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Business Profile

Great Lakes Farms Receives Economic Development Award



Elgin County Economic Development is pleased to have presented the Elgin County Economic Development Award to MaryAnne and Joe Van de Gevel of Great Lakes Farms at the Bridges to Better Business Conference held on October 26, 2016.

The award is given to a business who exemplifies Elgin's progressive nature, by being an integral part of Elgin County's Economic Development and Tourism programming.

MaryAnne and Joe Van de Gevel are

the third generation to carry on the tradition of growing high quality Elgin County fruit, just minutes from scenic Port Stanley. The couple grows strawberries, tree ripened peaches (and pick-your-own), pears, pumpkins and 15 varieties of delicious apples. The farm also features fresh-baked goods made on-site.

Great Lakes is a founding member of the Savour Elgin program from its inception in 2010, and continues to be a dedicated and active member. They were also one of the first agricultural businesses to take advantage of the Elgincentives program; starting with the conversion of a barn into cold storage. From there they also resurfaced their driveway and parking areas and introduced new signage on the farm.

In addition to their membership in Elgin County programming, MaryAnne volunteers her time and resources to assisting with Student Nutrition programs in Elgin.

Congratulations to Great Lakes Farms for their success in business and for their role in giving back to the community.

Business Profile

The Pepper Tree Spice Company - Adding a Little Spice to Elgin County



Pepper Tree Spice Co. is the creative child of London entrepreneur Deb Mackey who after years of hunting for good quality spices, wanted to share a passion for high-quality and truly fresh spices, herbs, and seasonings with the growing culinary and organic community in Southwestern Ontario. Combining a love of cooking, spices and endless creativity, she launched her company under the name Hyde Park Spice Co. with a small grouping of organic spices and 15 artisan organic spice blends.

Within months, she had developed an on-line presence shipping across Canada and the United States expanding further to open a commercial division in 2011. With an overwhelming response from the community and as her business continued to grow, it became evident that another location was necessary. In

2012, the company was rebranded Pepper Tree Spice Company and she opened her location on Colborne Street in Port Stanley.

Today, with over 250 organic spices and 90 proprietary blends, The Pepper Tree Spice Company is Canada's only organic spicer. Debbie takes great care in the selection of spices she offers for sale. Sourced from all over the world these 250 different spice varieties are the highest quality and are completely organic. With absolutely no additives these spices are naturally 100 percent gluten free. All 90 of Pepper Tree's signature spice blends are made daily on-site at the Port Stanley location.

Customers flock to the store to experience the exotic aromas and flavours that add a dash of excitement to their culinary endeavours. Hyde Park Steak Spice, Garlic Mashed Blend,



Moroccan Spice Blends, Sensational 16, and various Curry Blends are a few customer favourites. Also particularly popular are the Bridge Street BBQ Rub and the Famous Portly Fish Rub - both developed and named in honour of the village of Port Stanley.

The store also offers a wide variety of salts including the popular Lavender Rosemary Salt Blend, a huge range of different peppers, a growing collection of Chile Pepper offerings, and a wide variety of rare and difficult to find spices. A gourmet food section features dip mixes, olive oils, chutneys, preserved lemons, balsamics, gluten free pastas, local breads, cheeses, and unique and beautiful cookware - all of which are sure to impress at your next dinner party.



The Pepper Tree Spice Company offers exquisitely gift-wrapped spice collections starting at \$25. Choose from pre-selected collections or

decide what spices to include yourself. These collections are the perfect gift for a friend or loved one this holiday season.

Debbie and her staff take great pride in making The Pepper Tree Spice Company a true foodie destination. She has created an experience for all the senses when walking through her doors. Questions and consultations are encouraged. Staff spend a great deal of time with each customer allowing them to smell and sample different spices, inquiring about their needs, and offering suggestions and advice.



Part of this culinary experience is teaching customers the ways in which they can incorporate the spices they purchase into meals and special dishes. The Pepper Tree Spice Company offers spice seminars as well as very popular intimate, interactive cooking classes on-location throughout the year. Small groups ensure that each participant has the opportunity for one-on-one interaction with the chef/instructor and a large share of the delicious meal that is prepared.

