

CAMPFIRE IN A CAN EXPERIENCES FIERY GROWTH

ABOUT JUNE BERRY. Juneberry was established in 2020 by Dylan Veilleux. Located in Waterville, Maine, the company employs 3 people creating an all-natural, portable campfire in a can. The compact, self-contained firepit is ideal for patio tabletops and small spaces where a wood fire isn't practical. Made of food grade soy wax and four large fibrous wicks, the portable campfire burns without creating sparks. The campfire can be placed in a firepit that adds to the ambiance and prevent damage to the surface it sits on. *Popular Mechanics* recently featured Juneberry Nova table to firepit as a new favorite product.

THE CHALLENGE. Veilleux's original product was a wax and hemp fire starter that burned for 30 minutes. This initial product was a surprise success and Veilleux, a consummate entrepreneur, continued to work on new designs and new product ideas. The idea of a portable fire in a can made from all-natural materials took root and business began to grow. As sales began to rise Dylan Veilleux knew that he needed to improve his manufacturing process to increase throughput while maintaining product quality. He also recognized the importance of protecting his product by developing proprietary technology.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Dylan Veilleux began working with Maine MEP, part of the MEP National Network™, during the summer of 2022. Maine MEP Project Managers Bill Whittier and Forest Wentworth visited Veilleux at his facility where each campfire was assembled by hand. The cutting process was slow and left 20% of the fiber material as waste, so Bill and Forest developed a plan to incorporate some standard machines and adjust production processes to significantly increase throughput and reduce waste. Bill and Forest recommended the use of a bandsaw to cut the wicks and developed a cutting process that eliminated all waste. After adding the bandsaw the production team was able to produce the same number of campfires in one hour as previously had taken an entire day.

Additionally, Veilleux was unable to source enough firepits to meet demand and found that the firepits were getting extremely hot, causing burns if touched. Forest Wentworth, located at the Advanced Manufacturing Center (AMC) at the University of Maine, developed a plan to assist with these issues. Engineering students at AMC worked with Veilleux to benchmark relevant existing products, identify effective technology and develop design concepts. Veilleux and the AMC reviewed and refined design parameters, manufactured prototypes, developed cost estimates and identified potential manufacturing partners.

The new firepits are now manufactured from a proprietary, air-insulated design that allows the firepit to burn at 500 degrees and remain cool to the touch. Juneberry products are now sold throughout the country at shops like REI and Stonewall Kitchen and campgrounds, co-ops and garden stores.

"Thank you again for visiting my production studio! I recently added the bandsaw to our production studio and has been a total success! Essentially, the task that would take up most of the day is now completed in an hour."

-Dylan Veilleux, Owner - Juneberry

RESULTS



1 new product to market



87% reduction in processing time



20% reduction in waste

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