

# Boreal Berry Bar Inc.



JoJo and Nicholas, photo provided by Boreal Berry Bar Inc.

Owner: Jo Jo & Karen Cormier

Product: Wild Rice Berry Bar

Established: 2010

Market: National

Number of Employees: 2

Website:

[www.borealberrybar.com](http://www.borealberrybar.com)



*“...Media glamorizes innovation, in reality it takes an enormous amount of time, money, and commitment to succeed.”*

## The Business

Boreal Berry Bar Inc. is a small business established in 2010 which specializes in developing healthy foods containing ingredients found within the Boreal Forest in Northern Canada. At present, Boreal Berry Bar Inc. has one bar on the market called “The Bushman’s Bar” and is using the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc. to make and package the product. Jo Jo Cormier, co-owner of Boreal Berry Bar Inc., considers his bar to be *“wildly nutritious and berry delicious, made with 17 ingredients. This fine Canadian product is gluten free, northern, natural and nutritious.”* The Bushman’s Bar is currently being sold online and at retail stores across Western Canada. Jo Jo and his wife Karen, co-owner in the business, chose to develop their bar in rural Manitoba because it is where they live. A need to be closer to suppliers, production facilities and consumers, required them to relocate their business from Flin Flon to Austin, Manitoba.

## The Motive and Skills

Karen and Jo Jo are motivated by their love of northern Canada and their desire to share the goodness of the Boreal Forest with the rest of the world. They wanted to create a business with the goal of educating people on what is available within the forest. Jo Jo has spent years watching Northern Manitoba’s wild rice being shipped to the USA to be processed and sold. He believes *“we need to be using more of our own ingredients in Canada; we are a land rich in resources, with many northern communities needing employment*

*opportunities. So why isn’t Canada utilizing our own natural resources right here?”*

Jo Jo and Karen believe the most important skills for success have been patience and persistence. Jo Jo says innovators need to have the *“get up and go and believe in what they are doing”* in order to succeed.

## Challenges and Support

For the Cormiers the cost of doing business in the north is one of many challenges involved in creating a new business. *“It was difficult to source small amounts of ingredients, connect with the right government departments and officials, and ensure the final product was representative of our original goals.”* Boreal Berry Bar Inc. had help along the way from other small businesses. *“Networking with other small businesses”* says Karen *“has been the most helpful for us”*. *“It was small companies that helped us get to where we are today”* added Jo Jo.

## A Piece of Advice from Jo Jo and Karen

First, *“branding is your number one concern; the markets are so competitive that branding gives you the edge.”* Second, *“spend time talking to others about their experiences and the costs/benefits of going into business. Media glamorizes innovation, in reality it takes an enormous amount of time, money, and commitment to succeed.”*

# 101 Ideas

for Innovation and Entrepreneurship



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