

EXHIBIT # 7 A  
DATE 02/17/15  
HB 478



10A Kem Lane  
Absarokee MT, 59001  
Office 406.328.4084 ~ Cell 406.321.1708  
orders@beckysberries.com

February 16, 2015

To whom it may concern,

### Becky's Story

My husband and I were born and raised in Montana. We love this great State. You might say we are a "Made in Montana" family. Being raised in a rural setting, we grew to realize our dependence of the bounty of the earth. In that setting I was taught how to take our state's agricultural produce and turn it into tasty treats for our families. Eventually that experience turned into Becky's Berries, a local Home-Based Business based out of Absarokee MT that specializes in producing a unique line of Jam, Jellies, Syrups and Sauces. We take pride in producing fresh quality products, and try to provide our customers with the highest level of satisfaction.

Becky's Berries was a total leap of faith inspired in 2005 by the necessity to help with the family bills. This family venture, born out of necessity and a unique life changing situation turned into a successful business opportunity. The success of the business lies in a lot of hard work, dedication and sheer determination .

We started out by selling our product at the Yellowstone Farmers Market in Billings MT. First time to market we had 2 flavors of jelly and 3 hours later we were nearly sold out and had made \$600. We now have 15 different flavors of jam and jelly and 2 flavors of syrup.

Through Farmers Market the popularity of the jams and jellies grew And I was advised to get in contact with the Snowy Mountain Development Corporation out of Lewiston Montana. That is when I first met Bob Giese who pointed me in the right directions, getting a business name registered with state, making sure I got all the correct information on the labels (which we were doing on our home computer at the time.) We got registered to use the "Made in Montana Logo" which has played a huge part in marketing out product.

In 2005 we moved to Absarokee Mt. Our First year in Absarokee I cooked the jellies at my sisters Assisted Living. The kitchen there was licensed as a commercial Kitchen.

We started going to other Farmers Markets, besides Billings we would go to Red Lodge, Columbus and Bozeman. The demands for Jelly increased.

I soon realized that in order for this to work we would need our own facility. We had a small building that we turned into a commercial kitchen making it more functional and easier to work. This was all done with money that was made selling the product. We are licensed by State annually, we pay for a Food Manufacturer ( onsite retail - takeout ) license and for a Food Manufacturer (Wholesale - off site) license.

It was Spring of 2007 our own facility was up and running and we started attending various Trade Shows around the state and worked at adding more flavors and variety to our line. Our most popular flavors are the jalapeno jellies. These were a God send for I knew if we ever had a year when there would not be a good harvest of wild berries we could be in trouble. With the jalapeno jellies we have easy excess to ingredients year round. This gave us a huge boost in growth.

With the growth we realized I needed additional business training and got in contact with Melissa Kramer at the Stillwater County Economic Development Office. Working with the County was like wind beneath

our wings.

Through the County and Beartooth RC&D- a food and agriculture center, we applied and were awarded a \$5000 Growth Through Agriculture Grant. This went toward a computer set-up, Quickbooks Training, Designing a web-site, developing professional labels, and helped to pay for fees to take the product to Wholesale Tradeshows.

With the help from the County program I became a BEAR (Business Expansion and Retention) client. This program opened up doors for me and provided access to various resources including Kendall Hartman with Billings Job Service and the Department of Labor, a web designer, and a business coach. I was able to utilize IWT (Incumbent Worker Training) Grant Funds to attend A FastTrac Growth Venture Class, Complete a Food Safety Training Program, Quickbooks and Social Media training. I worked with students at MSU-B College of Business to develop a business plan.

In 2009 we broke into the wholesale market. That year we attended the Billings Market in Jan. Come March we went on to the Made in Montana Show in Great Falls Montana.

Our first year in wholesale marketing we sold product to over 80 stores, our target being exclusive gift shops & food co-ops like Good Earth Market. Seems like we've been in Good Earth Market forever they've moved a lot of jelly for us through the years. We are pleased that we've gotten orders from popular tourist spots like Fairmont, Chico Hot Springs, Custer's Battle Field, Pompeys Pillar, many others.

Currently we attend a few retail shows out of state. Two of our best ones are in Powell and Gillette Wyoming. Gillette is our biggest retail show of the year. The Made in Montana sticker as part of our packaging doesn't seem to be a hang up with Wyoming buyers.

Becky's Berries has now ripened into a thriving year round business. We start the year with the Wholesale Market in Billings Montana. We go to 4 wholesale markets a year and hope to change that by starting to go to some out of state markets.

We're into retail shows by March. Come June we start Farmer's Markets. From there on we're booked with market or retail shows every weekend on up to Christmas.

In between weekend runs we cook jelly (on a good day I can process up to 700 units). We keep busy getting orders out that we get on the phone or through our website. We opened shipping accounts with UPS and USPS and have shipped all over the United States. Needless to say at this point we have totally outgrown our facility and are looking at different options for expanding.

I am sharing our story with you just to show that given a chance a business in Montana can grow and be successful.

