Episode 110

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Nate's Nectar, beekeeping, creamed honey, family business, Logan County farm, farmers markets, product branding and packaging, Giant Eagle distribution, grassroots retail sales, QVC appearance, Fancy Food Show, Uncommon Goods, direct-to-consumer growth, leap of faith

SPEAKERS

Jason Duff, Nathan Davis, Erika Davis, Ethan DeLeon

Erika Davis 00:00

You're going to be the best advocate for your business. And if nobody— if you're not going to do it, then nobody's going to do it for you. So you have to go out there.

Ethan DeLeon 00:05

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Jason Duff 00:25

Hey guys, it's Jason Duff. I'm the founder of Small Nation and welcome to the Small Nation Podcast. I have 2 awesome guests in our studio today. We have Nathan and Erika Davis. They are the co-owners of Nate's Nectar. And one of the things I was excited about this episode compared to a lot is we get to talk about one of my favorite foods and that is honey. You're shaking your head. So you guys do something very special with honey because there's a lot of different honey purveyors. What do you guys call yourself? Do you harvest honey? Do you farm it? What is that term of what you do with honey?

Nathan Davis 01:07

Beekeepers.

Jason Duff 01:08

Beekeepers. Okay. Yeah, we get to talk about bees. But I'm excited to kind of unpack your family story, how you started your business. And one of the themes is like, from 4 hives to nationally loved Ohio-grown brand and what they learned with that growth behind it. So just like to start with you, Erika, tell me about how you guys met and maybe how this journey around honey began.

Erika Davis 01:34

Yeah, so Nathan and I have been together since high school. So we're high school sweethearts. We started dating before our senior year. He ended up going to Ohio Dominican University in Columbus. I went to Capital University in Columbus.

Jason Duff 01:48

Both great schools.

Erika Davis 01:48

Yes. So we're like 10 minutes away each other. And yeah, Nathan really kind of took lead on the bees. So I can let you take about that. But yeah, that's kind of where we've hit.

Jason Duff 01:58

So you met— and speaking of bees, like, I think probably people listening know that bees are kind of important, not for only just making honey, but like a lot of things in our environment, in our world.

Nathan Davis 02:09

Yeah, it's pretty much all your fruits and vegetables produced are pollinated by honeybees. So without honeybees, you wouldn't have, you know, watermelon, strawberries, a lot of those good things, tomatoes, our food would be pretty boring.

Jason Duff 02:21

What— how did you have a fascination with bees that turned into your passion?

Nathan Davis 02:26

So I basically, we grain farm in western Logan County, a couple thousand acres. And I always worked on the farm growing up. It was my grandparents and my mom and dad. And then I went to college, and I was originally going to go for biochemistry. And I was like, nah, let's not do that.

Jason Duff 02:42

That sounds like a lot.

Nathan Davis 02:43

Yeah, it was. So I ended up being an environmental science major with a biology minor. And I had to do an internship to actually graduate. And I'm like, I've been on the farm my whole life. Like, where do I intern? Like, there's nowhere around us. And my professor, he actually lives out in West Mansfield area. He goes, okay, look at these couple of things. So I started poking around and I actually found COBA, which is Central Ohio Beekeepers Association. And I actually interned with them for what, 2 semesters, something like that. So they had monthly meetings, and then they had monthly outings at their local bee yard. And it was kind of help, you know, set up those meetings, organize those meetings. But it was just really fascinating. It was a different side of agriculture I'd never seen before. You know, only having row crops, you know, I had family that had a dairy at the time, and then they ended up just having steers and stuff. You know, you got hogs around us, chickens all around us. You never saw like that niche agriculture because you don't have like the horticulture type stuff. You don't have the fruits and vegetables really around here on a large scale like you do in northern Ohio. So when I got into the Bees, I was like, this is something different. And then as I went into my senior year, third year, I don't know. I was an overachiever. I graduated in 3. So it was like, wow. I was like, I went to play baseball and I ended up getting hurt. And I was like, I'm getting out of here. I don't like the city.

Erika Davis 03:58

He couldn't handle Columbus. He had to get out.

Nathan Davis 03:59

Not a fan of the city. But it was like, I want to have the conversation with my parents. I was like, I want to come back to the farm. Like, well, you're going to have to do something else. So that's kind of how that started. Most people would've built a hog barn or something like that. And that might've been easier in the long run, but this journey has definitely been more impactful on our lives. It's a different side of agriculture that is, you know, a lot of people don't explore.

Jason Duff 04:22

So what kind of started out as a hobby being connected to the association, you started getting different connections and meeting people that were, you know, passionate about bees and harvesting honey and selling honey. When did that passion actually turn into you selling your first jar of honey?

Nathan Davis 04:43

So I roped my parents in pretty early. I was like, hey, I'm gonna go buy— it's packages. So you buy 3 or 4 pounds of bees and it has one queen, you dump it in, and then they create all the wax on the combs and stuff. So we started off with 4 of those and it was like, oh, this is fascinating. And you're not supposed to be in them every day and to get away from that, we ended up with, I think it was 12 or 16 within the first month, like just went and bought more because it was like, we could be in these every single day. They're that fascinating.

Erika Davis 05:12

Yeah, your parents loved it too. Yeah.

Jason Duff 05:14

Well, and for someone that maybe isn't exposed to that, can you describe like what is fascinating about it?

Nathan Davis 05:18

That's a—

Jason Duff 05:22

Is it the sounds? Is it the way they interact with each other?

Erika Davis 05:26

It's an entire colony itself.

Nathan Davis 05:27

Yeah. So like you have the queen bee, and she basically runs the whole thing. So you have one of those. So in the middle of the summer, your colony, you'll have somewhere between, oh, we'll call it 60,000 to 80,000 bees in the hive. Well, there's one queen, and she is like the controller of the entire colony. But the way they interact, there are different roles. Like some of them, when they first hatch and stuff, like they are the ones that clean. Then you have like the foragers, and then you have the guards, and then you have the drones, which their only purpose is to mate with the queen. So you have all these different social structures inside. But then also, you know, coming from the farming background, it's like, you know, these things do really cool things, you know, you look out the yard in the spring and you get these dandelions and it's like, oh man, I gotta go mow. These are kind of annoying. I don't like looking at them. But then you go in the beehive and you see all this bright yellow pollen coming in. And then you have maple.

Jason Duff 06:10

That's what they need.

