



Winter 2020 Newsletter

The New York Small Scale Food Processors Association (NYSSFPA) was formed to represent and inform all small-scale food processors. The organization's workshops educate by mentoring, teaching marketing, connecting farmers and processors for value-added production, and guiding food-entrepreneurs in the use of current approved processing practices.

NYSSFPA is composed of the following officers and committees:

President: Kathrine Gregory

Treasurer: Maria Grimaldi

Secretary: Deb Krajcik

Communication Committee: Megan Harris-Pero, Esq., Deb Krajcik, Andrew Dufresne, Kathrine Gregory, Beth Linskey

Education Committee: Maria Grimaldi (Chair), Martin Broccoli, Stephen Hadcock

Membership Committee: Bob Bleistein (Chair)

Newsletter edits and design by: Bhavna Punjwani, Kathrine Gregory

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Have a question?

Need some info?

Email us and you will receive a response from one of our board members within 72 hours (remember we are all volunteers and running a business also)

Please add this email address to your contact list to receive our Quarterly Newsletters

Bi-Weekly E-blasts with Time Sensitive Information

CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS? OR EMAIL?

Please remember to let us know so that you don't miss receiving important information.

Send us an email with the update to

SmallScaleNY@gmail.com

President's message

Dear Fellow Members of Small Scale,

Welcome to January 2020.

A new year, a new decade, and the month for reflection.

What did you do right in 2019 and what could you have done better?

As you may have noticed our quarterly newsletters have become more practical in nature. None of us have the time to do hours of research whether on the computer or on the phone. We need to be able to get the information in 'soundbites' and from as varied an audience as possible. That is why we have tapped into our board members and asked them for short articles on specific topics. Our fall issue was about selling, and this issue is about packaging to gain sales...see our theme here!

All good things in 2020

Kathrine

MISSED YOU AT NOFA-NY 2020

The seminars presented by our members were fascinating, well attended, and covered a variety of topics. Our booth showcased many of our products as a member of NYSSFPA. In addition, the second table was for each of our speakers to showcase and sell their products, and sales were being made. See you next year in Saratoga!



THE IMPORTANCE OF PACKAGING

So what is it about your product that gets people to purchase your product? There are many factors, but a prominent factor is your packaging. Sometimes, as a consumer, you may pick up something because the packaging made a slice of chocolate cake look irresistible or, you may avoid a package of bread because the plastic bag it came in was not airtight and allowed for premature molding. As the new decade starts, many entrepreneurs may either launch a business or rebrand. If you are one of them, read what our board members have to say about things they look for in packaging and tips on creating the perfect package for your product.

Kathrine Gregory *President, NYSSFPA*

Packaging to Stand Out From the Herd

There are many issues to consider but the most important is:

Do you have a good story on the back of your package?

Does the consumer who picks up your package find a connection with you and chooses your product from all the others?

Your package reflects:

your passion for what you are manufacturing,

your belief in what you are doing (and why you work 20 hours a day doing it!)

Make sure that passion and belief is there on the back of your package. You want each customer to feel a connection to you and to have brand loyalty to your product. They even become brand ambassadors by their word of mouth advertising.

How to craft your message?

Write the five most important words to you about your product and who you are.

Then create a small story around those words...

'I created this product because I love the effect ____ has on my body and think it will make you feel just as good.

"I created this product because my son has allergies and can't eat his favorite treats, so I made him something delicious and special safe for him to eat and something delicious he can share with his friends."

I have given you the start and I know you can take it from here. Do several of these vignettes and pass them around to friends/family/coworkers see what resonates: go from there. Nothing is perfect but as you keep refining it, it will become better. BUT don't take too long or it will never be done, and you will never have that package on the shelf!



Alicia Luhrssen-Zombek

*Education Committee,
NYSSFPA*

Simple Way of Updating Your Story

What is the Product?

Not a trick question; this should be an easy one.

When selling your product in this competitive market, the main key is to have it stand out. You want to make sure your value-added food product grabs the attention of the consumer while displaying both value and quality.

Before you head into the process of either creating or rehabbing your package, ask yourself these questions:

What is the story I am trying to tell regarding my product?

Who am I selling this product to?

Why do people want/need this product?

Why choose my value-added food product over others?

Using the answers from the questions above, design your package to look professional and complete. Give the right impression at first glance. How will this package entice the consumer to take one step further and buy your product?

There are a few key pieces to keep your package design on the right path and in the hands of your consumer:

- Keep it simple
- Consider a color theme
- The right size is important
- Be honest with your packaging
- Convey how to use your product
- Make good use of images (hold back on too many images or having your face on the package)

The most important piece of this process is to tell your product's story clearly and concisely!



