



Southeast Idaho

# El Secreto Salsa

2021

## EL Secreto Salsa Casera



### El Secreto Salsa

Jose Herrera and Elias Ragel

Pocatello, ID

Started: 2019

[elsecretosalsa.com](http://elsecretosalsa.com)



Jose Herrera and Elias Ragel came in to see the Southeast Idaho Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in December 2019 because they wanted to start selling their homemade salsa commercially. Business Consultant, Claudia Allen, met with them since she is fluent in Spanish, and they are not English speakers. Both men work at Amy's Kitchen in Pocatello, Idaho and in their spare time perfected four different flavors of "El Secreto Salsa." Their vision is to sell them in stores all over the state.

Claudia counseled them on licenses, certifications, creating a HACCP (food safety) plan and she helped them find a commercial kitchen to turn their dream into a reality. From that very first meeting, Jose and Elias were very willing to put in the work and listen to the SBDC's advice.

Claudia, along with Jose and Elias, met with Idaho State University officials to secure a commercial kitchen. Claudia also went to all meetings to help translate with the Health Department to ascertain what licenses they would need and certifications. They managed to do all of their certifications in just over a year and to buy all of the equipment needed with their own funds.

They made their first batch of salsa in March 2021 and have secured eight stores in Pocatello, Twin Falls, Burley, Blackfoot and American Falls to carry their salsa. The amazing part of their story is that they both still work full-time at Amy's Kitchen and they make all of their salsa on the weekends, working up to 12-hour days on Saturday and Sunday to keep up with the demand. They even let Claudia participate one Saturday and make a batch of Salsa! They use only organic ingredients and no preservatives in their salsa and have a special process (thus the word "secret") which makes for a favorable tasting salsa.

Idaho State University Workforce Training was instrumental in helping them out by renting out their kitchen at a very affordable price every weekend for them to use, even giving them their own key. Jose and Elias are very humble, hard working men and that is why so many different agencies in Pocatello, Idaho went above and beyond to help them.



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