



# Marketing Hazelnuts in Ontario





## The Current State in Ontario

Ontario has hazelnut farms in varying degrees of maturity. Some are newly planted, where others have reached near full production.

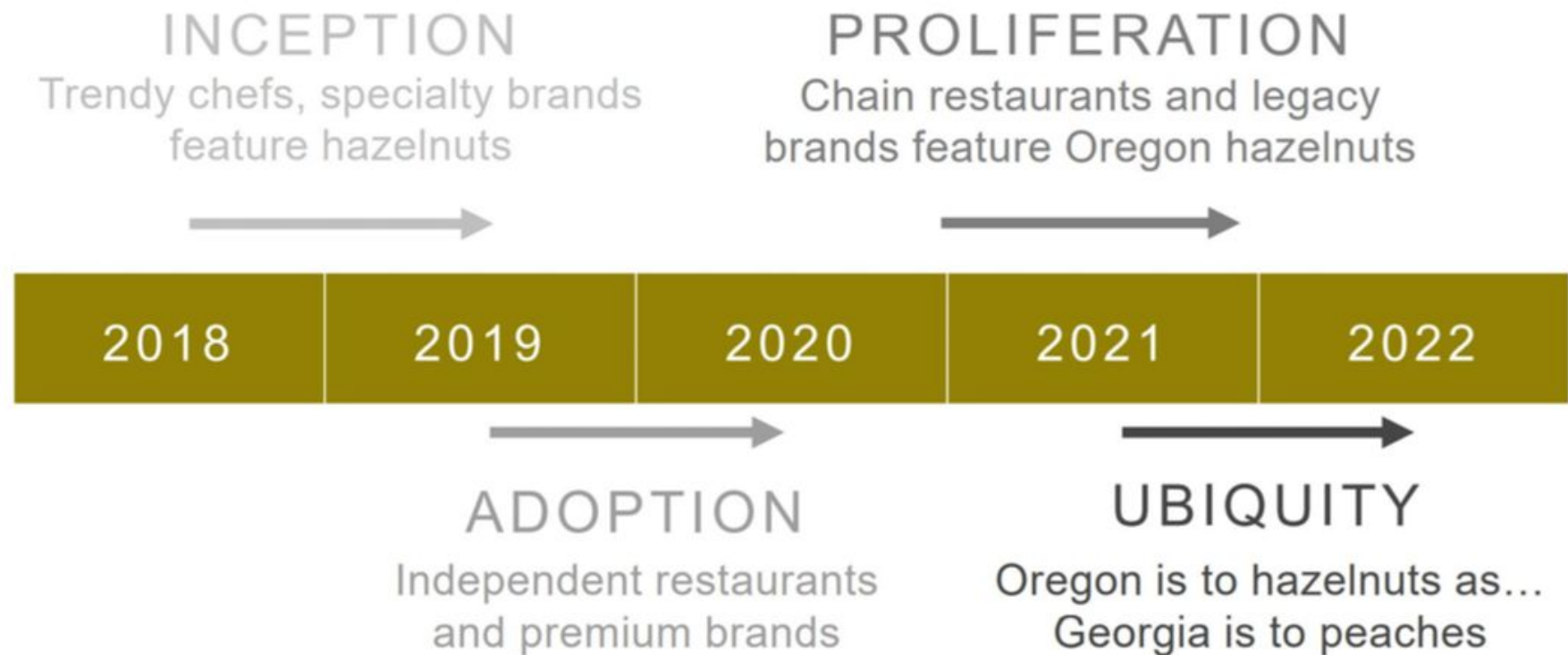
The OHA hosts field days every summer to show off these amazing farms.

Now it is time to sell those nuts!

# Industry Start-up Challenges

- ❑ Still developing the best cultivars for our province
- ❑ Lack of public knowledge
- ❑ Inconsistent supply
- ❑ Inefficient supply chain
- ❑ Inconsistent resources to support and stabilize research and development
- ❑ Market competition from Turkey

## Oregon Hazelnuts: Five-Year Marketing Strategy



Source: Discover Oregon Hazelnuts – Oregon Hazelnut Commission



# Selling to an Aggregator

Selling to an aggregator means taking your nuts off the field, and straight to a large facility that purchases them

In Ontario, some farmers buy nuts from others when they have orders to fill, but not enough of their own crops to fill them.

No large-scale aggregator exists in Ontario, yet!

George Packing Company is a well known example of an aggregator in Oregon



# Selling Hazelnuts

- Regulated by OMAFRA under Ontario Regulation 119/11 of the [Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001](#).

This includes: food safety, packaging, labelling, and advertising

For example:

Retail Display Signs: ANY produce offered for retail sale in Ontario must have a retail display sign on or directly over the produce displays. This includes: retail stores, farm gate stands, roadside stands, seasonal market stores, stalls at farmer's markets



# Farm Gate & Social Media Selling

## □ Farm gate stand:

Setting up a stand at the end of your driveway with a secure container to collect payments

## □ Social Media Selling

Facebook marketplace, Instagram, X. Having people message you with orders

## □ Pros:

Easy

## □ Cons:

Slow sales, not conducive to large volumes



# Pick Your Own

This can be a fun adventure, and is dependant on what you put into it

## □ Pros:

No harvesting!

Agri tourism fun, offering a unique experience to the public

Opportunities for education





# Pick Your Own

## □ Cons:

Must have hours of operation

Strangers on your farm, theft

Damage to your trees

Parking, Washrooms

Food safety concerns

[Are You Ready to Start a Pick-Your-Own Farm? J. Kelly](#)



# Farmer's Markets

Setting up a farm stand at farmer's Markets can get you well known in the community

## □ Pros:

Face to face connection with multiple customers each day

## □ Cons:

time consuming

Each market has entrance fees

May have no sales

Great Idea: Go to many markets and meet other farmers, negotiate having them sell your hazelnuts at their stands!



# Wholesale

Contact and visit restaurants and bakeries who advertise that they “buy local” or “use local ingredients”

## □ Pros:

Much larger volumes than farm gate

Restaurants talk = more customers

## □ Cons:

Most want already shelled hazels

Hard to get them to switch from lower cost supplies like Sysco (who imports their hazels)



# Value Added

Additional processing steps to your nuts allows you to sell at a much higher price

- Roasted nuts
- Oil
- Flour
- Confectionary

# Value Added

## □ Pros:

Very few are doing this  
Increased price point

## □ Cons:

Food Safety Concerns  
Additional Equipment Required  
Clean Kitchen and Safe Food Handling required

# Pricing

Consider these 3 C's

- Costs — What is your cost to grow the crop?

Be comprehensive in your estimate of costs. This might include production inputs, labour, containers, equipment, marketing, insurance, utilities, maintenance. Remember to include a value for your own time as the owner. Leave a buffer.

# Pricing



- Competitors — What are your competitors charging? Explore other farms' websites and social media channels. Consider how your customer experience compares to competitors' and check if your pricing reflects it.
- Customers — What are your customers willing to pay? Talk to potential customers.



# The OHA's role



- The OHA's legal status is a non-profit Farm Organization which does not allow us to sell hazelnuts
- Members have the option of letting us put their contact information on our website
- Emails that come in for nut sales get directed to the website
- Grant applications for Marketing Project
- Foodland Ontario availability guide
- Lobbying for government support