Nathan Davis 06:11

Exactly. Yeah. So then before that you have maple. So it's kind of like one of those things and it's like they're the only— they're not an animal, they're an insect, obviously, but they're the only ones that hoard. So they will just continue to pack in as much as they possibly can. It's not like, hey, I'm only going to eat enough for today. We're only going to store enough for this winter. It's like, Let's put in as much as we possibly can. And then that's when we go in, we pull honey, extract that honey and stuff. But it was just kind of how— trying to think of a way to say it. You see agriculture as corn, soybeans, and then it's like you got this whole other side of these bees go hit clover, they hit alfalfa. And it's kind of cool to see that interaction of how much overlap there is.

Jason Duff 06:53

So you had these hives and you had a passion of something that the two of you can do together. When was the shift? It's like, I actually think we need to sell this and make money.

Nathan Davis 07:04

That was a couple years in. Like, the first year we actually sold, um, we didn't have an extractor. It was super cheap at the beginning. We actually smashed all the comb down, which you don't do because they have to rebuild all the comb. But then we sold it in these little tiny Ziploc containers, and we just put like an Avery label on it and sold it to people around to graph and stuff. And

Erika Davis 07:28

actually our first container after the Ziploc, I took pictures of it on the front porch of my college house.

Jason Duff 07:33

I love that.

Erika Davis 07:34

Because I was still, I did 4 years, the typical route. So I was there for 1 year more. But yeah, we started off with like a black and white label, 1 pound, and then kind of moved from there in different sizes, different labels.

Nathan Davis 07:48

Yeah, when I went and visited her in college, it was like, here's some containers of honey and bottles of honey. I need photos.

Erika Davis 07:54

Yeah, because I went to school for marketing.

Jason Duff 07:56

That was her gift.

Erika Davis 07:56

Yeah, I went to school for marketing. for marketing and communication. So it kind of worked in, like, agriculture has never been my thing, but we kind of worked as a pair of, we each had our own area. Yeah.

Jason Duff 08:06

Well, farming, it can look romantic on the outside, but what's the part that no one else sees?

Erika Davis 08:12

The time.

Jason Duff 08:13

The time. Okay.

Nathan Davis 08:15

I think the biggest thing is probably the stress. You know, just on like the row crop side, like, you know, this August was insane. We had so much rain.

Jason Duff 08:24

The rain, all the rain.

Nathan Davis 08:25

And everybody's like, oh, is it gonna stop raining? You know, we're never gonna get things out of the field. It's like, we always get things out of the field. That's not a concern. It's, you know, how much damage did it do? But it's the same thing on the bee side. Like, um, if you don't get them built up good enough in March, April, they're not going to produce any honey that year. And then what are you going to sell? But then that goes back even further. Like, this time of the year going into winter, we're setting them up so that way they're the biggest population they can be going into winter, so that way they come out of winter nice and strong, so that way they can produce honey a lot sooner and higher quantities of honey. But you never see that. It's that side of like, we have to constantly be planning 6, 12 months out in advance.

Erika Davis 09:05

And you've talked about how farming and bees, it's a one shot.

Nathan Davis 09:09

Yeah, you get one shot a year. And if you miss that shot, that's a whole year. Yeah, that could end your business.

Jason Duff 09:15

So you actually have the product and it's a product that you share doing together. It's in a jar. When did the shift say we actually have to create a name for this and sell a business and like market our product?

Erika Davis 09:30

I remember you coming to me 'cause I worked at, out of college I worked at Honda. So I was in HR and marketing, or HR at Honda for quite a few years after college. And I remember you came to me at our little rental house and you're like, okay, we have the opportunity here. Do we want this to be a hobby and remain a hobby? Or do we want to take this as a business? And that got really serious because as Nathan says, like anybody can be a beekeeper and sell honey. It's what are you doing that's making yourself different? So like that hot honey, the creamed honey, that's where it started making us different. And we were able to provide something that we've never been able, or a lot of other people can't. And so in the beginning, we started going to this co-op kitchen in North Ohio in the Findlay area.

Jason Duff 10:14

Okay.

Erika Davis 10:15

And we started making creamed honey there. And so you'd make huge batches of creamed honey in this kitchen, and then we would bring it home and then sell it. Now we have our own FDA kitchen, but in the beginning, you have to use those co-op kitchens. But it was such a nice opportunity for us to test the market and see, is this an actual thing before we start investing in our own facility and our own kitchen and all those things?

Jason Duff 10:36

How many bad ideas did it take to actually get a good one?

Nathan Davis 10:39

A lot.

Erika Davis 10:40

Yeah.

Jason Duff 10:42

I mean, your creamed honey product, I just have to say, If you go home to my kitchen and open up my pantry— and what I love about your product, it's shelf-stable. So, like, it doesn't have to be in the fridge. It can actually be in the pantry. Uh, and you will see every flavor— blueberry, lemon, raspberry. Mmhmm. And is there a peach? Or there's one— Mmhmm. Literally, I have them all. And I switch— like, I'm big with, like, croissants and bagels and that kind of stuff, and it's a perfect product for that. But, like, you go into the store, that is something unique. Like, What was the shift? So you started Nate's Nectar, that was the brand, and you were initially selling honey, and then it's like, okay, let's do some research and development and create other cool products.

Erika Davis 11:25

Yep. And then you— we started— your sisters and mom really started going to farmers markets for us.

Nathan Davis 11:30

Well, I will say our research and development did include a trip to Paris.

Jason Duff 11:34

Oh, that's not a bad deal.

Nathan Davis 11:35

So yeah,

Erika Davis 11:37

not just for that, it ended up being like secondary. Like when we went to all these bakeries in Paris, we— that's when we were introduced to creamed honey, was in Paris.

Jason Duff 11:44

Got it. Okay.

Erika Davis 11:45

And we're like, we don't see this. Like, we already had the honey and we're like, we don't see this anywhere. And so we decided to come home and figure it out.

Nathan Davis 11:53

Yeah, because they have all the croissants and all those pastries and all that, and they always ask you like, do you want— what was it like, what'd they call it, like creamed honey? And it was like, what is that? And then we tried it, it was like, oh man, this is fantastic. Yeah. But then it was one of those things of like, you know, what sets us apart from just anybody else selling honey? And that was kind of—

Jason Duff 12:10

How important were the farmers markets in getting feedback to know what your customers wanted?

Erika Davis 12:16

Vital.

Jason Duff 12:17

Vital.

Erika Davis 12:18

We learned so much from that time. We don't do them anymore, but it was huge in that time of our business.

Jason Duff 12:25

Can you kind of unpack why?

