

ACCESS

MANITOBA

April - June 2002

Wild West – a U.S. Success

by Sue Murray

The U.S. market is an ever-promising opportunity for the owners of **Schwartz Sausage Company**, a Manitoba seasoning manufacturing company.

The Headingly-based company counts itself among the growing number of small and medium-sized enterprises in Western Canada that are taking advantage of the **International Trade Personnel Program (ITPP)** offered by Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD).

While Rodney and Janet Schwartz currently sell their products across Canada and in 17 states in the U.S., they are well aware of the potential for further expansion. With help from the ITPP, Schwartz Sausage hired recent MBA graduate Jonas Johnson in September 2001 to further develop their expansion into the U.S. market.

According to the Schwartz's, their meat marinades were instrumental in marketing their products in the U.S. Their product lines include: 14 seasonings, sold under the name Wild West Seasonings; meat marinades; specialty seasoning; jerky cure seasoning; sausage seasoning kits; and a novel product for making jerky from hamburger.

"Jonas will also work to increase product awareness, and eventually he'll recruit and train brokers and sales representatives for the U.S. market," says Rodney.

He also projects a 100 per cent increase in export sales resulting from the first year under the ITPP initiative.



Schwartz Sausage Co. President Rod Schwartz (R) hired Sales and Marketing Manager Jonas Johnson (L) through WD's International Trade Personnel Program to boost export sales of Wild West Seasonings.

"Western Economic Diversification, and in particular Lee Gregg, a WD Client Service Officer, was extremely helpful in keeping our expansion plans on track," said Janet. "She also advised us on some networking opportunities and pathfinding services that we found most valuable."

Schwartz's future plans include expanding its product line, expanding its reach in the U.S. market and diversifying the packaging size to better accommodate the food service sector.

To find out more about Schwartz Sausage Company, call 1-800-493-3993 or visit their Web site at: www.wildwestseasonings.com. ♣

Sowing the Seeds...of Sales Worldwide



Denis C. Cloutier, president and owner of Cloutier Agra Seeds, is working to expand the company's reach into the global marketplace.

by Sue Murray

Although genetically modified (GM) crop production is the current trend in agriculture that scores of grain producers are capitalizing on, there are others focusing on the specialty markets that have emerged.

Among those bucking the trend are Denis C. Cloutier, president and owner of **Cloutier Agra Seeds Inc.**, which specializes in the export of pedigreed seed, oilseeds and identity preserved grains.

Cloutier realized there was a specific consumer demand for non-GM food products and moved quickly to respond to the emerging niche market. Nearly four years ago, after deciding to concentrate on a crop not widely produced in Manitoba,

the St. Norbert-based company began marketing new early maturing varieties of soybeans.

Export sales to date have done very well, says Cloutier. The company has widened the scope of its international marketing of agri-seeds and, in particular, soybeans, and now boasts customers in Europe, Japan and Asia.

Future sales look very promising according to Cloutier, and plans to further explore potential markets for soybeans are already in the works.

With funding assistance through Western Economic Diversification Canada's (WD) **International Trade Personnel Program (ITPP)**, Cloutier Agra Seeds has hired a recent graduate to assist in the development and implementation of the company's export market strategies.

"This WD initiative has been instrumental in helping us realize our potential," Cloutier says. "Our staff has now grown to half a dozen full-time employees now that Wanda Heron has joined the team and is focusing on further developing our markets in the Pacific Rim."

WD Client Services Officer Richard Lloyd says it's rewarding to see clients like Cloutier Agra Seeds benefiting from programs like the ITPP. Lloyd encourages other Manitoba small and medium-sized enterprises to look into programs and services offered by WD by calling 1-888-338-WEST (9378) or logging on to www.wd.gc.ca.

Cloutier Agra Seeds can be contacted at 261-0584 or check out their Web site at: www.cloutieragraseds.com. ♣

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What a Concept!

by Sue Murray

It's been 10 years since **Freedom Concepts Inc.** opened its doors with the mission of "Creating the *CYCLE* of Mobility" by designing and manufacturing award-winning therapeutic mobility aids for children and adults with special needs.