Bob Bleistein *Membership Chair, NYSSFPA*



Packaging from the Eyes of the Insurance Broker

As an insurance broker who insures numerous brands and understands risk retention, I would have to say that the number one function that a food package needs to have is a package that protects the product. A package that keeps the integrity of the product is vital to the person that not only opens the product but is the end user. Another point of a package is to make sure that the product is safe from any outside elements and one that shows people that care is taken to protect the contents within. When I go to purchase a product off the shelves, I look at how the product is sealed, the possibility of a use by date and how a package holds in my hands. I also look for items such as brand identity and how it communicates to me as to what it is and what it might do as well as perhaps some suggested usage for the product.

I think that an identity of a brand is also important. From the colors the company uses, the size, the shape and the type of packaging materials used helps to set the tone of what the product inside might be all about. The brand identity in my mind also helps to show a consumer who a target market might be, why it is different or perhaps why it's similar to another brand but perhaps slightly different. A package may put your brand or company name on it to help give me a little more background on what I might buy.

Of course, if the item is something yummy like potato chips or another type of common product. I know exactly what I am looking for..... breaking the bag open and hopefully not eat the whole bag!

Deb Krajcik *Secretary, NYSSFPA*



The Importance of First Impressions and Presentation

Packaging is beyond important. Have you heard the sayings, 'You do not get a second chance to make a first impression?' or "presentation is everything", so with your packaging, it is beyond important. Here are three reasons why:

1. Shelf space is limited. This limitation does not only apply to store shelves; it also applies to our pantries and refrigerators. Premium space necessitates whatever we purchase first catches our attention, a pretty color or perhaps an attractive logo.
2. Packaging, whether done poorly or well, is a reflection on the brand as well as the business owner. We would like our packaged goods to have as clean and crisp a look as the produce they represent.
3. Since we know shelf space is limited, how will our packaging stand up to the myriad of products surrounding it? A recent quest to create a cheese appetizer presented two forms of packaging. The first, no frills, was to simply wrap the product in see-thru film and slap a label on it. The weight of the product was variable. The second was pre-packed and pre-weighed. All of the packages were the same. The consumer knew what they were getting and it was easier to figure the quantity required for the project. Packaging. It is beyond important.

Beth Linskey *Board Member, NYSSFPA*

Your Product Will Inform You on the Type of Packaging Needed

My experience was in bottled or jarred goods. I made jams and chutneys. We used a traditional tapered jam jar. The market has changed in the last few years and the customers will pay more for an 8 oz jar of jam. The people who now own my old company have been able to change the jar. It is now a straight sided jar not tapered so the shape of the label is easier to deal with it can even be attached by machine, that's a BIG money saver. Keep paying attention to your competition.

Things to think about:

- Cost of your product;
- where it will be in a store
- Refrigerated or not (Label must be waterproof)
- What will your design look like on a store shelf, color, font size
- What needs to be on the label, recommended font size
- Choose a design that tells the story of your product. It should be clear and uncluttered, you want to stand out on the shelf.
- Make it look different from similar products. I had printed labels with a shiny finish. This was so the labels could be washed or wiped off if any jam got on them but this made them stand out on a shelf too.

Packaging is a commitment of time and money, you won't do another package design for at least a year. Take your time and get it right.



Stu McCarty, Grower's Discount Labels

Designing a Label for your Products



Taking a little time to develop an attractive label is a good investment for any direct-marketing venture. A well designed label is easy to read and eye-catching but it must also create product identity, satisfy regulatory requirements, and bring your customers back for repeat sales. Even if you only need a label to legally market hot sauce, for instance, why not design the label so it tells the customer how the recipe was developed or how the product is unique? The label can be your sales representative, promoting your product when you can't be there. The style, color and statements made on the label speak volumes about you and the integrity of your product.

Before beginning the design process for your product labels, do a little competitive research and analysis in some local markets. Be sure to design a label that fits within your budget. It may be as simple as setting type to coordinate with an existing logo or dressing up a plain text label with clip art. Or you may want to develop a new logo for your business. Whatever your requirements a good designer can make suggestions and give you alternatives and the cost. Beware of hard-to-read type or bad color combinations. Good design need not be expensive. It is worth taking a little extra time to adjust and balance any label to make it more effective.

