

Welcome to

The Great Manitoba FoodFight

Wednesday, September 21, 2016

De Luca's Specialty Foods, Cooking School & Restaurant
950 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg

Program Guide

The Great Manitoba Food Fight (GMFF), celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, features 10 of Manitoba's top food innovators in a good-spirited competition to prove who has the best new product for 2016.

All 10 competitors have developed innovative, new food products and are ready to further commercialize their creations. They are competing to win one of three award packages to help them make their products more commercially viable. The gold prize package is valued at \$10,000, silver at \$7,000 and bronze at \$3,500.

The competitors were chosen from applicants across the province, based on the strength of their applications and the commercial appeal of their products. The competition also involves a panel of expert judges who will offer their expertise and feedback on the product quality and commercial viability of each entry.

Manitoba Agriculture is pleased to co-host the Great Manitoba Food Fight 2016 with Food & Beverage Manitoba in partnership with DeLuca's Specialty Foods Cooking School & Restaurant Ltd.



A reception and awards ceremony will be held after the competition (5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.). Guests will be able to sample all of the competing products, prepared by DeLuca's talented chefs. The award ceremony will begin at 7 p.m.

Competition Agenda



9:15 a.m. Stuart Webb - A Taste of Africa - Winnipeg - Biltong and Droewors (dried sausage)

A Taste of Africa brings a unique dried sausage product to the competition today. Similar to beef jerky but superior in taste and texture, this meat delicacy is popular across Southern Africa and is a hit with the ex-pat community here in Manitoba. Stuart hopes to introduce regular Manitobans to this treat and expand its popularity as a delicious snack food.

9:45 a.m. Kimberley Bialkoski - Flora and Farmer - Winnipeg - Applekraut

This delicious fermented product is an Asian-inspired twist on traditional sauerkraut and chock full of nutritional benefits. The Applekraut is not heat processed, allowing it to retain the nutritional benefits of the probiotics created during the fermentation process. Made with cabbage, apples and a variety of spices, this Applekraut is sure to be both tasty and nutritious.

10:15 a.m. Carrie Arsenault - Sugar Me Cookie Boutique - Gimli - Icelandic Vinarterta

Who doesn't love Vinarterta? Carrie's version is a decadent work of art and yummy too. Made with 7 cookie layers, a prune filling and topped off with a fine layer of almond buttercream icing, this beautiful Vinarterta is truly a labour of love.

10:40 – 11:00 a.m. Refreshment Break

11:05 a.m. Katy Unruh - Katy's Kookies - Brandon - Cherry Jubilee Natural Lean Bar

This bar is high in protein and fibre and made from all natural ingredients. There are no added flavours or preservatives and it can be enjoyed as a snack or as a protein or fibre supplement. This is perfect for busy people on the go or for athletes looking for a little boost.

11:35 a.m. Evan Funk - Funk's Sauces and Marinades - Steinbach - Funk's Original Herb and Garlic Marinade In-A-Bag

This marinade is conveniently packaged in a re-sealable bag for easy use. You simply open the bag, add 2 or 3 pounds of meat and grill after 4 to 8 hours of marinating. The bag is vacuum sealed for freshness. This marinade is perfect for meat, fish or veggies and so easy to use.

12:00 – 12:50 p.m. Lunch

1:05 p.m. Helen Staines - Decadence Chocolates Inc. - Winnipeg - Firecracker Bar

This bar is "from the bean" and made from pure Venezuelan Trinitario cacao beans which are roasted and ground in house for over 50 hours. Chili powder and popping candy are added for that firecracker effect, really bringing your mouth to life. This from the bean approach to chocolate is new to Winnipeg and the quality and richness is second-to-none.

1:35 p.m. Johanna and Alan McLaughlan - Rocky Lake Birchworks - The Pas - Birch Syrup Barbecue Sauce

A gourmet barbecue sauce made with Manitoba birch syrup, this sauce will make your taste buds sing. Its slightly sweet and spicy foundation can be used on a variety of meats, adding a wonderful caramel flavour.

2:05 p.m. John Heim - Torque Brewing Co. - Winnipeg - Witty Belgian Wheat Beer

A traditional Belgian wheat beer with hints of orange, lemon, lime and coriander, the Witty Belgium is sure to delight craft beer fans everywhere. Brewed right here in Manitoba, Torque Brewing is a start-up, locally owned and operated. Attention to detail makes this brew an exceptional and refreshing choice.

