**1. Quirky’s Egg Minder (2013–2015) – The “Smart” Egg Tray**

Quirky, a startup known for crowd-designed products, launched the Egg Minder: a $70 Wi-Fi connected egg tray that tracked freshness and sent alerts to your phone. Consumers saw it as a gimmick—too expensive, unreliable, and solving a problem no one really had. The product was discontinued within two years.  
**Prompt:** Why did Egg Minder flop? Which issues (product development, customer need, pricing) do you see?

**2. Hampton Creek “Just Mayo” (2011–2017 controversy)**

Hampton Creek launched *Just Mayo*, a plant-based mayonnaise alternative. It gained attention for being vegan and sustainable, but the company faced regulatory battles over the use of the word “mayo,” production quality issues, and allegations of deceptive sales tactics (buying back its own product to inflate demand).  
**Prompt:** What problems do you see here—product positioning, regulatory, internal management?

**3. Farmigo (2011–2016) – The Online Farmers’ Market**

Farmigo created a platform that let consumers order directly from local farms, with neighborhood pick-up points. Despite strong interest, logistics and distribution proved too complex and costly to manage. The company shut down its consumer service in 2016, pivoting instead to farm management software.  
**Prompt:** What were the main challenges—operations, scalability, market reach?

**4. Sweetriot (founded 2005; faded out by 2016) – “Healthy Chocolate”**

Sweetriot marketed itself as a socially responsible, healthier chocolate brand that used fair-trade cacao nibs. It was trendy and mission-driven, but struggled to compete in mainstream retail. The taste profile was niche, distribution limited, and the brand couldn’t secure enough repeat customers.  
**Prompt:** Why couldn’t Sweetriot scale? Was this a product/market fit issue, sales/marketing, or financing?

**5. Solazyme (2003–2017) – Algae-Based Food and Fuel**

Solazyme aimed to revolutionize food and fuel with oils made from algae. Despite big corporate partnerships, production costs were too high, scaling was slow, and the company couldn’t meet market expectations. It shifted repeatedly between food, cosmetics, and fuel before eventually being acquired and rebranded.  
**Prompt:** Which problems stand out—product development, economic environment, or trying to do too much at once?

**1. Quirky’s Egg Minder (2013–2015) – The “Smart” Egg Tray**

Quirky launched a $70 Wi-Fi connected egg tray that tracked freshness and sent alerts to your phone. Consumers saw it as a gimmick—too expensive, unreliable, and solving a problem no one really had. Discontinued within two years.  
**Issues:**

* **Product development** – solution in search of a problem
* **Sales/marketing** – poor customer adoption, wrong price point

**2. Hampton Creek “Just Mayo” (2011–2017 controversy)**

Plant-based mayonnaise alternative that gained attention for sustainability and vegan appeal. Faced **regulatory battles** over labeling, quality control problems, and accusations of buying back its own products to inflate demand.  
**Issues:**

* **Regulatory environment** – labeling disputes
* **Production/operations** – quality control concerns
* **General management** – credibility and governance issues

**3. Farmigo (2011–2016) – The Online Farmers’ Market**

Platform connecting consumers with local farms through neighborhood pickup points. While interest was strong, the logistics of distribution and operations proved too costly. Farmigo shut down consumer services and pivoted to farm management software.  
**Issues:**

* **Production/operations** – distribution and supply chain challenges
* **Internal financial management** – scaling costs exceeded revenues
* **Sales/marketing** – difficulty reaching a large enough customer base

**4. Sweetriot (2005–2016) – “Healthy Chocolate”**

Fair-trade cacao nib chocolate marketed as socially responsible and healthier. Popular among niche consumers but struggled in mainstream retail. Limited distribution and repeat customers prevented sustainable growth.  
**Issues:**

* **Sales/marketing** – niche appeal, limited market reach
* **Financing** – unable to secure enough funding to scale
* **Product development** – flavor profile didn’t match mass-market demand

**5. Solazyme (2003–2017) – Algae-Based Food and Fuel**

Promised to revolutionize oils from algae for food, cosmetics, and energy. Despite large corporate partnerships, high production costs and slow scaling undermined the model. The company shifted focus repeatedly before being acquired and rebranded.  
**Issues:**

* **Product development** – technology not cost-competitive
* **Economic environment** – oil prices dropped, hurting alternative fuels
* **General management** – spreading too thin across markets (food, cosmetics, fuel)