

LINCOLN, Neb. (KOLN) - Baker's Candies, the beloved maker of "Nebraska's Chocolate," has opened its newly expanded outlet store in Greenwood, marking a major expansion for the family-owned business as demand for its signature meltaways continues to soar.

A new store means everything for this family of chocolatiers. Todd Baker, Baker's Candies CEO, is not just selling candy, but creating an environment of nostalgia.

"It doesn't matter if you are a kid, or if you are 80-90 years old, we want to take you back in time to that feeling that you had as a kid in a candy store and that is what we created all of this to accomplish," Baker said.

The new space not only accommodates more candy but also more visitors. In 2024, Baker's Candies welcomed more than 300,000 people to the old store. Baker said people travel from all over to get their hands on this one of a kind confection.

"We wanted to make sure for those who make the pilgrimage to Greenwood, Nebraska, we reward you with plenty of things to see and do while you are here," he said.

Baker said that growing interest has also translated into sweet success, as the company produced 500,000 pounds of chocolate last year and is now manufacturing up to 2,500 pounds a day. Of the 40 million meltaways sold in 2024, 30 million were purchased in Nebraska.

The story of Baker's Candies began decades ago with Todd's father, Kevin Baker. A former missile systems engineer for the U.S. government during the Cold War, Kevin pivoted after the war to inventing machinery for mass production. But rather than selling his inventions, he used them to launch his own chocolate operation in 1986.

"The one thing that my dad always wanted to accomplish was that he wanted to make Nebraska's Chocolate," Baker said. "In the state of Nebraska, it is not hard to build a great business. If you can build a quality product, and get Nebraskans to embrace it as their own, then you've got a great foundation for a family business."

Since no one had claimed the title of Nebraska's Chocolate, Baker's Candies set out to make chocolate that would make all Nebraskan's proud. Baker believes that once Nebraskans adopt something as their own, they take it with them.

"We couldn't be more proud to make Nebraska's Chocolate," Baker said. "It really is our identity."