2:30 – 3:00 p.m. Refreshment Break

3:05 p.m. Peter Fehr - Gourmet Inspirations - Winnipeg - Salted Caramel Whiskey Sauce

This delightful dessert sauce can be drizzled on cheesecake, ice cream, apple pie or just about anywhere your imagination takes you. Salted caramel is very trendy right now and the unique addition of whiskey lends itself to wide appeal.

3:35 p.m. Chelsea Szachury - The Bar Lady - Winnipeg - The Bar Lady Chocolates

These rich, velvety chocolates are completely guilt-free, both vegan and gluten-free. Simple, healthy ingredients and a minimalist approach in production, sets this product apart from the rest. The chocolate is smooth and creamy and sure to satisfy every sweet tooth.

The Judges

- **Paolo DeLuca**, purchasing and sales manager - Wholesale Division, **DeLuca's Specialty Foods, Cooking School and Restaurant Ltd.**, Winnipeg (www.deluca.ca). DeLuca's is a Winnipeg staple, offering a grocery store, catering facilities and a cooking school all featuring authentic Italian foods. As well, DeLuca's have a food distribution division. Paolo is passionate about fresh, local foods. Products from across Manitoba can be found in DeLuca's store, located at 950 Portage Ave.
- **Martin Scanlon**, professor of food technology in the Department of Food Science - **University of Manitoba**. After degrees from the University of Leeds in England and postdoctoral fellowships at the Canadian Grain Commission and the University of Manitoba, Scanlon was head of the Milling Section at FMBRA in Chorleywood. At the University of Manitoba his research and teaching has been focused on food processing and food quality, primarily working with Canadian prairie crops. As well as being granting agency panels for NSERC and international review teams, he has worked with a number of international and local companies to implement new technologies aimed at improving process efficiency or product quality.
- **Jennifer Strath**, (market development manager) **Food & Beverage Manitoba (FMB)**, Winnipeg, (www.foodbeveragemanb.ca). With over 30 years of marketing experience, Jennifer has launched and branded some of the most successful products in western Canadian Agriculture. Her more recent passion is with Manitoba-made food. Working with FBM has allowed Jennifer to promote locally made foods, putting more Manitoba food on Manitobans' plates.
- **Scot McTaggart**, owner, **Fusion Grill**, Winnipeg, www.fusiongrill.mb.ca. The Fusion Grill has been operating for over 19 years and in 2011 was listed as one of Canada's top restaurants by the Globe and Mail. Scot delights in using fresh, local Manitoba ingredients in his dishes and enjoys sharing his food's origins with his loyal customers.



A look back... a glimpse at some of our previous winners

Adagio Acres (Bronze Winner 2014) – Naked Oats

What prompted you to enter the Great Manitoba Food Fight?

We heard about the Food Fight as we were up to our eyeballs learning about how to enter the retail market, and we were really excited for the opportunity to get feedback from such a great panel of industry experts.

Where were you selling your products at the time of the competition?

In March 2014, we were selling at three farmers markets, seven specialty stores and six grocery stores.

Where are you selling your products at this time?

We are currently selling our naked oats through about 47 specialty and grocery stores in Winnipeg, and are also supplying to approximately 30 different restaurants and local food manufacturers.

Have you added new flavours or products to your product line?

We are now also manufacturing Steel Cut Naked Oats and Quick Cooking Naked Oats for retail and foodservice.

How would you describe the growth of your business over the last few years?

It's been a huge learning curve as we learn about the food industry and how business is done while still maintaining the care and attention to detail of a small scale farm. We have made a number of very conscious decisions to slow down our growth so that we can continue to focus on our local customers and give ourselves time to learn from our mistakes.

What are your future plans?

We're really excited about a few possibilities for new products. We'd like to introduce a Naked Oat and wild rice mix, and have been doing a lot of experimenting with granola lately. But more often than not, future planning means just hoping that we'll get the day's work done before the sun sets; so we'll take each step as it comes.

adagioacres.com

Boreal Berry Bar (Bronze Winner 2012) – The Bushman's Bar

What prompted you to enter the Great Manitoba Food Fight?

We entered the Great Manitoba Food Fight for many reasons. We wanted to showcase our prototype as a unique Manitoba product. Jo Jo (co-owner) and I wanted the experience of pitching our product to an audience that would provide critical feedback. We wanted to connect with fellow Manitoba start-ups in the food industry and share experiences. And of course, we wanted the chance of winning some prize money to help with the refinement of The Bushman's Bar.

Where were you selling your products at the time of the competition?

We did not have our final product at the Great Manitoba Food Fight. We had an initial prototype which we then spent another year refining to the point where we had a clean label and a gluten-free nutrition bar that was true to our original vision. Following the Great Manitoba Food Fight win, we spent two more years refining the bar, branding our product, developing an online store on our website, designing packaging and promoting The Bushman's Bar at trade shows across four provinces.

