

“Gaining certification has changed our company. The Standard has given us credibility, and companies that did not know us now have the confidence that we are a safe and well-managed company that complies with the BRCGS for Food Safety. Our business has doubled in the 6 months since we achieved our certification.”

**Wally Marcolin, owner,  
Olivier's Candies**

**BRCGS** | Food  
Safety

## Case study

**Olivier's**  
CANDIES LTD.

∞ A Tradition since 1909 ∞

## Olivier's candies

Providing the finest confections possible to generations of loyal customers.

The BRCGS for Food Safety was first introduced in 1998, and was the first food safety standard to be GFSI benchmarked. Wally Marcolin, owner of Olivier's Candies, told us about why his company decided to pursue BRCGS certification.

### Can you tell us a bit about your company?

Olivier's Candies is one of the oldest continuously operated businesses in Western Canada. We've witnessed the birth of the province of Alberta, the Great Depression, two world wars and a couple of oil booms. Along the way, we've changed a bit – we've grown, we've moved and we've adapted to a changing market. But we've never lost sight of our purpose – to provide the best confections possible to generations of loyal customers.

We are a family owned and operated business, and we are now entering our 108th year of operations. We continue to grow, and we continue our tradition of providing quality, service, innovation and solutions to our customers. Today, we manufacture a variety of candy and chocolate items under two distinct banners – Olivier's Traditional Candies and Chocolates, and most recently, The Candy Tree Gourmet Lollipops.

### Why did you decide to become certified, and why did you choose BRCGS?

We realized that the retail food business was changing and that, in order to grow and survive in today's world, the company had to change. Major food retailers were beginning to adopt the philosophy that if you were not certified, you would not be able to continue to do business with them. We chose the BRCGS over the other standards because it aligned with our manufacturing business and the expectations of our customers.

### How did you implement the Standard?

The process took about 4 years, and it all began with hiring an industry expert, Jyoti Sahasrabudhe, of Sahasrabudhe & Associates, to guide us. Jyoti is a BRCGS auditor, and she was instrumental in helping us understand the requirements, developing programs and assisting us in the implementation of the Standard. She worked with us step by step through the process and her experience and guidance were invaluable.

We then hired a full-time food safety supervisor who, with the assistance of our consultant, ensured that the programs were properly implemented and maintained.



**BRCGS  
Certificated**  
Since 2017

**16,000ft**  
Production facilities

**Retail 2**  
outlets

**Established**  
1909

**46**  
Staff



This included staff training sessions, management meetings and setting company goals that were not related to production or financial results. We did a gap assessment to identify areas of weakness, then put individual plans in place to address non-conformities. This impacted every area of the company, from product selection, manufacturing layout and processes to staff and management training. This could not have happened without our management's commitment.

### **What were the most significant changes and challenges you faced to meet the requirements?**

At first, we did not know what the Standard was and how to successfully implement it. It became clear that if we were to be successful, we needed to make a number of changes even prior to implementation.

At the time we began the process, we manufactured 250 items and processed in three different areas of our plant. There was no uniformity or allergen control and traceability was next to impossible. Consequently, we reduced our SKUs to 13 from 250, and consolidated all our manufacturing to one area by renovating our plant. This became the backbone of our ability to move to the next step of implementation.

The other significant challenge was that 60% of our staff did not speak English as their first language. We had to develop ways and means of communicating with our staff so that they effectively understood expectations and so we could ensure that programs were being correctly implemented and maintained.

### **What problems or issues has the BRCGS certification helped you address?**

The BRCGS helped us with every component of our operation. Prior to implementation, we had no clear manufacturing best practices, our allergen control and traceability programs were non-existent, and staff were poorly trained. The Standard gave us focus and a sense of purpose, and there was a sense of pride and accomplishment as we completed and successfully implemented each segment.

**Was training delivered by the BRCGS Academy or one of our approved training partners, and how**

### **did it improve your skills and knowledge?**

We could not have been successful in implementing the BRCGS without the assistance and support of our consultant, Jyoti Sahasrabudhe, who is a BRCGS Approved Training Partner. She broke the Standard down into smaller, more manageable pieces so that we were not overwhelmed. Her counsel and knowledge gave us the confidence that we could complete this program and be successful.

### **What benefits has your company experienced in being compliant and gaining certification?**

Gaining certification has changed our company. We have been able to solidify relationships with our existing customers, and our ability to service new customers has grown at a tremendous rate, especially in the US. The Standard has given us credibility, and companies that did not know us now have the confidence that we are a safe and well-managed company that complies with the BRCGS for Food Safety. Our business has doubled in the 6 months since we achieved our certification.



### **Do you have any tips for sites who are thinking about implementing the Standard?**

First of all, you need commitment from everyone in the company. If management is not serious, the implementation will fail. Hire a consultant that understands your business and who will guide you through the process, filling in the gaps where more information or interpretation is required. Finally, once certification is gained, the process does not stop – you must continually strive for improvement and ensure programs are maintained.

### **How does your company communicate the benefits of certification to the company, its customers, and any other stakeholders?**

From our perspective, the benefits are simple. Without certification, we would not be able to do business in the US or with food retailers in Canada. So that translates to jobs for staff, credibility with existing and potential customers, and the opportunity for stakeholders to protect and grow their investment.

**See how BRCGS can help your business reach its full potential [brcgs.com](http://brcgs.com)**

**BRCGS Case Study**