

Herman's Hot Sauce

Herman Stein knows how to make an entrance--people literally cough and sneeze in his presence! This reaction occurs if he has any powder from dried extra hot peppers on his clothing. Make no mistake--Herman's Hot Sauce is HOT!

In business since 1999, Herman views making hot sauce as a labor of love; he grows 80% of the vegetables used in his four sauces: Original Hot, Medium Hot, Medium Hot (Chunky) and his Extra Hot, Nitro 2.0. From growing over 45 plants per variety of his own sweet and extra hot peppers--in addition to his own tomatoes--to hauling 400 lbs. of produce to the Common Wealth Kitchen Incubator (CWKI) where he puts in a 16-hour workday making and bottling his sauce, Herman makes his one-person production look daunting. However, he contends that the love of creating something everyone enjoys keeps him returning to the CWKI year after year.

As for a successful product, Herman has the sales to prove it. His sauce can be found in several local and regional locations, including the Lake to River Food Co-op in Youngstown, The Butcher Block in Mineral Ridge and the B&K Farm Market in Warren. Nationally, he distributes to St. Charles, Illinois and Silverdale, Washington. In Silverdale, his sauce is featured in the famous Bloody Mary drinks at a bowling alley/restaurant/casino establishment. He credits his widespread sales to his online presence through a website and introducing his sauce to restaurants he patronizes in the Northeast Ohio region. His sauce has even helped people win chili cook-off contests!

While Herman acknowledges the challenge of insurance costs and licensing in running a small business, he encourages potential entrepreneurs to do their due diligence in obtaining the necessary schooling and licensing at the outset of starting a business. He appreciates how the CWKI assists small business owners with obtaining certifications, licensure, Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) and Federal Department of Agriculture (FDA) inspections/approvals, producing, bottling and labeling. The convenience of having a commercial shared-use kitchen in his community contributes to the success of his business.

Visit www.hermanshotsauce.com and on Facebook at "Herman's Hot Sauce" for more information and to learn about upcoming events featuring Herman's Hot Sauce!