Where are you selling your products at this time?

We have an online store on our website. We have over 100 independent grocery and convenience stores throughout Manitoba and Saskatchewan carrying The Bushman's Bar. Bushnell's Trigger Effect TV is a strong promoter of The Bushman's Bar internationally.

Have you added new flavours or products to your product line?

We currently have one product, containing three types of berries from Canada's north. The Bushman's Bar is gluten-free, with four grams of fibre and nine grams of protein in every bar.

How would you describe the growth of your business over the last few years?

We have grown slowly, following our marketing plan. We did not want to grow too big, too fast. We continue to slowly expand across Canada, tapping into several consumer markets: gluten-free, health-conscious, outdoor pursuits and healthy snack.

What are your future plans?

It's a surprise!

borealberrybar.com

Sweet C Bakery (Gold Winner 2015) – Cookie Dough

What prompted you to enter the Great Manitoba Food Fight?

My friends and family recommended I do it. They knew that I was starting prep on putting my idea of frozen cookie dough into reality, but the constraints financially are something that every entrepreneur faces. When they told me I literally had nothing to lose by doing it, I decided I'd try. There is never a bad time to practice a pitch or present your products, so I went in using this more as a learning opportunity. I was never expecting to win. I made some great connections the evening of the awards, so I felt that alone was worth it.

Where were you selling your products at the time of the competition?

We had just done our first round of label design. In fact we had a mock label for the competition. It was still in the early stages.

Where are you selling your products at this time?

I am now in Red River Co-op (three locations), Swan Valley Co-op, Generation Green, Cramptons and La Grotta.

Have you added new flavours or products to your product line?

We are currently working on a gluten-free dough to be added and will possibly be looking at changing some of the other flavors.

How would you describe the growth of your business over the last few years?

The growth of Sweet C bakery in the past 12 months is something I was expecting at my 10 year mark in business. We are selling in stores and competing with brands that have been around for years. We are opening up our own production facility and store front. We have come so far and this is just the beginning for us.

What are your future plans?

Once we get our store front open, our plans will be to focus on obtaining more wholesale accounts. In five-to-seven years we want to be in a factory and be shipping all our frozen cookie dough across North America.

sweetcbakery.com

Gorp Clean Energy Bar (Gold Winner 2009) – Energy Bar

What prompted you to enter the Great Manitoba Food Fight?

I entered the Food Fight because I was at the point in my business concept where I was ready to move to the next level of commercialization and really test the market but didn't have the resources to make the leap. Being a part of the Food Fight not only helped me fine tune my presentation abilities but also helped to really test my concept to see if it would hold water.

Where were you selling your products at the time of the competition?

At the time of the competition I was not yet selling my product. I took the money I won and leveraged it into the Manitoba Agri-Innovation Suite (MAIS) program, which was a 50/50 matched funding initiative by the provincial government. The MAIS program was designed to help Manitoba entrepreneurs succeed in the marketplace and to aid companies in my position. I then had \$30,000 to put towards developing a very strong brand. This included strategy planning, package design and our overall brand concept.

Where are you selling your products at this time?

We are selling our GORP energy bars in over 600 stores across Canada and will begin exporting to the United States shortly.

Have you added new flavours or products to your product line?

Since the competition we've added a new flavour (Peanut Butter & Raspberry) and currently have a Ginger, Apple & Pecan flavour going through shelf life testing right now.

How would you describe the growth of your business over the last few years?

Overall we've experienced a steady growth over the past few years. There have definitely been lulls and challenges along the way and at other times we've spiked over a short period and have had to deal with the complications that causes us as well. In the end you just have to keep putting one foot in front of the other.

What are your future plans?

Our future plans are to keep expanding the flavour offerings and we also have a new product ready to launch. But it's top secret at the moment. We are also looking forward to exploring more export opportunities in the future, as well.

gorpworld.com

Jill Dorosh (Gold Winner 2014) – Jamore! Real Fruit Spread

What prompted you to enter the Great Manitoba Food Fight?

I entered for the exposure, for the potential assistance that came with further developing my product if I was to place and to meet like minded people and other people in the industry.

Where were you selling your products at the time of the competition?

I was selling at the Farmers Markets, and at a couple of locations in the city.

Where are you selling your products at this time?

Now we are in over 20 retail locations in Manitoba!

Crampton's Market, Bothwell Cheese Retail Store, Deluca's Specialty Foods, GJ Andrews, Generation Green at The Forks, Local Meats and Frozen Treats, Myer's Delicatessen, Scoop & Save Health Foods, Sunrise Health Food Stores, The Fresh Carrot, The Marketplace in St. Norbert, Red River CO-OP locations in Winnipeg, Vita Health Stores, The Whole Touch Spa

Have you added new flavours or products to your product line?

