



# OvenWorks Pizza celebrates 25 years

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, Original OvenWorks Pizza is still as high quality of a product as it was back in the late 80s when James "Jimmy Boy" Edming started the company. Switching owners in 2006, the business is now in the hands of its president, Alan Lee, and his wife Wendy Wells, who also serves as vice-president.

Based in Glen Flora, the factory is a USDA facility "where each pizza is hand-crafted by the dedicated team," said Wells. Eau Claire also hosts a distribution center and corporate office for the business, which employs 8-10 employees between the two cities.

The company has a full-time staff, along with several family members who also help out, but "the full-time staff is really the backbone of OvenWorks Pizza," says Lee. "Our dedicated teams of employees who work from our Glen Flora and Eau Claire locations are the key to making everything run smoothly."

"[Alan and I] did not have any formal experience in the pizza business, other than being regular pizza consumers," said Wells. "Our backgrounds came from diverse industries...which included business ownership. We knew that we wanted to be involved with a quality product and something we were passionate about."

The two met "Jimmy Boy" on a routine Saturday grocery trip and knew his product was something they could be



passionate about, said Wells.

"Many frozen pizzas had changed over the years," Wells says. "The Jimmy Boy (OvenWorks) brand had remained true to what made frozen pizza such a popular product, with long standing roots from Wisconsin."

The couple was encouraged by Jimmy's original mission and purpose and wanted to carry on his goals.

In 2011, OvenWorks added two specialty pizzas to their growing list of products - the Chicken Alfredo and Kick-N-Chicken pizzas. Both of these pizzas contain 100 percent white meat with no

fillers or rib meat, unlike other competitors. In 2012, the company introduced a well-received light and flaky Toscana style square crust.

OvenWorks offers every taste bud an option with ten flavors, in addition to the two chicken options, with three crusts (thick, thin and Toscana) and two sizes (9 or 12 inch) to choose from. But the company didn't stop there. They now offer gluten free pizzas in Deluxe, Combination, Pepperoni and Sausage/Mushroom, catering to the 1 in 133 people in the United States that have celiac disease.

"When we consider new products,

we certainly keep in mind the health aspects of each of our ingredients," said Wells. "[This is why] we added both the Chicken Alfredo and Kick-N-Chicken pizzas to our product line. We were committed to only use 100 percent white meat chicken. Sure, it would have been cheaper to go with a lot of fillers or by-product, but OvenWorks is about maintaining a quality product that our customers have learned to love, and, more importantly, trust. We're not going to change that."

OvenWorks, entirely based in Wisconsin, uses ingredients directly from Wisconsin based producers and distributors. The sauce is a seasoned "secret recipe" and the business grates all of their 100 percent Wisconsin cheese on location. With the extensive use of Wisconsin produced products, the company meets program guidelines to be part of "Something Special from Wisconsin" as well as part of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

Available around Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, northern Illinois and eastern North Dakota, consumers can still find the pizzas in their original clear packaging the company has used from the start. Keeping with a more environmentally friendly package, using fewer waste products, it also allows buyers to see exactly what they are getting, a whole lot of Wisconsin cheese over quality Wisconsin grown ingredients.

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