

RLF Business Spotlight

DoMat's Family Foods

Benson, MN



DoMat's Family Foods owners, Tim and Carol Mattheisen are happy to be able to provide the community of Benson a grocery store that meets customers needs and the always-changing grocery business that they have been a part of for the past 47 years.

Tim grew up in Benson and was eager to give back to the community that he grew up in when he started the business in 1972, along with partner, Gene Doscher. In 1976, DoMat's moved from a 2,800 square foot store to a 8,000 square foot store. In 1996, Tim and Carol's son, Matt, joined them in the business. Matt continued to take on more responsibilities when Gene retired in 2007. While leasing the space they were in at the time, they realized they wanted to put money into something they could own. That, along with Matt's interest in continuing the family business, is what lead them to build new in 2017.

They say their customers are what makes all the hard work of being an entrepreneur worth it.

They enjoy the variety of their work and overcoming challenges by working together as a team.

From the time Tim started working in the grocery business in high school, to where him and Carol are now, they have always strived to provide a clean and pleasant environment for customers and secure employment for their staff. **They work hard to grow their business in Benson so they can continue to work and live in the community that they love.**

When building their new store in 2017, the UMRDC RLF program helped in providing gap financing to purchase equipment for the building.



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Q & A with Tim and Carol

What motivated you to start this business/get involved?

We have been in business since 1972. In 1972 Tim and his former business partner Gene Doscher, purchased the business. Both Tim and Gene worked at the business for the previous owner prior to the purchase. At that time it was a small 2800 square foot store that was more like a neighborhood grocery. In 1976 we moved to a new 8000 square foot store in a strip mall. After Gene retired in 2007, our son Matt joined us in the business. By this time the building was aging and badly in need of repair and improvements. Since we were leasing the space we felt we did not want to put any money into a building we did not own. Our son was also interested in continuing the family business. Therefore, we decided it was time to build our own building. The new building was completed in January, 2017.

What are your goals for the DoMat's Family Foods?

To provide a clean, pleasant environment for our customers to purchase their grocery needs for their families, to continue to grow our business and to be here for the future, and to continue to provide employment for our employees.

Where do you hope the business will be in five years?

The grocery business has seen many changes in the last 47 years. We have made it a priority to keep up with these changes to give our customers what they expect from a progressive grocery store. We hope to continue to grow and maintain the level of customer patronage that we have enjoyed since we opened our new building in January, 2017.

What is your favorite part about being an entrepreneur?

Our customers- we enjoy meeting new customers and greeting the ones who have shopped with us for years. We also enjoy the variety in our work. There are so many things to do and each one has it's challenges.

What were your biggest hurdles to building your business and how did you overcome them?

Trying to build sales volume and customer base. This was accomplished by trying different types of creative promotions to make shopping in our store more attractive to our customers.

Why Benson? What do you enjoy most about owning a business in this community?

Tim was born and raised in Benson and worked in the grocery business when he was in high school. He was familiar with the community and wanted to give something back to the community that he grew up in.

What would your main piece of advice be for someone just starting out?

Form a business plan to make sure you are able to handle all of the expenses and challenges that go with owning a business.

How has RLF helped you become the business you are today?

When building our new store we needed gap financing to complete the financing package with the bank. The UMRDC and the RLF was a key player in providing some of the gap financing. The loan was used to purchase equipment for the business.

The staff and the board of the UMRDC gave us helpful direction with financing. They were so easy to work with and we are forever grateful for their help.