Yes! After winning the food fight I was able to add

2 new flavors of Jamore Real Fruit Spread, we won with our Blueberry flavor, but then added Saskatoon and Strawberry with Dark Cherry. PLUS we have been able to expand to a new line of products called Conscious Ketchup!

How would you describe the growth of your business over the last few years?

It's been steady. After Jamore Real Fruit Spread won the Gold Medal at The Great Manitoba Food Fight we were able to grow quicker than we would have on our own by utilizing our winnings. We developed the 2 new flavors, completed or shelf life studies, had new labels designed and ultimately were able to get on to the shelves of more retail locations. It has been an exciting process and truly a blessing to be able to have the opportunities that I have had.

What are your future plans?

Keep pushing forward! I would like to expand the Conscious Ketchup line, possibly look at expanding into another province - but slowly. I never want to over promise and under deliver - I want to make sure I continue to look after the stores that so generously give us their shelf space. So slow and steady growth is my goal.

Chocolatier Constance Popp (Silver Winner 2009) - ManitoBar

What prompted you to enter the Great Manitoba Food Fight?

First time I entered (2007), I was encouraged by MAFRI (so called at the time) and I felt it would be a very good opportunity for people to learn that Chocolatier Constance Popp existed. Also, I really wanted to place in order to receive some of the funding and services, as I was about to open my commercial kitchen and shop. I came fourth that year – just short of any winnings and received a wonderful made in Manitoba basket – that was encouraging.

The second time I entered (2009) I won the Winnipeg chapter event with our now famous ManitoBar and came second in the overall event to the wonderful GORP bar. We were able to improve our packaging with our prize. To this day I am very grateful for the exposure, prize and support from the GMFF [sic] community.

Where were you selling your products at the time of the competition?

At that very early time in my business, I was only selling at Siesta Café in Riding Mountain National Park – RMNP [sic] was super familiar to me as I did my master's degree within this park and so very comforting to try out my new chocolates at a friend's Café.

Where are you selling your products at this time?

In my shop of course, Chocolatier Constance Popp at 180 Provencher, as well as online and also at a few places around Winnipeg including, Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Legislature, Deluca's and a few hotels, coffee shops and restaurants.

Have you added new flavours or products to your product line?

Absolutely—in addition to making and selling a good range of bon-bons, bars, barks and molded pieces, we also make and sell cakes, frozen treats, macarons, chocolate drinks and chocolate showpieces. And we do make some of our own chocolate from whole cacao beans right in our shop. One of our specialties is creating original iconic molded pieces such as the Golden Boy, CMHR, and the Juno Award as well as numerous custom pieces for our shop and for other businesses and events.

How would you describe the growth of your business over the last few years?

Slow but steadily upwards – it's the Manitoba way.

What are your future plans?

We are planning a very special event and we are expanding, too. Stay tuned!

constancepopp.com

Belinda Bigold, High Tea Bakery (Silver Winner 2011) – Imperial Cookies

What prompted you to enter the Great Manitoba Food Fight?

A referral from our Manitoba Agriculture representative Jayne Kjaldgaard.

Where were you selling your products at the time of the competition?

Strictly out of our storefront

Where are you selling your products at this time?

We are now in coffee houses around the city, but still primarily through the store. We only just completed our renovations.

Have you added new flavours or products to your product line?

We have not added flavours, but we've expanded into corporate branding of the cookies, so that corporations can add their own logos to the cookies. This is our fastest growing segment at the moment.

How would you describe the growth of your business over the last few years?

Difficult - LOL! Faced with a kitchen at capacity and the inability to produce more product, we've spent the better part of 3 years in a full scale expansion of our property. We've built a 2 storey addition on the back of our building, which houses a brand new kitchen and a dedicated decorating studio. Then we gutted the front of our building to create a more customer friendly area, including a new coffee & tea bar. Business is up approx 35% since we took part in the competition, and growing steadily, but for the years it took to expand, business essentially stalled.

What are your future plans?

To capitalize on our recent expansion. The renovation basically caused us to tread water for 3 years. Now we finally get to put those marketing and expansion plans in motion and actually grow. We'll be adding web sales of our imperial cookies, and expanding into more wholesale markets.

hightebakery.com

Thank You to Our Valuable Supporters

The organizing committee would like to thank these partners for supporting the dreams of innovative food entrepreneurs.

Our Partner



Our Co-Host



Gold Supporters

