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## FEATURE ARTICLE

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### After 10 Years, Utah's Kodiak Flapjacks Grow!

For many years, Salt Lake City resident Penny Clark had dreamed of taking her family's whole-wheat pancake recipe to market. Interested in good health, she always believed there would be a market for the great tasting whole-grain pancake recipe that her father was famous for. In 1982, she sent her then eight-year-old son, Joel, out to the neighbors to sell lunch sacks full of ingredients to make her pancake recipe. "I still remember," says Joel, "coming into the kitchen one day and seeing a bunch of brown paper lunch sacks laid out on the counter that mom was filling with flour she had ground in her wheat grinder. She had hand written on every sack how to make her pancakes." His dad loaded up the Radio Flyer red wagon, and with the family sheepdog at his side, Joel went out and sold all the mixes she made to people in the neighborhood, and even got some reorders. "I thought I'd test the market a little bit," says Penny, "and give Joel and the dog something to do."

Twelve years went by, and Penny, still believing that consumers would love her wholesome pancake recipe, suggested that one of her other sons, then 28-year-old Jon, take the family pancake recipe to market. After studying about grains and other healthful ingredients, and eating pancakes nearly everyday for six months, Jon transformed his mother's recipe into an add-water-only version, and accomplished a major breakthrough for whole-grain pancake taste.

In 1995, Jon recruited Joel to once again go out and begin selling the pancake mix, which was named Kodiak Cakes because of the family's love for the outdoors and because of their ties to Alaska. They started marketing the mix to gift shops and gourmet markets while running the company out of Jon's basement. Love letters started flowing in from fans who had discovered the mix's light and fluffy texture, and wonderful taste. "People would constantly tell us that they couldn't believe the mix was made with whole-wheat because it is so light," says Joel. The Clark's claim that this flow of positive letters, which continues today, is what kept them going when the pains of starting a new business on a shoe-string budget were almost enough to make them want to quit. "We couldn't quit," says Jon. "People loved the mix so much that we had to keep going." Now, after 10 years in business, the Clarks are selling Kodiak Cakes in nearly 2000 stores in 25 states.

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