More details at the outset will enable a designer to work efficiently and save you money. Supply her with sketches, photographs and samples of labels you like. Ask for a detailed estimate, itemizing research, logo development and typesetting. You should review proofs at each step in the process and get updates on the cost of the project. You also want to be aware of how design decisions affect your printing costs.

A designer or a label printer will help you select label material and coating that is appropriate for your product. Avoid the disappointment of a label that comes off in the freezer or dissolves in your cooler by testing before you print.

Here are a few practical considerations.

Make it Legal. NY Dept of Ag & Markets "New York State Food Labeling" covers the 5 basic labeling requirements. See <https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/food-safety/food-labeling> for more details. An experienced label printer can review your label for compliance but a review by a state agency should also be done.

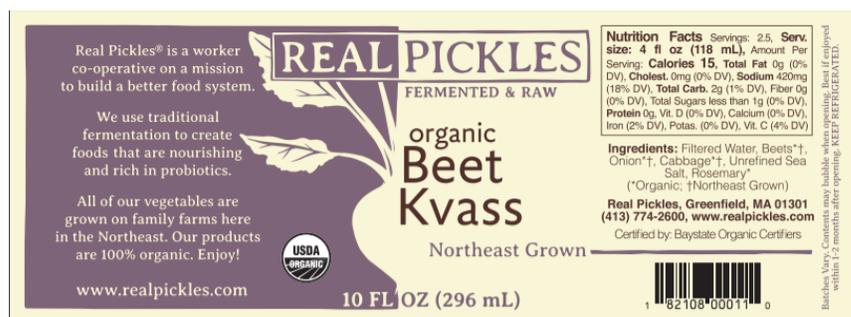
Nutrition Facts. Unless you make nutrition claims such as "low-fat," FDA has a small enterprise exemption. However, consumers are accustomed to seeing nutrition facts on labels so including it will help your product gain consumer confidence. Be sure to use the appropriate template for the size available on your label. FDA guidelines do not allow reducing a template since font sizes are very specific.

Bar Codes. Most retailers will require a bar code for efficiency at check-out and inventory control. You can buy unique numbers from a bar code reseller, such as barcodestalk.com. If your retailer requires that you have a registration from GS1 (very rare and usually only for national stores) you won't be able to use bar codes from a reseller. Be sure to get a high resolution image and make it large enough on the label to scan reliably.

Conclusion. The Real Pickles label illustrated here is a good example of a well-designed product label that meets regulatory requirements and does everything a label should do. Many beginning food producer's labels have an over-sized logo and a very small product name. It is important, as in this example, to have them balanced so that the consumer knows who you are, but so they also can quickly determine the name of the product.

Review our quote request form on our home page growersdiscountlabels.com, which gives you all the information a label printer would require to quote and design a label for a new client.

Good luck! Remember that although designing and printing labels is a business expense, a well designed label is a good investment that will bring you excellent returns.



4 Secrets to Creating Killer Packaging on a Start-up Budget

How your product looks is an extension of your brand – and so proper attention must be paid to how your product is packaged. You've probably heard the saying, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." Your packaging is your customer's first impression of you – and therefore just as, if not more, important than your product itself. Your packaging needs to sell your product when you're not there to do it, so you need to make sure you get it right. There's never an excuse for poor packaging – even if you're working on a start-up budget.



Like many food entrepreneurs, my journey began as a pursuit of passion. An admitted chocoholic, I started making chocolate covered pretzels in my mom's kitchen at a young age. Experimenting with different combinations of chocolates and toppings, I soon began giving my creations as gifts to friends and family. Always a creative soul in and out of the kitchen, I earned a BFA from Syracuse University, and went on to work as a Junior Art Director at Grey Advertising, a large advertising agency in New York City. In 2001, my sweet n' salty treats became an instant hit at the office holiday party, and after much encouragement from friends, family, and coworkers, I decided to turn my passion and pastime into a business. But, also like many food entrepreneurs, I didn't have a large amount of money to fund it. "Fretzels™ by Jill" was launched with an initial investment of \$300 my grandmother gave me to buy chocolate.

Building a business – and a brand – on a shoestring budget is hard, but not impossible. I barely had enough money to produce my product, let alone invest in packaging. But I knew just how important it was to get the packaging right. Working on a tight budget forces you to be more creative and resourceful, tapping into your own strengths, instincts, and network to get things done. I was fortunate to have a background in design, however, you don't have to be a designer, or have a trust fund, to make sure your brand attracts customers with that certain "Wow Factor."

