

PRESS RELEASE

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Derbyshire-based Food Manufacturer Celebrates 20 Years in the Business

Long-term colleagues Pete Robertson and Chris Ford are celebrating 20 years in business together with their sauce and ingredient manufacturing venture, The Flavourbase Sauce Company.

Pete and Chris formed the business in the early 90s, initially producing sandwich fillings. They noticed a gap in the market for authentic, ethnic flavours where the main issue was the lack of suitable ingredients necessary to create these products, while satisfying the marketplace requirements for flavour, texture and shelf life.

To resolve this issue, Pete & Chris began to develop and manufacture sauces themselves for use exclusively within their own products. Volumes were limited as production was entirely manual in a hand stirred 30kg pan over a gas burner.

As the sauces were both specific and unique, requests for supply to other manufacturers gathered pace. Pete & Chris began searching for financial and technical support to assist with up scaling their production. This resulted in them working closely with the Food and Drink Forum's food specialist team for equipment selection and the innovation team for grant support.

The first piece of machinery required to make the range of sauces was a Joni tilting kettle, partly funded through the Food and Drink iNet (Innovation Network). The iNet is one of the Forum's largest and most successful European Regional Development Funded projects offering grants to Food and Drink manufacturers across the East Midlands.

Technical support, also provided by The Forum, assisted the business in gaining the SIA Global accreditation. Routes to market were also identified at Forum-led "Meet the Buyer" and networking events, including the Forum's annual Members' Supper.

This food specialist expertise and networking allowed the business to develop and generate interest from new and current customers.

Today the Flavourbase Sauce Company works with a select range of clients to develop bespoke products specifically designed to enhance the customers offering. At present the range includes sauces, dressings, chutneys, flavoured mayonnaise, Sous Vide blends and dessert sauces.

Flavourbase have significantly increased the size of their premises and workforce in order to meet the growing demand from their customers. In 2013 they produced over 400 tonnes of sauces! In the coming 18 months Pete, Chris and the team are aiming to produce an additional 100 tonnes of mixes in their newly fitted dry blending room, while continuing to look for time and space saving improvements to ensure the business continues to evolve.

Pete and Chris credit the Food and Drink Forum as being a key link in the chain of growth and improvement essential to aspiring local food businesses. According to Pete, "the support from the

Forum has been invaluable and as a small business they fill the skills gap we have. It's always important to get an outsider's perspective when you are working closely on a project and the Forum team give honest and informed advice – it is crucial for small businesses not to be afraid to look for help". Pete Robertson

Flavourbase is aiming to continue its close association with the Food and Drink Forum and hopes to secure future funding through the Food and Drink iNet, enabling it to thrive and provide jobs long into the future.

"We are proud to be celebrating 20 years in business and look forward to serving our customers for many more years. Without the influence of The Food and Drink Forum and Food and Drink iNet we wouldn't be where we are today and would urge othersto take advantage of their unrivalled support." Chris Ford

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Notes to editors: For more information please call Bryony Ainscow on 0115 975 8810

The Flavourbase Sauce Company offer bespoke sauces, dressings, marinades and dry blends to a select range of customers. All recipes are developed based on customer needs and Flavourbase do not sell directly to the public. The team pride themselves on customer service and work on a controlled number of projects at any time to ensure that they are able to fully focus on developing high quality recipes.

The Food and Drink Forum, which is based at Southglade Food Park, Nottingham, has members across the East Midlands, including manufacturers, food service operators, and consultants and businesses providing services to the food and drink sector.

Its aims include championing the food and drink sector in the East Midlands, developing strategic influencing partnerships within and outside the East Midlands, and acting as a centre for information and knowledge on all subjects relating to the food and drink sector in the region.

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