

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Market of Choice MOJO Program Provides Local Makers with a Recipe for Success

Oregon entrepreneurs flourish with Market of Choice's support and guidance

EUGENE, ORE., May 7, 2024 — Independent, family-owned grocer [Market of Choice](#) celebrates the seventh anniversary of its MOJO program this month, a cornerstone initiative that has nurtured thousands of partnerships with Oregon food and beverage makers. Since its inception in 2017, the MOJO program has provided a launchpad for local entrepreneurs to jumpstart their ventures, helping them bring quality products to market.

It is not unusual for makers in the incubation and early stages of their business to face challenges navigating distribution complexities, steep slotting fees, scaling production, and managing growth. The Market of Choice MOJO program helps provide a path to market for Oregon makers, offering much-needed guidance, development support, distribution solutions, and promotion. Often as one of the first retailers to provide market-entry shelf space to these makers, Market of Choice's partnership and support gives makers time to generate revenue, build brand awareness, and increase production capacity needed to expand distribution regionally and nationally.

"We are deeply committed to supporting local makers and fostering the growth of Oregon's vibrant food community," says John Boyle, chief merchandising and marketing officer for Market of Choice. "Our MOJO program not only provides a platform for makers to showcase their products across Oregon but also contributes to the economic health and sustainability of our region."

Market of Choice has supported local makers since its founding 45 years ago and currently carries more than 7,000 local products throughout its 11 Oregon stores, which is approximately 15 percent of its assortment of products. [Portland Pet Food Company](#), [Pan's Mushroom Jerky](#), [Ground Up](#), and [Tropink](#) (formerly known as Pink Cloud Beverages) are examples of some of the makers that have thrived and scaled successfully with help from Market of Choice.

According to Portland Pet Food Company's Top Dog Kate McCarron, Market of Choice was instrumental in getting Portland Pet Food Company started both locally and nationally. Because Market of Choice tracked and shared Portland Pet Food Company's growth and sales statistics, the company was able to demonstrate its success with stores nationwide, which helped it expand into other retailers. "It's one thing to get on the shelf, but you have to stay on the shelf. It's a long, tough, and expensive journey. We probably wouldn't be where we are today without Market of Choice's support back then and now."

Many makers rely on Market of Choice to distribute their products. Market of Choice has streamlined the process by providing centralized distribution points in Eugene, Portland, Corvallis, Bend, and Ashland. A maker can take its product to a distribution point, and Market of Choice distributes the product to all its stores free of charge, saving entrepreneurs a lot of time and money. According to the Founder of Pan's Mushroom Jerky Michael Pan, Market of Choice's willingness to distribute his product statewide from one drop-off location was critical to the success of his business.

According to Sierra Thomas, founder of Tropink, Market of Choice offers more than just shelf space. The team

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looks after Oregon makers, providing tailored business advice and direct support, while also driving increased foot traffic and facilitating connections to valuable opportunities. “Market of Choice works in close partnership with key organizations that support food and beverage makers in the startup phase, such as Built Oregon, the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network, and the Food Innovation Center, and provided us with introductions. Every day Market of Choice impacts my business in an important way. They just do it – without being asked. It is beyond special.”

In their first year on shelves, Market of Choice’s “Full Potential Promise” to makers includes quarterly promotions, content creation and in-store sampling events for MOJO products, in which Market of Choice absorbs the costs of all discounts and promotions. “Most grocery stores don’t offer free promotions to vendors,” says Julie Sullivan Loos, co-founder of Ground Up. “Market of Choice stands out from other retailers by genuinely supporting local vendors, featuring them prominently in marketing materials, offering affordable distribution, and exposing them to customers in-store and online. They exemplify a true commitment to local makers.”

Success Stats

- Portland Pet Food Company is now in more than 5,700 stores nationally as well as stores in Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, and South Korea.
- Pan’s Mushroom Jerky is in more than 2,000 stores nationwide, including a rotation with Costco, and was funded by Shark Tank.
- In less than two years, Tropink has expanded into more than 100 locations across Oregon. Sales have seen double-digit growth year-over-year, and it continues to donate one percent of gross sales back into the local community through its 1% For The Planet commitment.
- Ground Up’s nut butters are in more than 1,000 retail stores in the Pacific Northwest and California. In addition, Ground Up provides job skills training to women overcoming adversity. Since 2016, more than 80 women have graduated and reached their employment goals.

Market of Choice’s MOJO participants and Oregon makers generated millions in sales between March 1, 2023 and March 1, 2024. And since 2020, Market of Choice has carried more than 2,500 products from BIPOC, women-owned and LGBTQ+ makers.

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About Market of Choice

Founded in 1979, Market of Choice is Oregon’s largest family-owned, independent grocer with 11 stores located throughout the state. Driven by the joy of and an admiration for Oregon food and its makers, Market of Choice has grown into a thriving grocery retailer with nearly 1,400 dedicated employees. With stores in Ashland, Bend, Corvallis, Eugene, Medford, and the Portland-metro area, Market of Choice has developed deep, meaningful relationships with farmers, ranchers, fisherfolk, and food and beverage producers across Oregon and is committed to fostering a vibrant local food economy. For more information, visit www.marketofchoice.com. Stay connected with Market of Choice on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Pinterest](#).

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