



The Bird Feeder



"Amish Farm to Backyard Feeder"

WELCOME TO THE BIRDFEEDER

It's almost Halloween which means all the big box stores are putting up their Xmas decorations. Slow down, pardner. There'll be plenty of raking before shoveling. Let's get to the newsletter.

Your Customers Should Drive By...

We think your customers should drive right on by... the big box stores. But your customers need to know that driving by the Big Boxers is a good idea.

Editor's Note: Big Boxers actually reminds me of a story involving Rob, the current Mrs. Martin, and two-for-one margaritas at a Motel 6 in Secaucus. But that is a story for another time.

Every morning the Bird Seed Boys get up and do three things:

1. Eat a well-balanced breakfast - Now with equal parts bacon & sausage
2. Coordinate their outfits for the day (Kevin prefers Spanx For Men - don't ask)
3. Think about reasons to Drive By

The smart bird feeder type person (aka customers) knows that September/October is the time to be concerned about seed freshness. Now freshness

Your Customers Should Drive By... (cont'd)

is an interesting term in the bird seed business. All the ingredients used in bird seed have been stored in somebody's bin or warehouse since they were harvested. But Lizzie Mae seed is different from the Big Boxer stuff because we mix and pack our seed just a week or two before you receive it. The shelf life of the product is at your stores---which is why smart store owners (That's your cue to say, "Like me!") rotate that stock.

So tell your customers to drive by the Big Boxers and drive to your store for freshly packed seed from a certain Amish Farm in Ohio. Leave the bugs to the other guys.

Tell Us About It

Debi and Mike Klein are the owners of The Backyard Naturalist. The store is located in Olney, MD, near Washington, DC. They are doing it right - both Reps and Dems have been coming there for seed, naturalist knick-knacks and superior customer service since 1989.

We asked Debi to tell us why she loves their business and their customers:

Question 1: Why are you in the bird business?

We love being able to connect people to the natural world in their own backyards through their birds. We love being able to pass on our knowledge and especially watch new customers' eyes open when they start to discover the magic of birds and how many different species can visit feeders, baths and shelters in their own backyards.

It's incredibly rewarding to witness their enthusiasm develop and watch as they learn about new birds they haven't experienced yet or recognize a new sound that they can now associate with a particular species.

We know that birding adds an incredible dimension to people's lives.

Tell Us About It (cont'd)

Everyday becomes an adventure - and you don't even need to leave your home! Our endless fascination with birds is still strong after being in business for 26 years! We also love that most of the folks that shop a birding supply/nature shop are nice people!! Our shop is like a community of hobbyists enjoying the same love of birds and nature as we do!



Question 2: Why do customers flock to your store?

Our customer service is paramount. We try to make every customer feel special, without being phony. Our shop always looks good, inside and out. It is cozy and warm with a unique personality that only a Mom and Pop shop can offer.

We are chock full of interesting bird feeding supplies (bird feeders, baths, houses, poles, baffles, accessories and seeds and suets). Customers either know, or find out very quickly, that we can tailor our advice and recommendations to their needs, tastes and budgets.

They feel our passion and interest, so they develop trust in us. You don't get that kind of personalized service at a Wal-Mart or Home Depot - and certainly you are anonymous online! But you get it at a shop like ours, which is why we thrived through difficult economies and the age of Amazon. Plus, Thank Goodness!, seed is expensive to ship! It makes much more sense to shop local. So in a nutshell, great customer service, great

Tell Us About It (cont'd)

quality seed and bird feeding products, great education and advice keeps customers coming back.

Question 3: What's it like to work with Lizzie Mae?

We love Lizzie Mae for a lot of reasons. Rob has been our seed vendor for the whole 26 years! He sat on the couch in my house those many years ago to introduce himself and help me figure out exactly what we would need for our first order, and how much of each item to order.

It helped shape our inventory practices for seeds in a great way right out of the gate. When he finally decided to open his own company with Kevin and Mahlon, we were in! There was no question! We were on the first truck!

We are loyal to good vendors, who treat us like we treat our customers. That is what Lizzie does. Great quality product, great personalized customer service. And we love supporting a company that is like a family, like ours is.

It's nice to have grown together through all the changes in the economy, our industry and the world together - always trying to support each other's business... I dare say you don't find this kind of relationship very often!



Rob is thinking about....Safflower

Safflower is a thistle-like plant that can grow to a height of about three feet. Small individual flowers grow in clusters called flower heads. Each flower is able to produce one seed.

Our safflower is grown all over Utah and Northern Idaho. The crop is generally planted in late April and ready to harvest by mid-September. It is generally planted after a crop of wheat or summer fallow. Our safflower is known for its super bright white appearance which is due to the drier growing conditions. It costs more but makes for a pretty bag of birdseed and isn't that what life is all about?



Interesting Note: Safflower is one of humanity's oldest crops. Chemical analysis of ancient Egyptian textiles dated to the Twelfth dynasty identified dyes made from safflower, and garlands made from safflowers were found in the tomb of the pharaoh Tutankhamun.

Safflower flowers are used in cooking as a cheap substitute for saffron, and is referred to as "bastard saffron" which really made it hard for Safflower to find friends on the playground.

IN SUMMARY

You might have noticed that the whole newsletter is now in this here email. No more clicking over to the blog to get the rest of the story. We'll still make blog posts on the articles. Yeah, we like having lots of blog postings. It's a web thing, don't judge. There's even going to be PDF versions of past newsletters that's suitable for printing and sharing with a friend. Just make sure it's a good friend.