Erika Davis 12:26

Oh, just like hearing feedback from them, creating customers. We still have customers now that we met in the early days. Yeah, just hearing feedback and how

Nathan Davis 12:37

The biggest thing was like, hey, so like when we started the Creamed Honeys, we used extracts. And because it was easy, it was easy to mix, you know, you didn't have to worry about anything, you mix it in, you basically jar it out, and you're good to go. And then it was kind of playing with, you know, is it too much extract? Not enough? Is this the right size? Not, not the right size. And then we kind of made that conscious shift that, hey, we want to go—

Erika Davis 12:59

As natural as possible.

Nathan Davis 13:01

Yeah, as natural as possible. And that's where we went into the organic freeze-dried fruit powders.

Erika Davis 13:05

Which was a huge game changer for us because when we were doing the extracts, it was like all of it was like the same creamy color. We used a white label. As soon as we saw the color change of those fruit powders, I was, from a marketing perspective, I'm like, we are changing everything. There is no way I'm slapping a white label in the front of this color of this blueberry. 'Cause it's beautiful. Yeah, the color is part of it. The color, when it's on a shelf, that's what makes it pop. When it's in the honey section with all of this other gold and yellow honey, the creamed honey, when it pops on the shelf, that is what's selling it. And so no way was I going to put another white label on those. So that's when we went to clear translucent labels, because that's the story that's selling the color, is selling the product. So that was a huge moment for us, was switching not only to be consciously have a cleaner ingredient, because when you look at our blueberry creamed honey, the ingredients are blueberry and honey. That's all it is. And as parents and just as consumers, that's super important to us, and we know it's important to our customers too.

Jason Duff 14:06

That's really important. And I love the farmer's market was the testing ground for you to get a lot of that feedback, interact with your customers, watch where their eyes were drawn to certain things. And that's obviously helped you take the strategy to going into your retail stores. Right. I do think, appreciate it. Again, the, the theme of that is like, when did, when you realized you weren't just selling honey, you were selling a brand.

Erika Davis 14:34

Right.

Jason Duff 14:34

And that brand had to mean something. So just hearing in the first part of this segment of how you got started and uniting your gifts and abilities of how you approached the business and brought your lenses and your perspectives to make it better. is pretty darn cool. Thank you.

Erika Davis 14:54

Thank you. We took a leap of faith, honestly, because I was doing well at Honda. Like, I had a stable job, I had a good income, and then we decided, like, I had a pull of like, I need to stay home with the kids and need to help you with Nate's Nectar, like, make this bigger. Um, and we took the jump and haven't looked back since.

Nathan Davis 15:11

I think it was mostly because I was like, hey, I need you to make a Facebook post because I, I don't do Facebook.

Erika Davis 15:16

I'm like, I am at work all day. Like, you make your own Facebook posts.

Nathan Davis 15:20

And I'm like, okay, like, Buy this honey. Thanks.

Jason Duff 15:23

Please buy my honey.

Erika Davis 15:24

Exactly. And then they were wanting me to travel a lot more at Honda. And that's where it kind of put you in a position too of like, oh my gosh, we've got 2 kids at that point.

Jason Duff 15:31

Yeah. Talk about how when family came into this equation, and I know that family is very important to you, not only talking about how your parents and family on the farm began and seeing that lineage and that history carry on, but it can be very difficult for an entrepreneur or a couple to think about, I'm really passionate about this business and the hours that it takes, but having and choosing to have a family and trying to make those things coexist.

Erika Davis 16:02

Yeah, I think your parents have been passionate with you since the beginning. You wanna talk about your sisters?

Nathan Davis 16:08

Yeah, so I have 3 younger sisters and the one, she's a massage therapist. So she does the body products and stuff, but my younger 2 sisters, one does the candles, the other does the haircare products.

Jason Duff 16:21

You guys have it all. Geez.

Erika Davis 16:24

Well, honestly, it started like we have all this honey, and then we're like, what are we gonna do with all this beeswax? And then each of them were like, I can do something.

Nathan Davis 16:30

Well, it came from like seeing something. It was like, you know, for us, it was like honey was the extra leftover. Well, my one sister did the candles. She wanted, you know, cleaner fragrances. Because, you know, if you're burning certain candles, you look at the wick, and it's just black smoke just billowing off the wick. And so she kind of went down that route. Another sister, she had some She wanted some cleaner skincare products. So that's how that happened. My one sister, she had some — she didn't like her flyaways or something like that. So she came up with the hair stick. So it's one of those things that came out. But the 2 younger sisters, they basically work for my parents and then they help us as well. But they kind of spearhead a lot of that. So when you talked about new ideas and all that, when we think about flavors, everything's a year out. We test everything for a year. And then my one sister Marissa, she does a lot of that. She, we call her the, she's the COO of Nate's Nectar. Like she runs the day-to-day. She does like all the batches for mixing and all that stuff too. But, you know, without those 2 and then my parents, you know, we wouldn't be anywhere close to where we are today.

Erika Davis 17:31

Yeah. Like anytime we have a big order or something come in, we first talk to Marissa and be like, what's the logistics of this? What's the possibility of doing this? What does this look like?

Jason Duff 17:41

So I think for the listeners hearing that, it started with you guys, of course, having the support of your family, having the farm, but then it was like, how can we involve more people that we care about in this goal, in this operation, getting people kind of in their different roles? So your sister having that operations mindset in supporting the foundation for your growth probably was an essential piece.

Erika Davis 18:04

Essential. And then Lauren, she went to school for graphic design. So she has always created all of our labels from the very beginning, all of our photography from the very beginning. She's done all of that. And we work hand in hand together for that. So we really do have like each person has their niche in the company.

Nathan Davis 18:20

Yeah. Like we went to Fancy Food in New York City last summer.

Jason Duff 18:24

I've heard that's a great show.

Nathan Davis 18:25

Oh, it's pretty cool. Exhausting. Absolutely exhausting. It's the longest 3 days that I think I've ever—

Jason Duff 18:29

How many steps do you walk in the show?

Erika Davis 18:31

I don't recommend doing it 5 months pregnant. I was 5 months pregnant. Oh my gosh, you're a trooper.

Nathan Davis 18:35

But like, everybody is like, you know, everybody comes around pitching like, hey, do you need new containers, new labels? And someone comes up and they're like, I'm not even gonna ask you, your guys' labels look awesome. It was like, oh yeah, that's, that's my sister that

Erika Davis 18:46

does that. We texted her, we told her.

