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BUSINESS



Bryan Myers/Torstar

Jason Brass, president and CEO of Terra Cotta Foods Inc. in front of the Terra Cotta Foods building. Despite the pandemic, the company maintained year-over-year growth, and was named one of the top growth companies in the country.

TERRA COTTA FOODS AMONG TOP GROWTH COMPANIES IN CANADA

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A Georgetown business is being recognized as one of the companies with the top growth in the country for 2020.

Terra Cotta Foods was among the top 400 Canadian businesses in terms of growth according to an annual list published by the Globe and Mail.

While the list was dominated by tech and manufacturing businesses, a handful of food producers made the cut.

Terra Cotta Foods ranked at 395, with a three-year revenue growth of 67 per cent.

"Our growth has been exponential," said CEO of Terra Cotta Foods Jason Brass. "But the last three or four months of our fiscal year were impacted by COVID-19."

Had the pandemic not happened, Brass said he believed the company would have ranked much higher on the list.

"When the pandemic first hit, most people were panicking food-wise," Brass said.

Consumers focused on buying pantry essentials in the early months of the

TERRA COTTA FOODS INC.

Rank of Globe and Mail growth list: 395

Growth over the last three years: 67 per cent

Number of employees: 52

Founded: 1984

Address: 36 Armstrong Ave #9, Georgetown

Website: terracottacookies.com

pandemic, but slowly began returning to more normal shopping practices.

Prior to 2012, the company had solely focused on selling to schools and fundraising.

"The goal was to diversify," Brass said. "To grow our school business and to put a business plan in place around that nucleus."

Over the following years, Terra Cotta Foods Inc. began co-pack (contract packing) and private label services, providing their range of products to a number of well-known Ontario retailers.

"The private label has

been our primary source of growth," he said.

While revenue from schools and fundraisers are still an important part of the company's revenue, Brass said, the sales mix has had to change.

"We're having to adjust, and adjust quickly, to these new challenges," he said.

Private label is the company's main source of growth.

Another key to Terra Cotta Food's continued growth is a focus on niche markets.

One facility houses two distinct plants, a certified gluten-free plant, and a regular plant, both are certified nut-free facilities.

On top of that, Brass said, Terra Cotta Foods seeks out and finds ways to commercialize on food trends from keto to vegan to dairy-free products.

"There isn't any secret to it," Brass said. "It's hard work and homing in on some of the trends if you can get on them quickly."

"We're having to adjust, and adjust quickly, to these new challenges."

- CEO of Terra Cotta Foods Jason Brass