

Wendell Estate Honey



Photo provided by Wendell Estate Honey

Owner: Tim and Isabel Wendell

Product Development and Sales: Martin Neuhofer

Product: Honey

Established: 2011

Market: Local, National, International

Number of Employees: 3

Website: www.wendellestate.ca



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The Business

Wendell Honey Farm is located in the Canadian Prairies where Tim and Isabel Wendell, owners of Wendell Honey Farm, sell their honey to wholesale markets. In 2011, Wendell Honey Farms branched out into the retail market with Wendell Estate Honey, located near Roblin, Manitoba. The Wendell's take pride in producing white creamed raw honey with minimal processing, to ensure a high-quality product. The honey goes from extraction to the jars in less than 2-3 days, without heating or blending to maintain the colour and nutrients of the honey. Wendell Estate Honey is located in rural because that is where the farm is. Honey *“is a rural and farm-based product”* says Martin, Product Development and Sales for Wendell Estate. He believes the remote location of the farm is what makes Wendell Estate Honey a high quality honey.

The Motive and Skills

Wendell Estate Honey started because of the Wendell's desire to have the honey they eat at home available to everyone. Before this dream could become a reality, Martin conducted a year of market research to identify what was out there, what was missing, and where Wendell Estate Honey would fit. After identifying an upscale market for their honey, Martin worked to separate themselves from their competitors by the design and packaging of the honey. He then took Wendell Estate Honey on the popular CBC show Dragons' Den to further promote the product. The Wendell's and Martin were also motivated by the goal

of becoming price makers instead of price takers. With Wendell Honey Farm they were commodity producers so they had to take the market price, but with Wendell Estate Honey, they sell retail and are able to set their own price for their product.

For Martin the most important skills for entrepreneurs and innovators are persistence and market knowledge. *“It is a long road and you must know what is out there, what is missing, know your product and where it fits. So you can tell the world your product is better than others.”*

Challenges and Support

The biggest challenge Wendell Estate Honey is currently experiencing is highly connected to their location in rural Manitoba. The Wendell's and Martin are facing a dilemma, do they relocate to an urban centre to gain greater access to markets and labour to expand their production, or do they stay where they are to maintain the quality of the honey. Martin says Wendell Estates Honey got help from everyone. MAFRD and the GO Offices in Roblin and Russell, the Food Development Centre, Chamber of Commerce's, and Manitoba Exports and Trade provided Martin with knowledge on what to do and how to do it.

A Piece of Advice from Martin

“It takes longer than you think. Don't underestimate the time it will take to bring your product to market. Plan long term and find financial partners because it will handicap you if you don't.”

101  Ideas

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