



Wade Fisher (left), who co-owns the Fisher Honey Company with his father Dyson and brother Scott, sits with Bill Spickler (right), salesman and package designer.

Fisher Honey Sticks Become Marketing Sensation

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LEWISTOWN (Mifflin Co.) —

You're looking for a snack. Something sweet, but not heavy or filling. Something tasty. Something nutritious. Something reasonably priced. Are you asking too much? Does a snack like this really exist?

Yes, says Wade Fisher of Lewistown. But for now, demand is exceeding supply and Fisher is doing all he can to keep his customers stocked.

Wade Fisher, his father Dyson, and brother Scott, are owners and operators of the Fisher Honey Company in the Mifflin County Industrial Plaza, Lewistown. Together they process and package a line of bottled liquid honey for stores and bakeries. But Wade's latest passion is the honey stick — that reasonable priced, sweet stick of snacking satisfaction.

Fisher's Famous Honey Sticks are drinking straw-sized plastic tubes filled with 99% pure honey. With both ends heat-sealed, they're ready for you to grab and go! Pop open an end enjoy. No scissors needed nor excess packaging to deal with. There's only one problem. You have to choose a flavor!

"Raspberry, blueberry, cherry, and watermelon are fast movers. Licorice was a surprise. They (customers) wiped us out! We're working on Pina Colada, adding a new flavor each month," says Fisher of his already 26 flavors, including the natural honey flavor. Fisher says they're working in their test kitchen all the time, experimenting with natural and artificial flavorings, testing the market. Each stick weighs five grams and sells for 10-15 cents.

It would take more than a machine to cap Wade's excitement about this new snack. He first learned of honey sticks from an Oregon man who began packing and selling this snack eight years ago — a business that keeps growing each year. Through phone conversations, Wade learned that the man preferred not to expand his business into the East Coast and that he had a patent on his machine and manufacturing process. The Fisher Honey Company needed to design their own.

The machine they use now, a prototype, was designed by an inventor in Canada. It processes about 15,000 to 20,000 honey

stick tubes a day. Fisher has two different companies working on their next machine or machines, one he hopes will "crank" out that many in just hours. A patent is pending.

For funding, Fisher Honey Company relied on 75% of their own financing, and turned to Robert Postal of the Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation for the rest. The Occupational Vocational Rehabilitation office helped place workers. And until their new machines arrive, the Fishers spend their time creating new flavor sensations and filling orders — orders that keep coming in daily.

"We stock 10 to 15 stores in the Lewistown area and they include convenience stores, a wallpaper shop, a computer store, gas stations, and places you wouldn't expect to find snacks sold," Wade says. William Spickler works at designing display packages and handles marketing and sales.

The Fisher Honey Company is supplied with honey from a reliable source — the Fisher Bee

Farm, a third generation family business that involves moving 4,000 colonies of honey bees from Florida to Maine for pollinating crops such as citrus fruits, cherries, apples, blueberries, and cranberries. Wade's grandfather, Merle Fisher, began the Fisher Bee Farm in 1937 with two hives. The Fisher Honey Company purchases additional honey for their liquid honey processing and packaging operation.

But no matter what kind of honey it is, Wade says honey has an indefinite shelf life, although it will crystalize. When this happens, simply warm it up in warm water to liquify it again. But, please! Don't heat the honey sticks in the microwave — they'll explode!

Hopefully Fisher's Famous Honey Sticks will be coming soon to a store near you where you can taste test for yourself. Honey may have a long-shelf life, but once you taste honey sticks, they'll definitely have a short-life span!

For more information, call the Fisher Honey Company at (717) 242-4373.



Wade Fisher (left) and Bill Spickler (right) man the machine that fills the flavored honey sticks.

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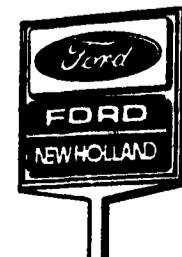
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