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As the ethnicity of the Quinte area becomes more diversified, a market has developed for foods from other cultures.

That niche is being filled by a new business in Belleville that sells a wide assortment of foods from around the world.

Rick and Jane Robinson opened Quinte Global Foods at 117 Mineral Rd. December 1. The store, just north of Wal-Mart, is a virtual cornucopia of ethnic foods from Latin America, Asia, Caribbean, South America and elsewhere. And if the store doesn't carry the item a customer is looking for, Rick and Jane will find it for them.

"We tell people we can find most anything," said Rick. "We will source out anything people are asking for. We have 20 suppliers now in the Greater Toronto area."

You'll find shelves and freezers full of fresh produce, frozen meat and seafood, canned and packaged staples, exotic snack foods, natural juices and much more. A recent inventory determined the Robinsons carry close to 1,000 different products and they are adding to them on a regular basis. Frozen shrimp, crabs, mussels and dim-sum are just a few of the fast moving items and all are sold at great prices, say the Robinsons.

Jane has a strong background in cooking and stays current on new products. That allows her to assist customers who wish to try new products.

"I think customer focus is so critical today," said Rick, noting the pair try to give the most personal service possible. If a customer has a product they enjoy and the Robinsons don't have it in the store, they can bring in the empty can or label and Rick and Jane will search it out.

As part of that emphasis on customer service, Quinte Global Foods is open seven days a week,

"We fell we're easily accessible to everybody," added Rick. "There's ample parking and we're near Wal-Mart."

Since the business opened in December business has steadily increased as people become aware of their clean, organized and well-stocked store, said Rick. The couple are now planning to add more shelving as part of their on-going efforts to improve customer service.

10 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

"We have a lot of customers coming from Kingston and we don't want them driving here and finding we're closed," said Jane. In fact, the store is drawing from a wide geographical area, including customers from as far away as Cobourg, Port Hope, Stirling, Madoc and other communities.

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