

# While Meal Startups Rise and Fall, a Midwest Prepared Meals Company Marks 25 Years Without Venture Capital

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2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Over the past

decade, venture-backed meal startups have raised billions of dollars, expanded rapidly, and in many cases collapsed just as quickly. Meanwhile, a Midwest-based prepared meals company is quietly marking its 25th year in business—without venture capital, blitzscaling, or national advertising campaigns.

“

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*Stephanie Keegan, Founder & CEO, Healthy For Life Meals*

Founded in the early 2000s, Healthy For Life Meals is a privately held, founder-owned prepared meals company based in Minneapolis that now serves customers across eight states. The company has grown steadily over a quarter century by prioritizing operational reliability, repeat customers, and disciplined execution rather than growth at all costs.

“In food, durability matters more than hype,” said Stephanie Keegan, the company's founder and CEO. “You

don't build a 25-year business by chasing headlines. You build it by delivering meals every week—through recessions, pandemics, supply-chain disruptions, and everything in between.”

While many high-profile meal delivery brands have struggled with unit economics, logistics costs, and customer churn, long-term operators point to less visible factors—such as manufacturing discipline, regulatory consistency, and customer trust—as the foundation of sustainable growth.

The company's Midwest roots have shaped its approach. “We never had the option to burn capital to buy growth,” Keegan added. “The model had to work in the real world, from day one.”

Industry observers note that as the prepared meals category matures, the contrast between venture-backed consumer food brands and regionally scaled operators is becoming more pronounced—raising broader questions about what sustainable growth in food actually looks like.

As the sector continues to evolve, companies that have emphasized operational discipline and long-term customer relationships over rapid expansion may offer a blueprint for building durable food businesses in an industry often defined by churn and volatility.

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Stephanie Keegan, Founder and CEO of Healthy For Life Meals, which is marking its 25th year as a privately held prepared meals company based in Minneapolis.

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