Freedom custom manufactures products with names like *Discovery*, *Adventurer*, *Journey*, *Expedition* and *Heritage*, and has made a name for itself for the quality of work that goes into each order.

The company's *Discovery* model was the starting point for success. With quick release mechanisms, *Discovery* adapts easily from one rider to another, making it the bike of choice for many therapists, schools and care facilities.

The *Heritage* series, with its walk through design and low seat, is especially great for people with dwarfism, balance problems, cerebral palsy, obesity, multiple sclerosis, and stroke and arthritis sufferers.

This innovative company even designed a two-seater tandem model allowing individuals with physical, visual or mental disabilities to enjoy bike riding.

Orders are filled quickly - from two to four weeks for the little bikes in the *Discovery* series, to four to six weeks for the *Adventurer Tandem*, *Expedition* and *Journey* series.

"The rehabilitation market has really diversified in the past couple of years, and the therapeutic advantages of our bikes are starting to be appreciated," says Freedom Concepts President Ken Vanstraelen. "This change has allowed us to expand our market into the U.S., focusing on rehab markets where weather isn't such a factor."



Rear steering is an innovative feature of Freedom Concepts' DCP 12 RS model in the company's Discovery series.

To carry out the necessary export market research and development, Vanstraelen tapped into Western Economic Diversification Canada's (WD) **International Trade Personnel Program (ITPP)** for the extra human resources the firm needed.

Marketing assistant Leigh Robinson has been on board with the firm for about a year, and has made promising inroads by cultivating relationships with end-users, therapists and dealers through networking opportunities, industry conferences and trade shows.

With a factory representative in California and independent sales representatives in Florida, Georgia, North and South Carolina, New Jersey and New England, Freedom Concepts is poised to ride the wave into the southern U.S. market.

Freedom Concepts Inc. can be reached at 1-800-661-9915 or visit their Web site at: www.freedomconcepts.com. ♣

Manitoba Business Seminars

Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre (C/MBSC)

The C/MBSC and the e-Business Service Centre offers a number of seminars to existing and potential entrepreneurs. The seminars are free, but seating is limited. For complete information about the seminars or to register, call 984-2272 or e-mail manitoba@cbsc.ic.gc.ca.

Identifying Business Ideas

This seminar will offer tips on where to find sources that generate business ideas.

Starting a Small Business in Manitoba

Learn all the bases when starting your own business, including name registration, taxation, licensing requirements and more.

Interactive Business Planner

Discover how to use this unique tool to create a personalized business plan online.

How to Use the Canada/Manitoba Business Service Centre for Market and Business Plan Research

Find out what resources are available in the Centre to help you plan your business venture.

How to Use the Internet - the Basics

An introduction to using the Internet for business research.

How to Use the Internet – Advanced

Designed for those comfortable using the Internet, the seminar will focus on advanced techniques when searching for business information.

How to Protect Your Invention: Patents, Copyrights, Trademarks and Industrial Designs

Find out what each form of intellectual property covers, the extent of your protection and when you should apply for it.

From Idea to Market...8 Steps to Help You Get There!

Phil Poetker and Ed Lam of Urban Imports Inc. share their experiences and knowledge in seminars outlining the steps you need to take in order to get your product from the development stage to the market — Manufacturing/Production, Ownership Agreements and Qualifying, Negotiating and Establishing a Business Relationship.

Women's Enterprise Centre of Manitoba

The Women's Enterprise Centre of Manitoba also offers seminars. To check the schedule and register for Winnipeg seminars, please call 988-1860 or 1-800-203-2343.

Effective Marketing for Entrepreneurs Workshop

This free one-day workshop is presented by consultants from Manitoba Industry, Trade and Mines (Small Business and Cooperative Development) and the e-Business Service Centre. Topics include: marketing, promotions and advertising; the difference between what customers may want and what you offer; e-business; the buying steps; and pricing. For more information or to register, contact Jeannine at 984-0037 or 1-800-665-2019 or by e-mail at: lafond.jeannine@cbsc.ic.gc.ca.*