Jason Duff 18:48

Yeah. And that feedback feels so good when you can hear that. Um, and family business is not easy because you love these people, but there's also this, you know, we, we're there to do a job. And you've got to have some accountability. You have to have some honest conversations. And occasionally, sometimes there are decisions that create conflict.

Erika Davis 19:10

Yeah, sometimes. But at the same time, I know Marissa, or Marissa, Lauren, and Emily, Nathan's mom, they're the ones that do most of our packing of our orders. They are going to pack that to the best of its ability every single time. We never have to worry about anything that they ever do. They're always thinking about, oh, let's use this instead of this because it's going to save us on cost of the packaging material. Like, we don't have to ask them to figure— they just always figure that out.

Nathan Davis 19:36

Yeah, they do a very good job. They, they, they take ownership in what they do, and that's kind of vital. Um, you know, kind of— I'm more so on the farm side, um, of things, and, you know, I just kind of show up in the morning, kind of ask if they need anything, and then I'm off to the farm or something like that. But, you know, when they need me, I'll be around, but But it's nice to be able to trust people that we do the job that you expect.

Erika Davis 20:01

They're not quitting on us.

Nathan Davis 20:02

No, no.

Jason Duff 20:04

So farmer's market, I mean, well, really folding table to farmer's market and actually deciding we want to distribute to retail stores. So I think, again, you hear a lot of people as they're growing their business, they maybe don't make the next leap in terms of growth. And sometimes bigger is not always better. I've realized that in my own journey, but I want to hear that process to get into a retail store and kind of the emotions that you were going through, both good and bad throughout that experience.

Erika Davis 20:37

Yeah, so we were building our facility and I remember we had a conversation. We're like, listen, we got to like pay for this facility now. I

Nathan Davis 20:44

think this was 2019, so right before COVID Yeah.

Erika Davis 20:47

So we decided we were gonna do some grassroots. So I went on, we wanted to go to the Columbus and Dayton area. And so I went on Google and I Googled all the different like specialty shops in the area, made a list, and then I made a route for us in the Columbus and Dayton area. And so we went to Columbus, Nathan was my driver, and I would pop out of the car, run into the store. We had a baggie full of like samples and our sell sheets. And so I'd go into each store and talk to the manager about getting our product in their store and give them the sell sheet, the samples, all the spiel, the pitch, everything. And, um, and that's one of my big, big takeaways is there's no— there's no one that's going to market or talk about your store better than you. Um, and just go out. What's the worst thing they could say is no? Like, who cares if they say— you know what I mean? You move on to the next thing. So we were going around Columbus, we were popping in all these stores and stuff like that. It was the end of the day, it was exhausting. And we're driving on the highway and I look over and I see Market District Giant Eagle or Giant Eagle Market District. And I was like—

Jason Duff 21:49

The big sign.

Erika Davis 21:49

The big sign. And it wasn't on our list. I was not— we were not going to stop there. And I was like, we had like maybe 6 bags left. And I was like, Nathan, let's just stop there. Like, what's the worst they can say? No. And so I walked in.

Nathan Davis 22:00

I was done because we'd already done 50-something.

Erika Davis 22:02

You hit up all the places. He was like, we are going home. I was like, no, we are stopping. So I walked in.

Jason Duff 22:07

He's like, this is the city. We're getting back home. Like, let's keep going.

Erika Davis 22:10

He's like having PTSD from college. So we go, so I walk in and I walk to the general manager. I was like, hi, like my name's Erika, you know, doing my spiel. And do you have anybody I could talk to? And they're like, oh, actually yes. And so he like calls somebody and he's like, all right, follow me. So he takes me to the back of the store and I walk in the back. I have one bag with me and there are like 8 people standing there waiting for me. And I walk up and they're like, hi, we're so excited to meet you. I'm like, okay. And so I do my spiel to all of these people just like standing in a semicircle around me. And they're like, that's so great. We would love to take— do you have any more? And so I'm like, yeah. And so I go call Nathan. I'm like, Nathan, bring all the bags, bring everything you have and come in here.

Jason Duff 22:50

We gotta sell.

Erika Davis 22:51

This is a big deal. And so he comes in and we meet and David was the main guy that we met and we still talk to David. We still have a good relationship with David, but that changed the directory of our business. We went from— we scaled back. We were able to kind of scale back because farmers market, going to farmers market and doing like 2 to 3 events a month is a lot. A lot of manpower, a lot of time on the weekends. So by being able to get into Giant Eagle and those things, we were able to pull back on the farmers markets a little bit.

Jason Duff 23:20

So that had to be exciting and terrifying all at the same time.

Erika Davis 23:24

Oh, yeah. So for the first year and a half that we were with Giant Eagle, I was doing the distributing. So we had 8 stores in the Columbus region. And by the way, when we did those grassroots, probably Giant Eagle and maybe 2 other stores came out of that. The whole thing. Yeah. But, um, so some of them were a fail, but it was fine. Um, but I was doing the distributing, uh, so I would go— they had a certain amount of time, so you had to be like done till by like 1 PM or something. And so you'd go in the back of the store, you check in the product, you'd go in, you'd put it on the shelf, you'd see— make it all look good, and then you'd leave. And I had to do 8 stores around the Columbus area every week. And, uh, I did it all the way up until I was 6 months pregnant with one of our kids. And I was like, Nathan, like, what are we going to do? Like, I can't continue doing this after this kid's born.

Nathan Davis 24:08

Because my sisters and mom were like, no, we're not doing that.

Erika Davis 24:10

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. That was my thing. And so I talked to our buyer with Giant Eagle and she goes, actually, this distributor would be a great fit for you. And that's the distributor that we have today and that we're still growing with today.

Jason Duff 24:23

It's pretty awesome to hear that. And then I imagine there's other small businesses that might be listening. Are there any mistakes that you think small producers of products make when they're trying to get that introduction? Or let's just say they land it and then they make some mistakes or could make mistakes thereafter. Any advice that you'd have for them?

Erika Davis 24:44

The first thing that comes to my mind is I think sometimes people are too quick to outsource things, like too quick to get a broker, too quick to do all these different things where Nathan and I are realizing like We, we had a big hand in a lot of things that we saw. Like, it taught us— like, me going into the grocery store, like, it gave me the understanding of like, okay, this is what my product looks like on the store, this is how much retail space it's taking. Because from the grocery store's perspective, the amount of space that you're taking on the shelf, that is money to them. So the shape of your bottle, the look of your bottle, how much your case— like, how many are in your case and stuff like that— that's all super important when it comes to the store because that's money sitting on the shelf for them. So when you're selling to wholesale, you're paying for that space on the shelf. And so it just gave me such a better understanding of kind of what the grocery store is going through and also showed me what products were doing well. What could— some one store would be really good with the creamed honey and another store would be really good with the raw honey. And so just understanding also the areas that those stores were into. Yeah, I think sometimes some people are just too quick to, too quick to grow and outsource things that they lose some margin of their own and get too big before they're able to actually fulfill that. I think that's one of the worst things you could do is grow too quick, but then not fulfill.

