

Candied pecans so good, they're "Cinn-fully Delicious"

SOUTH HILL, VIRGINIA, U.S., November 1, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Beth Callis grew up in South Hill, VA. Her food business started after years of making food gifts for people for Christmas. She'd always had a talent for baking and crafting tasty treats in the kitchen, so when she heard about a presentation from Virginia Tech about how to turn her food hobby into a business, she jumped at the opportunity to attend.

Always up to the challenge, she figured "If other people can do it, I can too."

She studied and learned the procedures and requirements surrounding home-based food production for public sale and consumption. Shortly after, Peculiar Pantry was born.

“

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Beth Callis



Peculiar Pantry Treats - Cinn-fully Delicious

Starting with a toffee recipe and an idea for cinnamon flavored pecans & almonds, Beth experimented until everything was just right, the perfect balance of aroma, taste, and texture. She sourced packaging, produced labels, and passed her inspections. Then, it was off to market.

Like many food-based entrepreneurs Beth started out at craft shows and festivals across Virginia. These events are the perfect environment to market test food products because you have instant feedback from a large sample size. You also have instant market validation based on

sales after samples. At those early shows, around 2002, she got the validation she needed. The market spoke, and the treats were a hit.

Enjoying Peculiar Pantry as a hobby, and not quite ready to make the leap to full-time, Beth continued her career and further developed her professional skills. She became a licensed massage therapist and launched a successful massage therapy business that thrived for 13 years.

Then, a global pandemic shook the world. When social distancing became a requirement, it was especially difficult to maintain a business based on physical touch. Beth decided to go out on top and retire from her success in massage therapy to focus on building Peculiar Pantry.

She quickly outgrew her kitchen and needed commercial space. Instead of sinking into debt to build a facility, she partnered with the local Makers Market, by the Southern Virginia Food Hub, a 501c3 organization dedicated to supporting food entrepreneurs,

agribusiness, and community food security. Through the Makers Market she gained access to a full commercial production kitchen and a support network, including mentors to guide her on her journey.

“The commercial kitchen equipment at the Maker’s Market enables me to make a lot more product than I could in a home kitchen. It’s nice to be able to have this level of production without taking on the expense of all that equipment while I’m just getting started.” – Beth Callis

With her supply chain and production process secured, she started to scale her brand, with new branding, logo design, and a commercial website currently in production.

One such mentor that helped her grow was Robin Allen of Birdie’s Pimento Cheese and Chairman of the Board for the Southern Virginia Food Hub. “She was a big inspiration to me and talked me through all the steps along the path. She showed me, firsthand, that a successful business was within reach. She gave me the confidence to grow.”

And grow she has. Beth just delivered her first wholesale order to Agoria, a specialty market in Petersburg and shows no signs of slowing down. She has even started helping others follow in



Makers Market in South Hill, VA is a destination for visitors to come try the finest foods Virginia has to offer.



her footsteps too, helping Donna Cliborne, owner of Humble Skillet to get her VDACS approval using the Maker's Market kitchen. They now have a successful partnership selling each other's products.

Beth excels at identifying markets, suppliers, and connections to realize growth opportunities. She has come a long way from a hobby baker and is on track to be on a store shelf near you soon.

If you're visiting Southern Virginia drive by South Hill and head to the Makers Market to pick up a cinn-ful treat for yourself.

Beth Callis

Peculiar Pantry

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