One of the drawbacks that we have run into is having to pay the counties for a Temporary Food License when handing out samples at the various shows we attend. This is an extra cost that drives up expenses. By the time we pay for our booth fee, gas, food and Hotel expense the last thing we need is the extra cost of purchasing a temporary food license to hand out samples when our business is already licensed by State. Not a good way to help a small business grow.

The cost of this temporary license seems very high considering it's only valid for a few days. I have paid for a temporary food license in the state of Wyoming and have only been charged \$25.00

I sincerely hope some improvements can be made concerning this issue.  
Becky Stahl

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Becky's Berries is nestled at the foot of Montana's Beartooth mountains.

We are known for our fresh ingredients, including delicious berries found throughout Montana and the Northwest.

Our mission is to produce a unique variety of jams, jellies, syrups & sauces to delight your tastebuds!



No preservatives.

No corn syrup.

Fresh and natural flavors with local ingredients.

*Share a taste of Montana with family and friends!*

**Winner, SBA Home-Based Business 2011, MT**  
Business Champion Of The Year  
SBA (U.S. Small Business Administration)

# Becky's Berries

10A Kem Lane,  
Absarokee, MT 59001

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For more information:  
[www.BeckysBerries.com](http://www.BeckysBerries.com)

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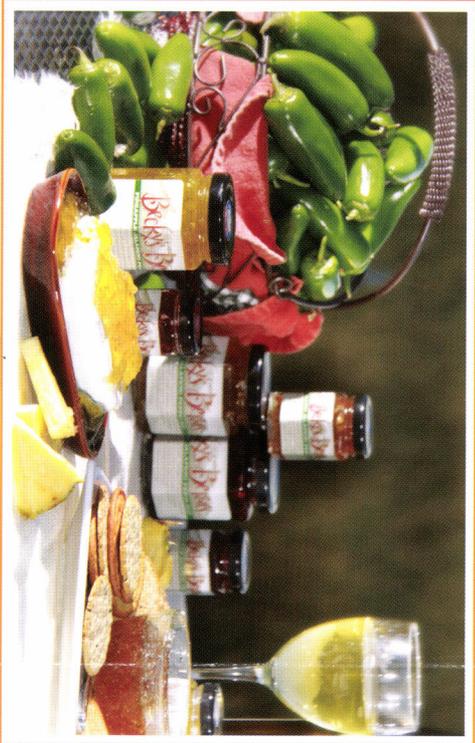
# Becky's Berries

JAMS  
JELLIES  
SYRUPS  
&  
SAUCES

Berry yourself in flavor with small batches of carefully crafted, hand-stirred, taste sensations.



EXHIBIT #7B  
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# 487



## Pepper Jellies

- Raspberry Jalapeño Pepper Jelly
- Pineapple Jalapeño Pepper Jelly
- Mango Jalapeño Pepper Jelly
- Road Rage Jalapeño Pepper Jelly\*

\* If you like Traffic Jam you'll love Road Rage, "When you get in a traffic jam and it gets hot, you get road rage!"

## Jellies

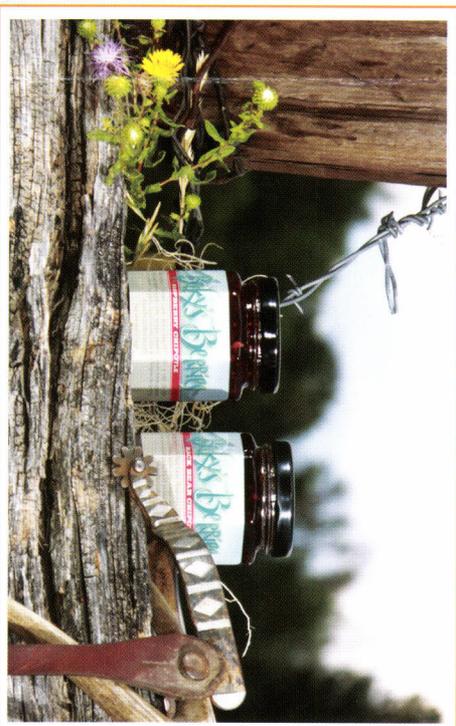
- Wild Buffalo Jelly
- Wild Chokecherry Jelly
- Wild Juneberry Jelly
- Wild Plum Jelly



"Great is thy faithfulness, LA 3:23"

## Chipotles

- Raspberry Chipotle Glaze
- Blackberry Chipotle Glaze



## Syrups

- Wild Chokecherry Syrup
- Wild Huckleberry Syrup
- Wild Juneberry Syrup



## Jams

- Wild Huckleberry Jam
- Strawberry Rhubarb Jam
- Traffic Jam \*\*
- Gold Rush Apricot Peach Jam

\*\* Traffic Jam is a true favorite with fresh raspberries, blueberries, strawberries, and marion berries.



# Becky's BERRIES

Jams, Jellies, Syrups and Sauces

Jim and Becky Stahl 10A Kern Lane, Absarokee MT 59001  
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[www.beckysberries.com](http://www.beckysberries.com)

"Great is thy faithfulness" Le. 3:23

