



## Success Story Weaver Meats



Painesville, Ohio

The Weaver brothers understand the hard work of running a business. Yet, this has never stopped them from pursuing their dreams. Weaver Meats was originally a retail butcher shop, owned by brothers Michael and Dave Weaver. In the 1980s, the brothers started making beef jerky and snack sticks, loved by many of their Mentor-on-the-Lake patrons. The brothers longed to ship their products out of state and sell their meat snacks locally but couldn't because of the butcher shop's retail exempt store status.

In 1996, the brothers decided to sell the shop and broke ground on the new Weaver Meats in February 1997. The new, state-of-the-art, USDA-inspected meat snack processing plant accommodates the whole meat process. They receive the raw meat, slice or grind, season, smoke, package and ship the final product, all from one location. In addition to their line of beef jerky and meat snack sticks, they make several lines of private-label products.

Mike Weaver has been a client of the Ohio Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Lake County since 2004. During this time, he received assistance on financing options and was introduced to multiple bankers in the area. These relationships resulted in the brothers obtaining an SBA 504 loan and various other types of financing.

In 2017, business was booming, but Weaver Meats was running at over-capacity. Mike and Dave Weaver began searching for financing options to allow for expansion and renovations. The proposed expansion would provide space for packaging, three new smoke houses and additional office space. It would allow room for new restrooms and a larger space for an employee lounge and break room. The expansion would provide Weaver Meats with more efficient product flow, save operating time, and allow for better segregation of products, increasing efficiencies and cost savings.

The Weavers, once again, reached out to the SBDC and were introduced to Business Advisor Martin Gareau. Martin assisted the brothers with loan requirements, gathering and reviewing tax returns and other financial data in detail. Together, they analyzed cash flow, assets, and profits in preparation for the loan paperwork.

"Marty did a great job," Mike said. "Anytime we needed help, he was on top of it. He made sure all our t's were crossed and our i's were dotted. He followed through to the very end."

After receiving assistance from the SBDC, Weaver Meats obtained a \$941,220 commercial loan from Erie Bank, partially backed by the Small Business Administration, and invested \$104,580 in an equity injection. Over the years, Weaver Meats has grown from two employees, Mike and Dave, to 19 full-time employees. Weaver Meats also has developed two affiliate businesses: RW Jank and Wild Ride.

"It takes a great deal of time and effort to own a successful business," Mike said. "It's not a 9-to-5 job, but that doesn't mean it's not worth it."

For more information on Weaver Meats, visit [weavermeats.com](http://weavermeats.com).



For more information about Ohio Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) programs and resources, visit: [sbdc.development.ohio.gov](http://sbdc.development.ohio.gov)

