

Community Comment
Tuesday, June 21, 2016

This is Erin Dunn of the Fortuna Chamber of Commerce with a Community Comment.

I admire entrepreneurs. They find a need and fill it. They are creative, they are inspiring. Often times I wonder “why didn’t I think of that!”

I was in Trader Joe’s over the weekend picking up some specialty items and I found a food product that I would never have thought to make, nor imagine it to be a successful venture.

I was walking down the chip and snack aisle and saw “Partially Popped Popcorn” with butterscotch and sea salt.

What?

I read the description on the back of the bag that started “What could be more festive than crunchy, partially popped popcorn dressed in butterscotch and sea salt?”

Festive? Dressed in butterscotch? That’s not what came to my mind, but I continued.

“This special variety of popcorn is processed using a proprietary method to produce the little crunchies usually found in the bottom of the popcorn bowl, but with a texture that makes them almost addictive and easier on the jaw—exclamation point.”

In other words, don’t try this at home. And, “crunchies” must be a made-up word because my computer didn’t recognize it. It’s kind of catchy. And thank heavens it’s only “almost” addictive.

But wait, there's more. "There is crunch in every kernel of this sweet and salt treat, but no fluff."

Well, that's a relief. I'm actually one of those people that loved to look for those half-popped kernels at the bottom of the bowl and eat them. You had to sift through the totally unpopped culls to uncover them. These days you don't find them as regularly with microwaved popcorn--so I lingered in the aisle.

I found the product concept to be both nostalgic and intriguing. So naturally, I bought a bag.

I felt like I would chip or crack a tooth at any moment, but I soldiered on. They have a texture similar to dried wasabi-flavored peas.

After a few handfuls, it felt like they all gathered together in one spot in my stomach.

At first I thought they might be just another version of Corn Nuts. But Corn Nuts are kernels of corn soaked in water for three days and then deep fried. (I had to look that up, I might need it for Jeopardy one day.) So they aren't alike at all—other than being corn.

I don't see the sustainability of this product. It's not something you would buy every week, or even every month. And I'm not at all sure I would put them out at a party.

It led me back to the question--How do people think of these things in the first place? I just need to think of something I like to eat—a guilty pleasure perhaps—that is a byproduct of a regular thing. Kind of like Slug Slime that Los Bagels makes.

I can't think of anything right now, but when I do, I'm going to pitch it to Trader Joes. Evidently, they'll take almost any idea!

This has been Erin Dunn with a Community Comment.