

Area farm hits the mark with customers

By MEGAN VEIT
Staff Writer

An area farm touts having items shoppers likely will not find in a grocery store.

"If you have trouble finding it in a grocery store, we probably have it," Linda Barry of Barry Farms states, describing the more than 1,400-item inventory she and her husband established as part of their online organic produce warehouse.

Linda Barry, along with husband, Bill Barry, spent the past eight years establishing their canning and bulk food site.

After seeing a pear tree turn black and berry plants wither due to herbicides used on bordering farms, the couple decided to go completely organic with their produce.

At the height of their farming, the Barry family cultivated six acres of produce that was then taken to local farmers' markets. Linda Barry's work eventually led to her management of the Lima market. This will be the first year Barry Farms will not be involved in the farmers' markets.

The pair successfully used their surplus produce to create canned goods that became a hot commodity on the virtual market.

With the closing of Walnut Acres, the first national organic site, Barry Farms began receiving requests from around the globe for products which are not in large enough demand for local grocery stores.

Researching each request, and experiment-

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If you have trouble finding it in a grocery store we probably have it.

— Linda Barry

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ing with some of the products in their own cooking, the Barrys began building an inventory of more than 30 varieties of grains, flours, beans and countless other baking and cooking goods. When describing their supply of rice, Linda Barry explained "[they] have everything from white to green to black."

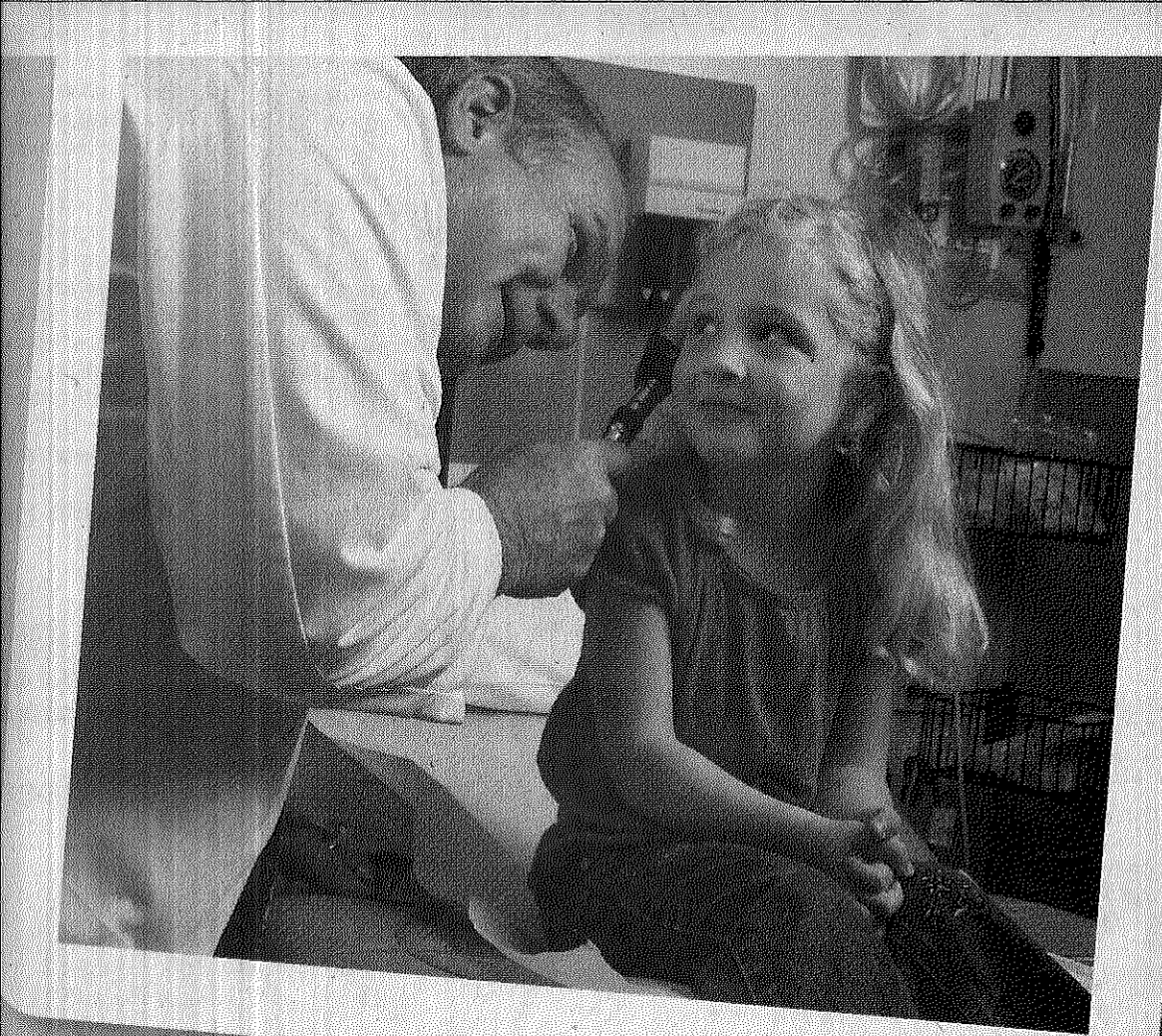
Using goods directly from the supplier and maintaining quick turn-around along with their fresh produce still canned on their farm, the family company can offer fresh supplies to their global consumers. The extent of