Jason Duff 26:06

I think it's a great point of that. There is always that tough thing of hiring employees to do certain jobs versus outsourcing, you know, pieces of the business to other companies or vendors. You know, how did you think about hiring employees outside of family and any advice on how, you know, they— to really build that passion for the business that, that sometimes, you know, is very hard to do?

Erika Davis 26:34

Yeah. Honestly, this year was our first year doing it and it was one of my best friends.

Jason Duff 26:38

Yeah. So it's a relationship that you knew and that you trusted.

Erika Davis 26:42

Yeah. We haven't had to go Outside yet.

Jason Duff 26:46

Pretty impressive.

Erika Davis 26:47

Yeah.

Jason Duff 26:47

So you just got to keep having more kids and get them working. Is that— and by the way, you're up to number 5 right now.

Erika Davis 26:53

And we're done. 5 and done.

Jason Duff 26:55

5 and done. What is your oldest?

Erika Davis 26:57

7.

Jason Duff 26:57

7.

Erika Davis 26:58

We had 5 in 6 years.

Jason Duff 26:59

Wow. That's awesome. So do you have any— like, if you look in the crystal ball of, like, as they get older, how do you want to find that balance of— welcome them into helping out, but maybe not growing to hate doing different things with it?

Nathan Davis 27:17

Well, for QVC purposes, they're not— they got to be 18 before.

Jason Duff 27:20

Okay, so we can't put them on QVC quite yet. No. Okay.

Nathan Davis 27:24

It's kind of one of those things. So like occasionally, the 2 oldest, you know, after school, they come out with Erika or something for a couple hours here or there. So they kind of see it. Erika has, you would tell the story about Emery. It was kind of funny. You can kind of see their entrepreneurial mind starting to work. You just, you see little things in them.

Erika Davis 27:47

Yeah. So like, they definitely take ownership of Nate's Nectar. I mean, Nate's Nectar, we've had it for 10 years and our oldest is 7. So they've never known us without Nate's Nectar. And my oldest was 7. And there was one day she came out to the facility with me, I had to get something done. It just wasn't something she could help me with. And she's like, I'm bored. I'm like, well, and I slid her a piece of paper and a pen. I said, go look at our list of creamed honey and come up with your new flavor. Think of a new flavor that you want to have at Nate's Nectar, and I want you to draw what you want the label to look like on this piece of paper. So she goes and does it, and she brings it back to me, and it was a mix of 2 flavors, which in our lineup is very, very new, very different. But in our kids' world, they get 2 flavors all the time from the facility. that we bring home. And so she decided these 2 flavors and she drew her label. And I said, that looks great. And I said, now you need to go talk to Marissa. Mm-hmm. And I want you to think about the logistics of how you're going to do these 2 flavors. And so Marissa asks her, she's like, well, are you, are you filling one and then putting the other one on top of it? Is it a swirl that they're going in together? And just asking her questions. She goes, well, the 2 flavors of these creamed honey, it might make it look brown if it's together. Like maybe There's 2 other flavors that would work best. And so I think it's all about planting those seeds of just like the seeds of giving her confidence that her ideas and opinions could matter to Nate's Nectar and that she could have a role in it if she wanted to. But just like, just the mindset of like, oh, I can do this. I can do something like mom and dad do. I think is really important.

Jason Duff 29:16

I love that.

Erika Davis 29:17

And I think it's something kids out, if you're not grown by parent or raised by parents that are small business owners, like you don't get that opportunity.

Jason Duff 29:24

No, it's. You can't read it in a textbook. You— it's not really something you even learn in college. Like, um, it is something that you grow up in and you have your own experience interaction. Mm-hmm. And I think I remember back, like, just having people in my family, you know, parents and grandparents that when I would sell a, like, a fundraiser from school, they were the first people to buy something from me. And there is something like magical that happens when you put your neck out there of something that you're proud about or you know, stepping out of your comfort zone, and then someone supports you with that. Mhmm. So, I, I think that's just a really important lesson. And I, and I do that a lot with our interns. You know, you, you, the definition of young people, you know, we, we all at some point were inexperienced with something. Or maybe there's a skill that you're really, really confident in, but there's other skills that you're not as good at. Like, having other people that will challenge, nurture, And sometimes push you out of your comfort zone to do that.

E **Erika Davis** 30:24

Absolutely. And I think like my time at Honda, even though it's very different from Nate's Nectar, those mentors that I had made a huge impact on the way I thought about it. They gave me confidence that like, oh, what I'm doing is correct and they want that. They think I'm valued. Was huge for me to then transition over to Nate's Nectar. And there was a lot of things that we, like building our website and stuff like that. There was a lot of things that I was taking from what I learned at Honda and bringing it to Nate's Nectar. And so it's like each, I look at each opportunity that you have in your life as building you for the next one.

J **Jason Duff** 30:53

The day that you gave your resignation for Honda, what kind of emotions were going through your head?

E **Erika Davis** 31:00

It was high and low because I was like, I, I put so much into this and I grew. Like, I, I got a raise or I got a promotion 3 months before I quit. And so like, that was really hard for me. I was like, I loved what I was doing. I was building something, um, 'Cause I was part of the pro center here in Bellefontaine. Yeah. There was a 4-man team and I was one of them that brought that to Bellefontaine. And so I had so much pride in that, but I knew from, 'cause we had 2 kids at that time, I knew from like the family perspective, that's what we wanted. That's what I wanted to do. 'Cause being a farmer, the hours are all over the place. And so like he would be gone late in the night, but then I would be at work and then be with the kids at home. It just gave us more of a flexibility of like, I can go out there during the day or bring the kids and they can see him and stuff like that. But full of emotion, but also full of opportunity.

J **Jason Duff** 31:55

So behind the growth of Nate's Nectar, there's a family learning and building a company together. You've now hired employees, I think your first employee outside of family. So congratulations with that. Why has the family always been such an important part of what you're building? But I want you to think going forward, some people talk about when they hire other people, we want to build like the family culture. What are some of the values that you think as you continue to scale and grow that you want to make sure that people know when they work for your brand?