For more information about The Pepper Tree Spice Company or to register for an upcoming cooking class Like them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/peppertreespice/>

HOLIDAY PARADES IN elgincounty



2016 HOLIDAY PARADES

DUTTON

Saturday November 19
2:15 pm

ST THOMAS

Saturday November 19
6:00pm

PORT STANLEY

Friday November 25
7:00pm

WEST LORNE

Friday November 25
7:00pm

AYLMER

Saturday November 26
2:00pm

SPRINGFIELD

Saturday December 3
1:00pm

RODNEY

Saturday December 3
5:30pm

PORT BURWELL

Saturday December 3
6:00pm

FINGAL

Sunday December 4
2:00pm

BELMONT

Sunday December 4
6:00pm

STRAFFORDVILLE

Saturday December 10
10:30am



Check out our website for event and activities all season long.
1-877-GO-ELGIN x168 - elgintourist.com

Business Profile

Century Chocolates Wins Enterprise Elgin

The County of Elgin and the Elgin Business Resource Centre (EBRC) are pleased to announce that Ryan and Krista Harris owners of Century Chocolates have won the 2nd annual Enterprise Elgin Business Plan Competition at a grand finale event held at the New Sarum Diner on October 20, 2016.

Century Chocolates will receive a prize package valued at \$8,000 that will include cash and in-kind services such as graphic design, website services, free commercial banking, and more.

Century Chocolates is owned and operated by the husband and wife team of Ryan & Krista Harris. Their "homegrown" business literally started out of their home when they decided to make custom Belgium chocolate creations for friends and family during the holiday season. It was not long before they were receiving requests for more of these delicious creations. Ryan and Krista combined their talents, resources, skills and abilities and launched Century Chocolates. On October 1, 2016, they opened their first retail store at 182 Main St. in West Lorne to accommodate their growing business.

This competition was designed to foster business development in the County of Elgin through new business initiatives as well as business expansions.

Business planning is a crucial part of any successful business operation. This competition not only encouraged entrepreneurs to come forward with their ideas, but it emphasized the importance of doing so with a well thought out plan in place.

Five finalists were chosen to present in front of a panel of local judges. Runners up included

Rachel Webber – The Stable Grounds, West Elgin; Garrett Vanderwyst – Kingsmill CNG, Aylmer; Jill Bond – Groovy Moon, Malahide Township; and, Debbie Hope - Dixon's Feed Service, West Lorne.

"The positive response that this competition received again this year is proof that the entrepreneurial spirit is thriving in Elgin County," said Alan Smith, General Manager of Economic Development. "We are extremely pleased to have had such a talented and ambitious group of finalists to choose from and we wish all participants success in their future endeavours".





THIS HOLIDAY SEASON #SHOPELGIN



This Holiday Season avoid long lines and crowded parking lots by doing your shopping in the idyllic towns and villages of Elgin County. Shopping locally will save you time and give you the opportunity to purchase original, hand-crafted products while supporting small business.

The main streets of Elgin County's towns and villages are the perfect places to pick up gifts that are truly one-of-a-kind and are sure to please everyone on your list.

Explore quaint boutiques for trendy clothing and jewellery pieces, select fine local wines, pick up handcrafted home décor pieces, fresh flowers, natural skin care products, hand-made pottery, homemade fudge, sweet local honey, artisan candles and more!

Deck the halls with a ceramic art sculpture or stained glass window or choose an expertly framed piece of art from one of Elgin's many galleries and studios.

A culinary gift is a perfect choice for that hard to buy for person. Help the chef in your life spice up their cooking with locally grown herbs or delicious jams, jellies and salad dressings.

For those that prefer to be catered to, try a gift certificate to one of Elgin's quality restaurants or bakeries that offer everything from delightfully

sweet treats to hearty country fare to fine dining opportunities – all using local ingredients.

A round of golf at one of Elgin's many courses or tickets to a live theatre performance are always appreciated gifts.

Shop Elgin this holiday season and wow everyone on your list. Find great gift ideas at www.elgintourist.com/shopping or search the hashtag #ShopElgin.