Over the years, I've learned many tips and tricks to maximize a brand with minimum spend. And I've discovered 4 Secrets to creating killer packaging on a startup budget:

K.I.S.S (Keep It Super Simple)

Especially if you are on a tight budget, and you don't have a professional designer at your disposal, keep label designs simple and uncluttered. When it comes to great design, less is usually more.

Work Backwards

Today there are so many options to choose from in the world of stock packaging. There's absolutely no need to spend a ton of money and time to design and produce fully custom packaging. Research what is readily available and work backwards from there to package your product.

Brand It

Once you find a stock packaging option that works for your product, personalize it to your brand and make it look custom-designed by infusing your brand identity – logo, colors, fonts, patterns – with printed labels, ribbons, hang tags, belly bands, etc.

Be Creative

I have a saying I frequently repeat to my branding and marketing students. "Don't reinvent the wheel. Reimagine it." When it comes to packaging, it's okay to get imaginative. When I was running Fretzels, I created a product called "Fractured Fretzels," which was the everyday "snack product" version of my brand. Up until then, Fretzels was mostly known as a high-end gourmet gift brand, but this new snack product, which was packaged in a simple stand-up resealable pouch, quickly became one of my most popular items. For the holiday season I wanted to dress up "Fractured Fretzels" to offer a "gift" version. I wanted something unique without being custom, so I looked outside of the box – literally – and found beautiful and fun wine boxes that I was able to reimagine for my food product gift packaging.

It's important to use your packaging as an opportunity for brand positioning and to showcase your brand voice and personality. If a picture is worth a thousand words, killer packaging is priceless!

There are many ways to achieve unique and amazing packaging that will stand out and attract customers to try your product, without costing an arm and a leg. These four steps are key to helping you achieve head-turning, profit margin friendly packaging.

Special Guest Contributor:

Jill Frechtman is an award-winning entrepreneur with a passion for building inspired, authentic, and impactful brands. Jill's unique approach to branding incorporates her 18+ years of experience as a designer, specialty food entrepreneur, and a creative strategy and brand marketing consultant. She is the founder of chocolate pretzel company, Fretzels by Jill, a consultant for a number of other entrepreneurs and businesses, in a variety of industries, developing, designing, and growing their brands, and teaches a class on branding and marketing to budding food entrepreneurs called, "I've Got a Food Product, Now What?"

Effective Packaging Sells the Product

Maria Grimaldi

In today's competitive market for artisan products it is paramount for small scale producers to focus on packaging to tell their personal story as well as the wholesomeness of the product inside the package.

What will set your product apart and what makes it special and worth the "extra" dollar (or two) to the consumer? Most often it is the label and packaging that can tell the story of your company. Most effective for small scale producers is a few lines on the history of the product. A good example is NYSSFPA Ashley Rossi's introduction of Apple Molasses. The Red Kill Mountain label tells us that for generations the centuries old traditional production of apple molasses was used as a primary method of preserving and extending the apple season. The label further instructs the purchaser on how to use apple molasses as a glaze and as a natural sweetener in place of sugar in everything from oatmeal to cocktails!

NYSSFPA member organizations can help you design effective and compelling labels and will offer suggestions for appropriate packaging. Contact Stu McCarthy at Growers Discount Labels for assistance in label and ideas for a wide variety of value added products http://www.growersdiscountlabels.com/label_gallery.html

SKS Packaging <https://www.sks-bottle.com/aboutus.html> carries a variety of packaging in glass, plastic and metal with fast delivery to your doorstep.



Packaging – One More Marketing Tool

Stephen Hadcock

One way to make the value-added product you are making stand out in a crowded field is to consider how it is packaged. However, is potentially cost prohibitive. Packaging can be expensive when you're producing goods at a small scale.

Keep in mind who your initial customer is. Are you selling directly to consumers? If so, some market research of potential customers would be one way to learn their preferences for packaging. What if you are selling largely through wholesale markets? Food retailers want a product that fits in with similar products on their shelves so they don't have to rearrange them.

To get an idea of what is available, look around on the Internet. One place to start to look at food packaging is the NY Food Venture website <https://cfvc.foodscience.cals.cornell.edu/regulations/packaging-supplier-list/>. There, you will find a list of packaging retailers. Shop around and ask for samples. It's smart to get a package from more than one source. If there is a problem with your supplier, you don't want to halt production while you're searching for a new supplier. This is good advice with all your vendors, whether they supply ingredients, labels, printing, or co-pack your food product.



LOOK FOR

The Annual Meeting minutes by the middle of February, telling you our goals for NYSSFPA in 2020.

VOTE

Did you vote on our slate of 2020 officers?

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Did you renew (by check or PayPal) ?