N **Nathan Davis** 32:31

I think honesty, hard work. People that take initiative, that's a huge thing. It was kind of that way growing up. I mean, me and my sisters, we are, there's 4 of us in 5 years. So we were kind of always each other's best friends growing up. And we were always getting into things, but it was like, you had to work hard, you need to be honest, and you need to have integrity. And those are, to me, those are the 3 big pillars of building a business. We could go out and build a business and not be honest and Those people don't usually last very long. And if you're not willing to work your tail off, it's not going to work either. So you have to be able to work, you have to be able to be honest. Those are probably my 2 biggest things, I would think.

Erika Davis 33:13

And I think just like upholding the— we've, as Nate's Nectar grows, the one thing that's super important to us is keeping that high quality that our product has always had. And our brand has always had. And if that's ever damaging, then we know that something is going wrong.

Ethan DeLeon 33:29

Running a business is risky enough. Your insurance shouldn't be. At CoverLink, it's people over policies. Real advisors who understand your business, your risk, and your bottom line. Protect what you've built.

Jason Duff 33:41

So you got a big call about a year ago from QVC. Tell us about that big call. Who got the call? What happened? Like, walk me through that experience.

Erika Davis 33:55

So it was actually, it started off at Fancy Food Show.

Jason Duff 33:58

Okay, so you were in this show, like walking the steps.

Erika Davis 34:00

Yes. Exhausted. Exhausted. So I— it's actually kind of embarrassing, but I, uh—

Jason Duff 34:06

We want to hear it.

Erika Davis 34:06

Like I said, I was 5 months pregnant and I was very hungry, so I was like, Nathan, I'm gonna go get us some food. And so I went down, got us some food. I was carrying back.

Jason Duff 34:16

I have to ask, what kind of food?

Erika Davis 34:17

Honestly, I don't remember. I

Nathan Davis 34:18

think it was a hamburger.

Jason Duff 34:20

Like, I'm craving a hamburger.

Erika Davis 34:21

I know, I think I got a gyro.

Jason Duff 34:22

Okay, okay.

Nathan Davis 34:23

The Javits didn't have many options, so it was kind of slim picking.

Erika Davis 34:26

Yeah, yeah. And so So to back up a little bit, before Fancy Food Show, I had this broker reach out to me and was like, hi, my name is blah, blah, blah. I'm with QVC. I'd love to meet with you at Fancy Food Show. And I was like, oh, okay. So it was in the back of my mind. And so then fast forward to Fancy Food Show, I was really hungry. And so I took the escalator down to get food. So I'm coming back up almost to our table, and I'm carrying these Styrofoam containers of food. And I passed this group of women. And everyone at Fancy Food has these badges. that say their name and where they're from. And I passed this group of women and I just catch that it said QVC. And I was like, huh? And so I'm like, hi, like, my name's Erika, as I'm holding my Styrofoam containers. I was like, I was reached out by so-and-so that said they were a broker with QVC. I just wanna make sure it was legitimate 'cause there's a lot of people that aren't legitimate out in this world. Yeah. And they're like, yeah, she's legitimate. I said, and she goes, but you can also just work directly with me. And so I took a, they have QR codes on there. So she had me take a QR code and I took it back and she goes, we've actually had a lot of success with Creamed Honey in the past. They just couldn't keep up with our demand. I was like, oh, okay, great. And so I took the information after Fancy Food Show, emailed them, stuff like that. It kind of went from there. I mean, I remember, because I was pregnant with our 5th kid, I remember like rushing out of a baby appointment to then hop on a Zoom call for one of my training sessions for QVC, just sitting in the car doing my Zoom session.

Jason Duff 35:50

And what is that like? They're like, teaching you what to say?

Erika Davis 35:54

Yeah, so yeah, so the first one's like learning about QVC, like how they operate, how like their net, all that things, and just making sure that like you understand what you're signing up for. So that was like the first level. And then the second is like you're uploading all of your products and like you're giving them your, um, pricing, all of that. You're coming to an agreement. And then it comes to going on air. So you have to do a whole— I had a whole day training on just how to be on air, how to speak What not to say, how you submit claims so that you can say certain things on air, which was kind of hard for me because, you know, the word natural— I can't say the word natural when I'm on QVC because I don't have a claim to back it up.

Jason Duff 36:35

Okay.

Erika Davis 36:36

So anything that is said on QVC, you have to have pre-submitted claims.

Jason Duff 36:40

That's great advice. I didn't know that.

Erika Davis 36:42

Yeah. So, and if you don't, like, that's not good news. So, but everything I had— I said, I only have certain things I can say. And so, um, because everything has to be claimed, I have to have a claim with it. So, um, I went through all this training, I passed that training. And even part of that training was, um, it was a group of like 6 of us on this Zoom call, and we each had to do like a mock with a host. So we had a host come on, and in front of like the rest of them, like, you had to pitch your product. Um, and that was if you got a pass or fail. Mm-hmm. So I passed that. I think that was in January, um, while I also had my— our son in September. So it was just like a whirlwind of events. I think that was January I did that, and then March we went on QVC.

Jason Duff 37:25

Where did you have to fly to do that?

Erika Davis 37:26

We drove to West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Jason Duff 37:28

Wow. Because I had— that's where their studio is.

Erika Davis 37:30

Yep. I think we had a 4-month-old at the time, so it was like, we're just gonna drive it.

Jason Duff 37:34

You did a road trip.

Erika Davis 37:35

We did a road trip.

Jason Duff 37:35

You show up, you've been trained, and is the recording like— is it just go time? Lights, camera? Oh yeah. Like Go.

Erika Davis 37:43

You sit in the back in the green room. And you get nervous because you're like, oh my gosh, I'm 10 minutes away. No one's coming to get me. Do they need me yet? Yeah. And so they come in, they get you, and they mic you up and test all the things. And then you just go on out.

Jason Duff 37:56

And you were probably having some goals of what you hoped would happen on that show from a sales perspective.

Erika Davis 38:04

Yes.

Jason Duff 38:04

But you crushed those goals.

Erika Davis 38:06

I didn't. I was not— so yeah. So we sold out.

Nathan Davis 38:11

We just hoped someone bought something.

Erika Davis 38:13

Yeah. We had no— That was it. We had no idea how this was gonna go. I mean, like, I had done my research. I had— there was someone else that sold creamed honey at QVC and they were on 3 times and I watched all 3 episodes and I—

Jason Duff 38:23

Smart.

