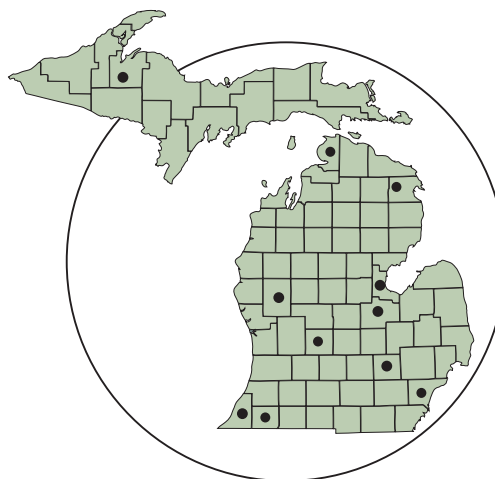


Access to a network of professional service providers

The Product Center has an on-campus staff including specialists in venture development, business and market analysis, supply chain management, food science and nutrition. This staff is complemented by other MSU faculty members and non-MSU service providers, including private consultants.

The Product Center also has an extensive network of certified innovation counselors who offer services anywhere in the state.

Contact the Product Center today to begin working with an innovation counselor in your area.



Contact Us

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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

Michigan State University

AgBioResearch

Project GREEN

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Product Center

Food • Ag • Bio



Accelerating Innovation
for Michigan Businesses,
Industries,
and Entrepreneurs

Partner with the Product Center and Michigan State University

The Michigan State University (MSU) Product Center helps Michigan entrepreneurs and businesses to develop and launch new product and service ideas into food, ag and bioenergy markets. Whether you are a budding entrepreneur or operate a well-established company, the Product Center is your key to the front door of Michigan State University's vast and varied technical expertise, research and outreach services.

At the Product Center, we facilitate innovation by customizing services to each client. From business planning to market analysis and research, and from scientific support to technical services, we deliver what entrepreneurs need directly or from our statewide network of university, business and governmental partners.

Our team of experts analyzes the level of service each client needs, taking some from concept development to launch and helping others with specialized issues such as packaging, labeling or nutritional analysis.

Success Stories

THE GFB: THE GLUTEN FREE BAR

(Ada) Marshall and Elliott Rader are entrepreneurs who created The GFB: The Gluten Free Bar because of their need to eat gluten-free. They wanted a great tasting, high protein bar that was gluten-free, and after being disappointed with what was on the market they created their own line of bars and gluten-free snacks. The company was formed in 2010 and in 2013 they received the Product Center's Start Up to Watch Award. The company is on pace to grow nearly 300% in 2014 and their line of products can be found in over 3000 stores across the country.



Service Offerings

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

We help you turn your innovative idea into a business or product concept.

- Assistance in identifying and combining your idea, your entrepreneurial drive and the market opportunity
- Educational presentations that provide an overview of business and product development and grant opportunities

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

We help you develop your basic business or product plan.

- Tools for researching and writing a basic business plan
- Market analyses for specific products or businesses
- Connections to state and federal agencies as well as private companies
- Annual conference for entrepreneurs with business development as a focus
- Connections into distribution channels

MARKET RESEARCH

We provide analytical insights regarding the agri-food value chain in the following areas of concentration:

- Market analyses of high-value, differentiated and niche products
- Strategic planning research for industry and commodity partners
- Real time trade data analysis for Michigan stakeholders in the agricultural production and processing industries
- Economic impact studies and consumer analysis
- Market reports on various aspects of the agri-food value chain

MARKETMAKER

We provide an online interactive mapping resource linking agricultural product businesses with markets across Michigan.

- Linking all parts of the food supply chain – farmers, processors, retailers, consumers, restaurant owners, institutional buyers and others
- A database for market research to assist entrepreneurs in identifying target markets
- <http://mi.foodmarketmaker.com>

SPECIALIZED SERVICES

We help you conduct in-depth feasibility and technical studies needed to launch.

- In-depth feasibility analyses of specific product markets
- Links with MSU faculty members and industry consultants for:
 - Feasibility studies
 - Nutritional analyses
 - Processing assessments
 - Other detailed services
 - Packaging and labeling
 - Feedstock logistics
 - Sensory testing

ACTION TEAM FOR HIGH GROWTH

Our team is dedicated to helping larger established companies looking to create new opportunities for long-term sustainability and profitability. The team provides strategic solutions to the following activities:

- Economic and market analyses
- Feasibility assessments
- Product development
- Resource development
- Supply chain and marketing issues
- Strategic planning
- Regulatory compliance

Many initial services are provided free or at minimal cost; more advanced services are fee-based, depending on the work required.