

GUAC SHOP - TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

ABOUT GUAC SHOP. Guac Shop, founded by Danielle Arbinger, makes five delicious and unique styles of guacamole in Perrysburg, Ohio. Danielle had been making her special guacamole for friends and family for years and had always dreamed of taking it to the next level. When she entered her product into a competition and won first prize (valued at \$20,000 dollars) Danielle knew Guac Shop was ready to take the next step.

THE CHALLENGE. In order to take the next step and scale up, Guac Shop had to solve two difficult and expensive problems. The first problem was locating a facility to produce the product. To do this could require significant investment and expense. And the second issue was how to increase the shelf life of the product to make it viable for selling in retail outlets.

This was where CIFT, part of the Ohio MEP and the MEP National Network™, and their Northwest Ohio Cooperative Kitchen (NOCK) facility stepped in to assist Danielle and Guac Shop. CIFT helped the company overcome these obstacles, enabling Guac Shop to propel the business forward.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Guac Shop learned about CIFT's shared-use commercial production facility in Bowling Green, Ohio, called the NOCK. By nature of this type of operation, the Guac Shop was able to process without having to invest in costly equipment or a more expensive rental of an industrial production facility.

Utilizing the NOCK facility along with guidance from the CIFT team, allowed Guac Shop to quickly scale up production. However, the Guac Shop product still had a shelf life of only 7 days, which would not be enough for retail outlets and grocery stores. By working with the CIFT food team and their network connections, Guac Shop was able to switch to a High Pressure Processing (HPP) technique for refrigerated products. This increased the product's shelf life from seven to over sixty days.

With these problems solved, the Guac Shop is now taking it to the next level and selling at outlets such as Walt Churchill's Markets, Kazmaier's Market, Bowling Green State University, the Cleveland Clinic, and others.

"I am so thankful to CIFT. With their help, I was able to start Guac Shop and scale up at warp speed. The facilities, equipment, guidance and connections I've made there have been invaluable to my business."

-Danielle Arbinger, President and Founder, Guac Shop

RESULTS



\$2,820,500 in new investment



\$263,450 in cost savings



\$32,000 in increased or retained sales



4 created or retained jobs

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