Erika Davis 38:23

Yeah. And when you're watching QVC, you hear them say like, this is the amount and this is how many is left as they're going through the show. And so I'm like, okay, like I'm just like trying to get an idea of, you know, how many we're gonna sell. And then my host called me 2 hours before we went on air. And so I was able to talk to him, which was great. just build a relationship. Like, you know, we talk about like, okay, these are the things you want to cover, because I have to put in writing like what I want to cover, what I want the host to cover during air. And so we're talking about that and stuff like that. And he loved the fact that I had 5 kids. I mean, that makes us like a unicorn, having 5 of those. But then we go on air, we were like already had this like kind of a relationship built and stuff like that. And so yeah, he kind of took the lead. And as he's going and saying each time, I'm, like, not registering it. Like, when he's saying how many is left, it's not computing. And you can, like, tell when I'm on air, it's not. He even says, like, sold out, and I'm not computing it. I'm still selling until, like, everyone— It's gone. Yeah. Everyone claps. And I was like, oh, oh, like, this actually sold out. We did it. Yeah. Wow. Yeah. And then I see you back in the green room, and you're like, it's blowing up. And I was like, oh my gosh.

J Jason Duff 39:32

So you had that experience. I had a chance to see your show and it was, it was awesome. And of course was really special for our community because this is a really rare special thing. Like I equate it to like going to the Super Bowl. There's not many athletes, like a lot of athletes like dream about going to the Super Bowl, but there are very few that put in the hustle drive or have the product that got there. Yeah. So that was really awesome. How did your lenses shift because of that experience? What did you learn? And what's next?

N Nathan Davis 40:02

So the biggest thing we learned, and I'm not the marketing guy at all, but it's free advertising. I mean, the amount of sales we had on our website. So if you have a Shopify website, you can watch live. And I know the one you did in July, you did 2 of them on the same day. So I was sitting out in the parking lot with 5 kids because we kind of made it into like a little weekend road trip. And you could just watch like the live statistics. or the analytics on the website. And it's like, this is great advertising.

J Jason Duff 40:31

Yes.

N Nathan Davis 40:31

And, you know, you pay for some advertising anyway, but then if you can capture those customers that don't want to buy, you know, we're selling like a 3-pack or a 4-pack and maybe they don't like one of those flavors. Well, they're going to go to your website and look. And just the amount of sales that we've pulled from that and that advertising of, hey, getting your name out there. And the biggest thing I think it is, is that, and we've talked about this a little bit, is everybody's like, oh, you know, you guys are like a legitimate business. And it's like, Right. We've been in business for 9 years. Yeah.

E Erika Davis 40:57

Literally, everyone was like, oh my goodness. I'm like, we've been doing this.

J Jason Duff 41:01

And it hurts you a little bit because it's like, I've been marketing and promoting. And I'm close with you guys. You don't know that I do this. But there is something about the celebrity and social proof of — and I see this a lot for restaurants. When a restaurant gets some media attention or wins an award or at the peak gets on the Food Network, then it's like, oh my gosh, you've made it.

E Erika Davis 41:22

Well, and I think— Back to those farmers market days, what the amazing thing was is we knew if we got someone to try our product, they would buy it. We knew if we got them to try it, they'd buy it. And so in between the farmers market and then getting the distributor, I mean, there were some days we would go to Giant Eagle and they would have us do like demos in the store, which is great, and we could get a lot of people to buy it. But that's also like a big time commitment of like going to the stores and doing all of that. So this was one way for us to do like the QVC was like doing a live demo to the — a huge audience and showing them how to use the product and showing them what it looks like. And it was like doing a tasting without them actually tasting it.

Jason Duff 42:00

I love that.

Erika Davis 42:01

It was just like through QVC, you're describing it. You're like, as the words you're saying like that, you're, you're wanting the audience to understand like, oh, this is exactly what it tastes like, this is exactly how I can use it. You have to answer all those questions when you're on QVC. And so it was like kind of going back to the farmer's market of the tastings, but in a completely larger scale way.

Jason Duff 42:20

It's exciting. And congratulations on that. And then the other thing, my sister is a dear friend of you guys and her husband, Jeremy. I know your families do a lot together. We were talking about the pickup line at the schools. You happen to be there at the same time, right?

Erika Davis 42:38

Yep.

Jason Duff 42:39

Got that. So my sister is always really good at gift giving. And that is one of her love languages. And a few years ago, she knows I'm hard to buy for, but she finds this really cool, unique stuff. And there is this magazine called Uncommon Goods that just curates the most interesting, unique kinds of gifts around. And I heard a little rumor, and I want to know a little bit more, that you may be featured in that magazine.

Erika Davis 43:09

Yep. We have 2 products that are on Uncommon Goods. So we've got our Hot Honey Trio and then we have our Creamed Honey Flight.

Jason Duff 43:17

Creamed Honey Flight. And then is there something sparkly about your product?

Erika Davis 43:22

Not yet. Coming soon.

Jason Duff 43:23

Not yet. Coming soon. So we'll just keep that as a teaser. You'll want to follow the Nate's Nectar website, which— what is that website?

Erika Davis 43:30

www.natesnectarandmore.com.

Jason Duff 43:34

natesnectarandmore.com. Let's make that distinction. So we'll add that link in our show notes. But let's just talk about what's next. What are some of the things as you guys think it as your family, as a business, a couple that you're really excited about in kind of this next chapter?

Erika Davis 43:50

Yeah, so like for Uncommon Goods, like I want to— we're not in the magazine yet because like when you— when we're on their website, but they're not in their magazine. My goal is to get into that magazine.

Jason Duff 44:00

Okay, goals.

Erika Davis 44:01

Yeah, I actually— we used to get that magazine ourselves and one year, it was 2 years ago, I got that magazine in the mail. And I was looking through it and they had like a peanut butter like sampler. And I was like, Nathan, our creamed honey would be perfect in this.

Jason Duff 44:14

There you go.

Erika Davis 44:15

So I put it on the counter, I put on my desk and I was like, we're gonna do this. I'm gonna email them after the holiday. And I forgot to. They reached out to me. They found my email and they reached out to us. You deserved it. Yeah, and that's how it worked. I was like, oh my gosh. But what's next?

Nathan Davis 44:31

To me, the biggest thing on the business side of things is this is the first year that we have surpassed, um, used direct-to-consumer to bypass our wholesale. Um, and that's kind of been the goal of ours the last few years because, you know, with— it's a little higher margin when you're selling direct-to, so it's a little less volume you have to move as far as that goes, and it should simplify a little bit of our logistics. But, um, as we continue to go forward, that would be really awesome to continue to grow those direct-to-consumer sales.

