



Project Profile

The Crazy Baker

Location:
Renick, WV

County:
Greenbrier

Description:
Expansion & Equipment Acquisition

Total Project Cost:
\$92,500



Project: Hall and Amy Hitzig started the Crazy Baker in January of 2003, leasing space from an existing small bakery in Renick, WV. After twenty years in aviation, Hall's desire for a career change led him to follow his passion for creating his irresistible desserts full time. Hall graduated with honors from L'Academie de Cuisine in Gaithersburg, MD and gained additional training at several hotels and restaurants in the U.S. and abroad.

The Hitzig's goal is to pursue the art of producing very fine pastry and other premium baked goods using traditional methods and organic or all natural ingredients. Products are prepared with 100% organic flour and as many locally produced, organic ingredients as possible. The nearly twenty products that they produce today are targeted to the high end of the specialty food market. By early 2006 Hall and Amy decided that they were ready to expand and sought assistance from the National Capital Investment Fund.

Role of NCIF: In 2006, the Natural Capital Investment Fund and representatives of the West Virginia Small Business Development Center met with Hall and Amy to help them put together a plan to raise the capital needed for the expansion. A loan from NCIF and a private investor was used to purchase additional equipment and a delivery vehicle, increase marketing, and provide the necessary working capital for the expansion. NCIF also provided technical assistance with marketing, financial management, and product development.

Impact: Funding from NCIF and a private investor provided the working capital and allowed Hall and Amy to purchase additional baking equipment. The funding along with marketing technical assistance has resulted in the expansion of mail order sales. Hall was selected as a runner-up in the Outstanding Bread and Baked Goods Category for his handmade crackers in this year's Gallo Family Vineyard Gold Medal Awards Competition, which recognizes excellence in artisanal food producing across the country.