

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

Idaho food entrepreneurs: Stories of grit, growth and innovation

AT A GLANCE

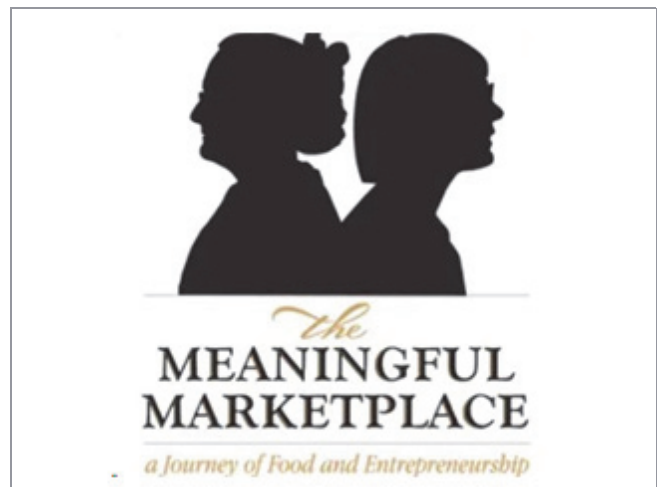
The Meaningful Marketplace Podcast shares the journeys and insights of Idaho's food entrepreneurs.

The Situation

Idaho's food industry is an essential part of the state's economy, providing jobs, enhancing local food security and supporting rural communities. However, food entrepreneurs in Idaho often face distinct challenges when navigating remote markets, managing multiple tasks and managing distribution logistics across vast geographic areas. Many food startups lack mentorship, visibility and community support, crucial for sustaining and growing their operations, making it difficult to compete in larger markets. A need emerged to amplify these entrepreneurs' voices, allowing them to share their stories, challenges, successes, and providing a platform for them to share experiences and connect with a broader network. Having mentors and being able to talk with other entrepreneurs is invaluable for their businesses and their mental health.

Our Response

The Meaningful Marketplace Podcast is hosted by Sarah Masoni (director of product and process development at the Oregon State University Food Innovation Center) and Sarah Marshall (founder of Marshall's Haute Sauce). Sarah and Sarah have been recording weekly entrepreneurs' journeys. Idaho is part of USDA's Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional



The Meaningful Marketplace Podcast logo.

Food Business Center. With support from the regional food business center several podcasts highlighted some of Idaho's great food entrepreneurs this year. Idaho's cohosts included Janna Hamlett (TechHelp and University of Idaho Extension food processing specialist), Colette DePhelps (UI Extension area educator in community food systems) and Katie Baker (Sun Valley Institute for Resilience).

Each episode explores the origins, challenges and triumphs of different businesses, offering listeners an inside look at the world of Idaho's local food entrepreneurial landscape. By sharing these stories, the podcast fosters community awareness, encourages support for local businesses and serves as a valuable resource for aspiring entrepreneurs seeking insights and

inspiration from peers in the industry.

Listen to our Idaho food entrepreneurs' podcast online at <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/meaningful-marketplace-podcast/id1485436605>.

Ep #	Name	Company
195	McKinley Dixon	Northern Latitude Foods
https://northernlatfoods.com/		
196	Travis Ballard	Ballard Cheese
https://ballardcheese.com/		
197	Melissa and Briana	Free Spirits Beverage
https://www.freespirtsbevco.com/		
198	Ladd & Zoey Wahlen	Roots Potato Chips
https://rootschips.com/		
199	Jan & Gail Zarr	Oma & Popies
https://www.omaandpopies.com/		
200	Joni Kindwall-Moore	Snacktivist Foods
https://snacktivistfoods.com/		
201	Sevana Saroyan	Hummuna Hummus
https://gethummus.com/		
202	Jessica Norris	Dilly's Pickled Veggies
https://www.dillyspickles.com/		
203	Brett Stevenson	Hillside Grain
https://www.hillsidegrain.com/		

Program Outcomes

- **Increased Awareness:** The podcast has reached listeners both within and beyond Idaho, expanding

awareness of the unique products and entrepreneurial spirit of Idaho's food industry.

- **Enhanced Visibility for Entrepreneurs:** Some of the featured businesses have reported an increase in local engagement and inquiries, helping them connect with potential suppliers, customers and partners.
- **Resource for Aspiring Entrepreneurs:** The podcast has become a valuable tool for those interested in starting their food ventures, offering practical advice and real-life lessons from seasoned entrepreneurs.
- **Community Connection:** Listeners have gained a deeper appreciation for the dedication behind each local product, fostering a sense of pride and community support for Idaho's food sector.

The Future

The podcast is cycling through all the states associated with the USDA regional food center. Next year (2025) Idaho's entrepreneurs will be featured again. We will focus on themes such as sustainability, innovation, how to utilize the local food system and regional collaboration. This continued effort will provide a dynamic platform for sharing the evolving stories of Idaho's food industry, inspiring both current and future entrepreneurs and strengthening the local economy through enhanced awareness and support.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

TechHelp is Idaho's Manufacturing Extension Partnership Center (MEP) and their mission is to help manufacturers succeed.

Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Food Business Center is made up of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming. The center supports small and mid-tier food and farm businesses.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Janna Hamlett, Assistant Professor & Food Processing Extension Specialist • Department of Animal, Veterinary and Food Sciences • 208-731-9363 • jannav@uidaho.edu

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