Erika Davis 45:00

Yep.

Jason Duff 45:02

The risk that you took, this is not easy stuff to do. And there have probably been moments, of course, you celebrate the great things happening in the business. There's times that are hard. I know that faith is really important to you. And can you kind of speak to that and you guys as a couple, your family, and again, the good things you want to do in making our community better?

Erika Davis 45:25

Yeah. Actually, I have a quick story about that. My daughter, so my oldest, she's 7, and she's in that phase where, like, she asks all the fun questions that, like, Nathan and I actually have to think about.

Jason Duff 45:36

You gotta solve them all, right? Solve all these problems.

Erika Davis 45:39

How are we gonna answer this? So she asked me the question the other day. She goes, Mom, does God own businesses? And I was like, no, God doesn't own businesses. What he does is he puts passions and abilities and skills to people that then build the businesses. And I said, so it's our job through life is to find out what those passions are that God's instilled in us and then turn those into businesses if we want to. Um, so that's kind of been like a big thing for us is we, for our kids, like we hope we're models for them of, you know, you got to work hard and you've got to put in the sweat and the grind and things like that. And, you know, the success for Nate's Nectar to me would be being able to then one day help our kids Learn, find their passions, whether it's Nate's Nectar or it's not, um, would be a big thing to me. Yeah.

Nathan Davis 46:26

And it kind of goes back to like the story you're talking about Giant Eagle. Like we were going on 270 and we saw it. What's the odds that you find the area buyer there at that exact time? And they meet and they meet what, once a month?

Erika Davis 46:37

And he's from Pittsburgh. Like the, the opportunity that he was at that specific Giant Eagle when I walked in there was like zero to none that he was there.

Jason Duff 46:46

And it was meant to be.

Erika Davis 46:47

It was meant to be. Just like when we got into the Uncommon Goods, like, I was like, I'm gonna do this. And I hadn't got around to it. And then they email us, it was meant to be. And so we just keep having these.

Nathan Davis 46:57

And there's definitely been opportunity. Yeah, there's definitely been opportunities that have, you know, been shot down. And then they arise like a year or two later. And it's like, all right, that was part of the plan. Like, we were not ready. And there's definitely been some that we're like, oh, we definitely were not ready. Like, before we got our distributor and stuff. We were, what, 2, 3 years prior to that, we were talking about a distributor. No way we could have done that. And we'd reached out to some, they kept telling us no. And it's kind of one of those things of like, you know, everybody's like, you know, one no doesn't break anything. It's like, no, you keep asking. But at the same time, things have to line up.

Erika Davis 47:31

Yeah. Yeah.

Jason Duff 47:33

I'll just share, you— I'm so impressed with your story. It's really awesome. I knew a little bit from the, from the outside, but just hearing it in person, it's just really, really inspiring to hear. But also, just to share how much gratitude that your community has. We had a unique opportunity of a muralist that was here working over a few months to paint this beautiful floral mural in an alleyway in the downtown. And that muralist, her name was Jaden Starry. And she happened to paint some bees on this wall. And we were talking about, like, when we open up this mural to celebrate for the community, the public art and the experience. How can we make this experience even cooler? And one of our team members reached out to you about involving Nate's Nectar. And I think the reply literally came within minutes of saying, yes. And oh, by the way, I want to bring samples. I want to set up a table. I want to be a part of this day. And you did it with not asking anything in return. And I do believe that there is those principles that givers gain. And that luck by chance was not luck by chance, it was meant to be. And so I just, I think we put out that prayer, that positivity, that energy that let's— we live in a world of abundance, and we want to see more of that success happen. So just as a point of gratitude, I want to thank you for that. Because it was a magical day. We had great weather. We had people out there smiling and laughing. It was great to honor Jaden and her husband and their family for bringing this there. And we attracted a lot of bees that day. We didn't anticipate the bees, but the bees were hanging— real bees were hanging out with us too. So your model of like, hey, like the bees, they're part of our ecosystem, and we need them. We did attract them that day as well. So as we're kind of closing up this episode, I'd like to ask you this kind of question. Somewhere in a small town, somebody has a product that their friends keep telling them would sell. They're maybe making it in the kitchen, their barn, their workshop. They don't yet have a distributor. They don't know anybody at a major retailer, and certainly they haven't yet had QVC calling. What's the first thing you would tell them to do tomorrow?

Nathan Davis 49:50

Don't be afraid to put yourself out there. For us, the biggest thing we probably did was going to Fancy Food. I mean, it was quite expensive, don't get me wrong, but just the amount of— was there 5,000-some buyers there? And everybody's stopping by. And, you know, these are worldwide buyers. These are not just US-based buyers. So whether it's export or, you know, in Washington State or Alaska or something like that, you're really putting yourself out there because, you know, someone's going to come by and like, oh, that price point doesn't work. It's like, okay, that doesn't. But at the same time, you got to have a little bit of wiggle room. But it's kind of one of those things of like, you need to, you know, put that first step forward and then you continue to work from there. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there. Talk to other entrepreneurs. That's the biggest thing is we've got some good advice from some people. Some really dear friends of ours that are small business owners. Talk to those people. Those people have probably been through a lot of things that you've never thought of. Even if it's a different industry, it's just a different perspective on things.

Erika Davis 50:46

And even on a smaller scale of that, like us doing the grassroots at the different stores and the farmers market and stuff like that, don't be afraid of no. You're going to be the best advocate for your business. And if nobody, if you're not going to do it, then nobody's going to do it for you. So you have to go out there. My second piece would be, um, like, know your margins. Don't ever get to the point where you are not making money on something. So you need to know what is the cost for you to make this product, what, what all do you have in it, and then what can— what is the, um—

Nathan Davis 51:15

What's the bottom margin? Because if you walk into a big retailer, um, especially QVC, that was the hard one. They were like, you know, we pitched our price and they were like, well, this is the margin we gotta have. And it is a hefty margin. And it was like, okay, that may not— so that's kind of why we came up with a different size because it's exclusive to them and we can kind of set that price point on that. So you kind of got to be a little bit flexible. I mean, I didn't like the idea of bringing another size because that's another set of labels, that's different lids, that's different containers. But at the same time, if the opportunity arises, you got to be a little bit flexible.

Jason Duff 51:47

Great advice, Erika, Nathan. Awesome. You know, hearing your story, sharing that advice, and just so excited to continue to follow your success in your journey. Big things to come.

Erika Davis 52:00

Thank you. Appreciate it.

Ethan DeLeon 52:02

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