

# CAN YOU HANDLE THE HEAT?!

NEW OWNERS OF SUSAN'S HOT MUSTARD RIDE THE HOT SEAT TO FIND NEW FORMULATION

## PRODUCT FORMULATION

### PROJECT ESSENTIALS

**Principal Investigator:**  
Emily Lim, Rob McCurdy

**Years Active:** 2017

**Industry Partner:**  
Susan's Hot Mustard

Denise Lorenz has an appetite for hot mustard.

So much in fact that she decided to buy Susan's Hot Mustard with her husband. They had enjoyed this product for years and were absolutely thrilled to become the new owners.

Even though Denise was new to the industry and had no prior knowledge working in this sector, she had confidence in the product, as it had been manufactured and packaged at the same location for years. Susan's Hot Mustard has been supplying hot mustard to customers since the 1970's.

Shortly afterwards, however, a manufacturing tragedy struck! The co-manufacturer of their hot mustard could no longer produce the product. The issue for Denise was that the company she purchased did not have a copy of the mustard recipe on file, leaving Denise with a major challenge as the business owner.

Duplicating the recipe from the remaining product they had on hand, translating it into something they could make themselves, and finding a new co-packer seemed insurmountable. As a final attempt to save the recipe and their investment, Denise found the Food Innovation and Research Studio (FIRSt) on the George Brown website. Denise thought, "Here is a group of people experienced in recipe formulation, product evaluation, and the food industry that could help us save our mustard!"

Denise approached FIRSt to review the current formulation of

the product and conceptualize new formulations, including the sourcing of alternative ingredients to replace in-house ingredients. The current products' traits were identified and evaluated, and alternative ingredients and processes were suggested to achieve the original product that Denise initially fell in love with.

**"Now we're looking forward to stopping in to FIRSt with the final product, but of course, only for those who can handle the HEAT!"**

DENISE LORENZ, OWNER

Emily Lim, Junior Food Scientist at FIRSt, said the best moments for her while working on the project included "successfully reverse engineering the formula from scratch, and learning about mustard processing to develop the new mustard for the client."

Samples of Emily's work were delivered to Denise's door and the tasting process was simplified by the excellent evaluation

forms, which later led to Denise visiting the tasting kitchen and meeting all the amazing, enthusiastic people behind the scenes.

Denise found the whole project from start to finish a "fantastic experience." From the onset, the contract and payment schedules that were developed eliminated all concerns regarding project deadlines and over costs. "The enthusiasm of the FIRSt team members was so exciting and I felt the passion FIRSt had for this product, just like I did."

It didn't just stop at mustard production! "FIRSt introduced our team to Will, from Rootham Gourmet Preserves, and we toured his co-manufacturing facility and began negotiating terms for producing our newly formulated Susan's Hot Mustard."

"Now we're looking forward to stopping in to FIRSt with the final product, but of course, only for those who can handle the HEAT!" With her new product—after such a challenging start—it's obvious that Denise did.