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Nimia's Miki grows in Own Backyard with DOST 1



1981 marked the inception of “Beatriz Miki”, which would later be institutionalized as the pioneer plain miki (native noodle) maker of Cabugao town in Ilocos Sur. Back then, it was managed by Beatriz Corrales, the namesake of the establishment. It was only after two and a half decades that the ownership was transferred to her brother Cresencio and his wife, Nimia.

At first, Nimia and Cresencio were not keen in engaging themselves in the miki- business but when Beatriz gave the business to them in 2006, they grabbed the opportunity. After 3 years, little did Cresencio and Nimia know that big things are about to embark as the couple decided to register the business at DTI under the name, “Nimia'sMiki.” The couple had only two goals in mind with their new-found blessing. The first is a wider recognition of their product not just in Cabugao but also in nearby towns and cities. And the second is the establishment of a name

in the big supermarkets of Ilocos. But as they all say, it doesn't stop in dreaming.

With big dreams comes corresponding obstacles of the same magnitude, at times even greater. With the big dreams that Nimia and Cresencio had, they know that it would not be that easy for them. They had competitors, received both criticisms and good feedbacks and a few suggestions.

Nothing good will result if you take these negatively and the couple decided to use these to their benefit. One of which, is a suggestion from the municipal government of Cabugao in 2008. The municipal officials recommended mixing malunggay leaves into the miki noodles and create a new twist called “mikulunggay”.

After thorough consideration, the couple tried to experiment on the suggestion with hopes of providing a healthier version of the plain miki noodles. They first tried mixing fresh malunggay leaves into the concoction but this created a meager result because the noodles became brittle. They then tried drying up the malunggay leaves and the outcome turned out good. Such skills of Cresencio and Nimia in creating variations in the miki noodle recipe was gained from working under Beatriz for 25 years.

Nimia describes their establishment as a family business since the staff consists of her, her husband and their kids. They work hand in hand in the production, packaging until the marketing phase. They start daily at six in the morning, spending 12 hours on regular days and spending more for large orders and unexpected events.

The company offers plain miki noodles and the mikilunggay, which is now becoming a popular choice for health-oriented dealers and buyers. They accept big orders and they do on-time deliveries without any additional charge. Their products are sold at Php25 per ¼-kilo pack at the main branch and Php26 per ¼-kilo pack at their outlets in Bantay and Narvacan and in two leading supermarkets in Ilocos, the JTC Mall and Two Brothers. Nimia also added that good maintenance is achieved thru standardization of the formulation of the final ingredients.

DOST Levels Up Mikilunggay

As Nimia's Miki is progressing, Nimia decided to seek assistance from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Ilocos Sur Science and Technology Center in Tamag, Vigan City. With the construction of a production house in 2009 as their equity, the family business was granted PhP 50,000.00 for the improvement of the label and packaging of mikilunggay. The production area helped the family avoid exposure of their products to possible contamination.

The new luscious green apple packaging materials with label improved greatly the mikilunggay marketing quality that it have been delivering at the San Juan public market, JTC Bantay Mall, JTC Vigan public market, JTC Vigan plaza and JTC Narvacan Mall. With this is a wow 100% increase in gross sales.

The portable electric noodle machine and table impulse sealer doubled the production volume of the firm. The noodle machine reduced the time of rolling and cutting of dough by 37.5%. The two hours for five kilos of flour became one hour and 15 minutes. The table impulse sealer secured the product quality.

The good manufacturing practices (GMP) training they had by the Food Safety Team of DOST Region 1 deepened their production responsibility. The couple have now become aware of the hazards present in the work environment and production cost was kept at minimum.

With the aid of DOST, the couple felt that it is more fulfilling to establish a business here in the country than go abroad since help from the government is very likely as long as qualification for assistance are met. It was through the assistance of DOST that they realized that the government is doing its duty in uplifting the lives of Pinoys, may they be entrepreneurs or not.

The assistance from the department cradled income increase for Nimia's Miki. The product demand increased 30%, which can be attributed to the training and to the new packaging design. And since demand has increased, an additional employee was tantamount to address big orders. Nimia and her husband, both community-oriented individuals, opted to help out-of-school youths so they hired one of them every time huge orders come.

As the Nimia's Miki grows, Nimia advises, "For those who want to start their own business, don't be scared, the government won't let you fall, as long as you have the will to achieve your dream, the DOST, for example, will accompany you towards your goal. To those who are planning to avail the DOST program, hesitation is not a good option."

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