Product Development—Part 1

Our initial producer intake survey for the Maryland Direct Retail Ready Products showed that 75% of the enrolled group members had products in some stage of development and, the remaining 25% were in the development process. Having a product that satisfies consumers’ wants or needs in quality and quantity is the launch point for a direct marketing campaign.

Formulating and producing a direct market product is too detailed for one newsletter, so this is Part 1 on the subject. Here we will address your decision process for selecting

- marketable products,
- resources for product testing,
- scaling up,
- and planning tools for this portion of your business.

Developing and marketing a retail-ready product requires a considerable investment in time and financial resources. Like planting any new crop, learning the nuances of a successful yield, is essential in bringing your product to market.

“Go, No Go”

Just because you can develop a product or new enterprise, should you?


This Fact Sheet is part of a series on Starting a Specialty Food Business in Maryland. “Making the Go, No Go Decision (FS-943)” is number 1 in the series and it concentrates on making the "Go, No Go" decision for starting a new enterprise, answering several clarifying questions that can help you decide if you’re really ready for the task ahead.

“Turning on Your Specialty Food Business”

What are the steps food entrepreneurs need to consider when developing, producing, and marketing specialty food products?

How will you address these steps?


This Extension Bulletin is part of a series on Starting a

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Specialty Food Business in Maryland. Turning on Your Specialty Food Business (EB 406) is number 3 in the series and it concentrates on how to formulate a business plan and to consider how your business will be organized.

“Product Development and Testing”

Whether you are already selling a product or still developing one, many retail outlets will require the ingredient and nutritional testing information about your product to consider stocking it. Here is a list of resources that can help you with nutritional testing, shelf live testing, and scaling up your recipe for larger production runs.

- **Product Development and Testing**
  https://extension.umd.edu/mredc/specialty-modules/resources-established-businesses#ProductDev

- **Product Development and Production**

FDA researcher from the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition prepares to collect tandem mass spectrometry data. FDA photo by Michael J. Ermarth

To continue to receive this newsletter and resources to help you become retail-ready! You can subscribe to participate in the *Maryland Direct Retail Ready Products Program* by going to go.umd.edu/JoinRetailReadyProducers