

Two Brothers, One Dream

It all started in the kitchen, making salsa out of five gallon buckets. He would sanitize jars, cook the salsa, put it in jars and then boil the jars to get a proper seal. A five gallon bucket would produce 40 pint jars. If the process was not done in the right order, the salsa turned out completely different.

This was just the beginning of the dream of having their own salsa sold in grocery stores. It had started out of the kitchen in Kyle Lancaster's home and was made out of his home for many years after he closed Jodarro's Grill in Slaton, Texas in early 2001.

Their initial jars were given to friends, family,

former restaurant customers and anyone who requested it. As the demand for the salsa grew, it became difficult for Kyle to keep up. At this point, he had to seek out a manufacturing company who could reproduce the salsa to his exact homemade specifications.

"Trust me, that's no easy task," Kyle said.

Financially, Kyle was never going to get the company off the ground. So in January of 2011, his brother, Kraig Lancaster, formed a partnership with Kyle and they became Kylito's Salsa Co. LLC.

Kylito's Salsa has five different varieties of salsa. The different heat levels are achieved by differing amounts of jalapeños in each variety, with the exception of Scorchingm which is a combination of jalapeños and habaneros.

Kyle felt the varying levels of heat are necessary in order to please everyone's preferred level of heat.

The salsa has very simple ingredients, but the unique cooking process is what separates it from the competition, and still makes it taste homemade.

Kylito's Salsa is in stores such as United Supermarkets, Market Street, Amigos, Lowe's Supermarket, Affiliated Food member stores throughout Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, Brookshire Brothers, and Brookshire Grocery Company.

Walmart Supercenters in will begin carrying the salsa in West Texas in July 2013. Also, HEB will add this to their shelves in August 2013.

"The salsa went from being my hobby, to being a career in a relatively short amount of time," Kyle said.

Kyle said the company has a lot of work in front of them, the salsa market is one of the most competitive markets in grocery retail. Kraig, Kyle's sister-in-law, Tracye Lancaster—who are all graduates of Texas Tech University—are constantly coming up with marketing ideas and strategies which they hope will give the company a competitive advantage in the market.

"To watching something grow from the ground up and exceed expectations is very rewarding," Kyle said. "However, our company is still in its infancy."

Kyle said this is a huge challenge, frustrating at times, but overall a wonderful experience. He said he would not trade his career for another.

"My salsa company means everything to me," Kyle said. **T**



Photo courtesy of Kyle Lancaster

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