Staff photo/Megan Veit

Employee at Barry Farms prepares some product for shipping during a recent visit to its facilities.

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the Web site's reach hit the couple when they received a telephone call in the early morning from Israel. Now, a map displayed in the warehouse highlights each country that products have been shipped to in green. While Europe, Asia and South America are almost completely highlighted, sales extend into areas in Africa, as well as Australia. Domestically, sales span from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which was Barry Farms' first credit card sale, to the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness, whom is now a regular consumer of the farms' guar gum.

Even more remarkable than their broad base of products is the Barry couple's dedication to their customers.

Many of the products found on the Web site were added upon request and new foods are still being added. To further meet the needs of their Web site visitors, they host an informational section.

In this section, viewers learn how to make goods such as nut butters, croutons and meringue. Items are added as questions are received.

Linda Barry said "today's generation is very visual," and to accommodate this, they have added videos to the how-to portion that walk the audience through each step of the process in addition to the written explanations.

Business is booming across the board and is reflected in the 30 percent increase seen in sales last year and this year's sales expect to see another increase close to 20 percent.

To meet growing demands, the Berrys work with several family members during shipping hours to send out each day's approximately 30 orders, a number that doubles on Monday mornings to include weekend orders.

Along with these hours, canning is done multiple nights a week and another extension to the warehouse is in its planning stages.

These pictures show some of the inventory at Barry's Farms.

Staff photos/Megan Veit



Staff photo
 Becky Johns poses at the counter of Bazill's and Jewelry.

Local a ge at business

By MEGAN VEIT
 Staff Writer

Having "learned her skills from the ground up," Becky Johns now nears her 10th anniversary of working with Bazill's Diamonds and Jewelry.

While she received training in managerial skills and worked with Delta Epsilon Chi Association (DECA), an organization for marketing students, Johns said she entered a new industry — jewelry — with enthusiasm.

Johns can now repair watches, the most common request in Bazill's, as well as buffing and silver soldering. A resident of Cridersville, the manager said she is happy to be working in an environment that allows her to reconnect with friends in her hometown.

Beginning on Park Street as a gold trader specializing in Black Hills gold, Bazill expanded and received a vendor's license.

Bill Bazill, the store's owner and operator, opened Bazill's Jewelry in 1980 and has since pro-

vided the area expert watch and jewelry sales.

The store's diamonds to its becoming Bazill's Diamonds and Jewelry they moved to rent home at Auglaize St. A in the store m and Bazill cur the building's poses.

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