

Niagara Food Specialty (Niagara)

Company Background

In 1975, Mario Pingue Sr. established a restaurant and banquet facility in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, that quickly developed a reputation for quality cuisine and attentive service. However, a steady string of comments about the prosciutto being served to guests, was not like that which was served in his home.

Mr. Pingue decided to make prosciutto not just for his own family, but also for the growing demands of his catering business. The business, situated in an old dairy, had a sub-basement that was 30-feet below grade which he figured would lend itself well as a cold cellar, or cantina, that was ideal for ageing prosciutto.

With the cantina location solved, he then recruited two reluctant apprentices in his young sons Mario Jr. and Fernando. Pingue Sr. passed on to them the butchery and salting techniques he learned from his youth.

In late 2002, the Oliver-Bonacini group reached out to Niagara to feature their product at Auberge du Pommier in Toronto, for the senior kitchen staff. Many of the employees had toured or completed stages in Europe so quality charcuterie was not foreign to their experience. At the time Pingue Sr. was away on vacation, as result Mario Jr. went to oversee the presentation and tasting. The product was enthusiastically received, which led Mario to immediately consider the market potential for prosciutto outside of the Niagara region.

Company Products

Niagara is a local artisan producer of traditional Italian inspired salumi. they hand craft prosciutto crudo, capocollo, lonza (lombo), guanciale, pancetta, cotechino (“muset”), fresh sausage; as well as doing custom meat cutting. Their fresh products include custom made sausage recipes, ’nduja, Canadian pea meal back loin bacon, breakfast sausage, hotdogs and fresh salami patties.

US Processing Plant

Niagara has purchased the vacant, 51,500 square foot Shoreline Foods facility on the corner of Roosevelt Highway and Countyline Road in the Town of Yates. A significant investment must be made in the Shoreline facility in order to bring it up to Niagara’s standards. The total project amount has not yet been determined. The facility will employ an estimated 25 people at full build out and service the US market.

NYS-OCR Request for Support

On March 10, 2016 the Yates Town board held a public hearing and following vote to support Niagara’s request to be the sponsoring municipality for an OCR grant for the purpose of making a term loan and deferred loan to Niagara. The funding will assist Niagara to finance a portion of the cost of equipment and/or working capital to support the expanded operation.