

# MEAT & DAIRY MONTHLY

## JUNE 2017



## "Little Boxes" Competing in a "Big Box" World

The other day I was wandering around in a big store. This was a large, national, chain store. The store was clean, well lit, and had aisles that seemed as long as football fields. I was there for molasses. It is BBQ season, we make our own sauce and it MUST contain molasses.

After 10 minutes of meandering down the aisles, I was starting to get frustrated. It was not in the baking section, it was not with jams and jellies -- I spotted a young fellow in a store apron stocking salsa. He saw me coming, I had the look -- every store clerk knows this look: I need help and I can't find something look. The poor fellow practically ran the other way. He was just stocking salsa, not customer service -- right?



**If you are a small store in a big box world how DO you compete with the sprawling aisles and copious parking of the big guys? Did you ever notice there are no clocks in a big box store?** You are in the timeless zone of wandering aimlessly with a gigantic cart -- when you only came in for a jar of molasses.

Some of our Four Seasons stores were kind enough to share their tips for staying relevant and thriving in their communities. Surprise surprise! Almost 100% of you said customer service was how you keep them coming. Over and over again:

- "We don't have customers if customers don't need you"
- "We have the best and friendliest service"
- "We have a knowledgeable and responsive staff, and we do deliveries"
- "Honestly, I think it has to be the customer service. Some of the things we used to sell can now be found in a number of other places. What keeps customers coming back is the experience they have while shopping".
- "We practically guide customers through every question like they are a close friend. It's a special class of people that work our front staff."



**WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR MEAT & DAIRY?**

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Small stores can have close, connected relationships with producers. Store demos where customers can meet producers directly and find out more about the products are key. Organic and natural foods customers have all kinds of questions for the people that make their food and they care about the values of both the stores and food producers— this plays into another key point of differentiation. Tell your story:



- “We do local better than big box, we can adapt to dealing direct with producers where big box stores are not set up that way”
- “We (Co-ops etc.) with our triple bottom line values (people, planted, profit) carry the highest quality, local, sustainable, nutritious foods and we MUST shout out the difference in our products and WHY we carry them. Customers with like values want to support our types of businesses but we have to tell the story!”
- “As a family owned and run business, we care about our community – we are not looking to grow into a national brand, we are just looking to serve our customers and meet their needs. We live here and we know and care about our customers and local farmers.”
- “The amount of new and unique brands we bring in. Since we are a smaller outlet, we cannot always carry the big name brands because Giant or Walmart will have them cheaper, so we have to be on the upswing with different brands.”

Lastly, small stores are nimble – it’s hard to turn a cruise ship, so be a yacht! A small store does not need permission from a head office to host a customer appreciation day or negotiate a special pricing deal. A coop can have a coffee & donuts morning for a local bicycle club. If you have self-determinism, you can check out the competition and you can put great ideas into practice without the red tape involved with a big box store.

- “Act quickly. Be David, not Goliath.”
- “Competitive pricing... Check out your competition. If your prices are not competitive customers will go elsewhere.”
- “Hire foodies! People that have a passion for food.”
- “You can’t have the lowest prices on everything every day, but have good prices and fantastic deals.”

One really wonderful thing about a smaller store or a local chain is there willingness to share ideas and insights on how to make it work. It speaks to the unique culture every great store creates that rather than defending a hoard of tricks, they are open to learning from each other.

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# NEW ITEMS

- 60752 - CV Waterhill Naturals Smoked Hickory Bacon 20/8 oz
- 45632 - OG Waterhill Naturals Mediterranean Turkey Breast 12/6 oz
- 61257 - CV Koch Turkey Dark Ground Turkey Bulk 2/10 lb (**preorder**)
- 61256 - CV Koch Turkey White Ground Turkey Bulk 2/10 lb (**preorder**)
- 61219 - CV Koch Turkey Antibiotic Free Turkey Breast 7-10 lb 4 ct (**preorder**)
- 68311 - CV Milton's Local Bell Pepper & Onion Bacon Sausage 12/12 oz
- 68312 - CV Milton's Local Chipotle & Cilantro Bacon Sausage 12/12 oz
- 68313 - CV Milton's Local Uncured Low Salt Bacon 12/8 oz
- 69134 - CV Bartels Farms Natural Bulk Grind Beef 80/20 6/5 lb (**preorder**)
- 69135 - CV Bartels Farms Natural Bulk Grind Beef 85/15 6/5 lb (**preorder**)



Milton's Local



With a passion for sustainable farming long before it was cool, Milton Faison, a second-generation farmer, was committed to healthy food, a healthy environment, and a healthy community. It's these values that he instilled in the generations that will follow, and inspire the work that we're doing today.

Now in generation four, our sights are set a little higher. We're looking beyond our farm to the many farmers in the community who share our values. All of our meat is certified "Paleo Friendly" and "clean label": no hormones, steroids, antibiotics, MSG, artificial nitrates or nitrites.

Milton's Local is committed to supporting our community and providing sustainable farms access to buyers that value all-natural, artisan meat. The more we grow, the stronger our ecosystem becomes, and the more our community thrives. We've set out to change farming and food for good, and were just getting started!

