

Beginning with only a KitchenAid mixer and a package of Pamela's Gluten Free Baking Mix in his small home kitchen, Larry Kaplowitz never thought his pandemic hobby would turn into a thriving Eugene business. Now, making 65 dozen gluten free bagels each week, Kaplowitz and his two sons have made Larry & Sons Bagels one of the most popular bagel shops in town.

As a West Coast transplant from New Jersey, Kaplowitz worried that his gluten free lifestyle would be harder in the small city of Eugene. He searched for gluten free bagels in stores across Eugene, but found them to be inadequate. "I said how hard can it be to make a bagel? So I did some research. I started making my own bagels, and I just got hooked," remembers Kaplowitz.

His backyard pottery studio transformed into a dedicated kitchen for making gluten free bagels. He installed a fancy Hobart mixer and an industrial convection oven, and added racks, trays, and other essential equipment. Kaplowitz experimented with many different ingredients before landing on potatoes, tapioca flour, and honey as his base, and focused on bagel techniques used by Eastern European Jewish immigrants.

Since there are many steps to his techniques, Kaplowitz's schedule of bagel production varies each day. Tuesdays are solely for cooking the potatoes, which is an essential part of the process as his base ingredient must be perfected. Wednesdays are for creating dough batches and separating them onto trays, before beginning to form the bagels. On Thursday, the baking commences, and any bagels not baked by the end of the day are done on Friday. Kaplowitz then gets an early start on Saturday to pack up and head to the Eugene Saturday Market, where he sets up his booth to start selling by 9 am.

His business started as a home delivery service, but after gaining a large customer base in just under a year, he decided to start selling at the Saturday Market. "I've got a cohort of regulars now. Some of them are showing up every week buying a dozen or more bagels," said Kaplowitz.

Every Saturday at the market, he is joined by his two sons, Bija and Matt. Bija is 15 years old and still lives at home, and although still in school, helps Kaplowitz with selling at the Saturday Market. Matt, however, is 32 and lives on his own, so Kaplowitz cherishes the time they get to spend together making bagels. "It's just very sweet," shares Kaplowitz. "It's been really nice to, as adults, have the opportunity to deepen our relationship with each other." The duo enjoys finding methodical ways of baking together and catching up on their shared interests while spending time with one another. "It's been really gratifying figuring out the most efficient movements and flow in the kitchen, and [Matt] is naturally inclined to do that too, so it's nice to share that with him," Kaplowitz said.

Kaplowitz is Jewish, and also feels that being at the Market is his way to connect to the small population of Jews in Eugene. "I wanted to dig more into my roots as a Jew. So I started doing that exploration and, especially delving into the history of bagels, realized how much the bagels are an expression of what the Jews have been through," he said. Growing up on the East Coast, Kaplowitz was part of a very Jewish different community than Eugene's. Eating bagels

every weekend at home was one of the main ways he connected to his Jewish identity and bonded with family over their roots. Thus, it has become very important to him to provide the same sense of connection that he feels from bagels with the Jewish community in Eugene.

Kaplowitz is thankful for the support he's gained from the community in such a short amount of time, and is excited to have just started distributing his bagels at local grocery stores after years of hard work. He hopes to expand even further to stores in Seattle in the future, but for now, is just excited to connect with his dedicated customers at the Market every Saturday morning.