



## Savannah Bee Company is Buzzing in Georgia & Beyond

### WHO IS SAVANNAH BEE COMPANY?

Savannah Bee Company was founded by Ted Dennard in 2002 in Savannah, Georgia, after his lifelong passion with honey and bees. The company offers fine honey and health & beauty products with hive-inspired ingredients to thousands of stores and consumers worldwide.

### THE STORY

When Ted Dennard was just 13 years old, he met Roy Hightower, an elderly beekeeper who put 15 hives on the Dennard family's property. Roy introduced Ted to the art of beekeeping, and he instantly fell in love.

That love propelled him to keep bees throughout high school and college, eventually leading him to teach beekeeping in Jamaica during his time in the Peace Corps. When he returned home, a friend convinced him to bottle his honey and sell it in her shop. Ted's honey became an instant hit, and as the popularity and demand increased throughout the community, he made the leap and started Savannah Bee Company in 2002.

Ted paid special attention to the packaging, bottling his honey in tall wine bottles to differentiate his product in the marketplace. His business model and eye for design worked, and Savannah Bee grew from depending on small boutiques to partnering with large retailers like Williams Sonoma, Neiman Marcus, Crate & Barrel, Harrods and others.

In October 2008, Savannah Bee opened its first storefront on Broughton Street in downtown Savannah. Since then, the company has continued to wholesale honey and health & beauty products to thousands of stores nationwide and across the globe and has opened retail stores in Savannah, Charleston, St. Simons Island, Myrtle Beach and Disney Springs.

From the beginning, Savannah Bee Company received great assistance on both the state and local level. The Georgia Department of Economic Development's (GDEcD) International Trade team helped Ted make global connections and venture into the world of exporting; Ted's honey and health & beauty products can now be found around the globe in many Caribbean Islands, England, the Middle East, Korea, China and more.

### Company:

Savannah Bee Company

### Industry:

Small Business  
Food Processing  
Health & Beauty

### What Georgia provided Savannah Bee:

- Assistance from the Savannah Small Business Development Center
- Assistance from GDEcD's International Trade team in exporting to more than five foreign markets
- Partnership with the University of Georgia

### Awards:

- **Delicious Living Beauty & Body Award**, 2017
- **International Company of the Year (Small Business)**, Governor's International Awards, 2016
- **Georgia Launching Opportunities By Exporting Award (GLOBE)**, Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) - 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017
- **Best Made-in-Savannah Product**, *Savannah Magazine*, 2016
- **Best of the East Press Award**, Natural Products Expo East, 2015
- **Best New Natural Beauty/Spa Product**, Natural and Organic Awards 2015 Europe tradeshow
- **Georgia Small Business ROCK STAR**, GDEcD, 2015



In addition, the Savannah Business Development Center and University of Georgia have both given Ted critical assistance in applying for grants and performing research and product development.

In 2016, the company sold millions of dollars in product – a far cry from the \$16,000 sales brought in the first year – and now employ a team of 110 people. But no matter how big the business gets, Ted keeps his focus on the bees. In 2013, he started a nonprofit called the Bee Cause Project, which puts beehives in schools for a new generation of kids to learn and discover. By the end of 2017, the Bee Cause Project will host hives in 240 schools and 4 countries worldwide.

The sky is the limit for Savannah Bee Company. This year, they will open additional retail stores in Midtown Atlanta and Gatlinburg, TN, as well as scope out new locations all the way from New Orleans to Colorado to Connecticut.

## HOW GEORGIA HELPED

- Assistance from the Savannah Small Business Development Center
- Assistance from GDEcD's International Trade team in exporting to more than five foreign markets.
- Partnership with the University of Georgia
  - Collaborated in food research, nutritional labeling and entomology related to bees
  - Bee Cause Abroad program: populated island in Bahamas with honeybees for student research and training
  - ExportGA educational program

## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- **Delicious Living Beauty & Body Award**, 2017
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- **Georgia Small Business ROCK STAR**, GDEcD, 2015
- **Small Business Economic Impact Award for ecommerce in Georgia**, Google Economic Impact Report, 2013
- **Best Downtown Shop and Best Gift Shop**, *Savannah Morning News*, 2011
- **Tupelo Flute Outstanding Classic**, Sofi Gold Awards, 2011
- **Small Business Success Story**, *CNN*, 2010
- **Entrepreneur of the Year finalist**, Ernst & Young, 2010
- **Member of the Inc. 500/5000 list** since 2009
- **Grand Prize Winner for Outstanding Condiment**, Gallo Family Gold Medal Awards, 2008
- **Entrepreneur of the Year Finalist, Southern Region**, 2008
- **Best Natural/Organic Product, Flavor of Georgia**, 2008
- **Georgia Small Business Person of the Year**, 2007

“The amount of resources and support GDEcD and the UGA Small Business Development Center provide to small businesses is remarkable. We are very fortunate to have such helpful representatives who desire to help us succeed locally and internationally.”

– Ted Dennard, Founder, President & Head Beekeeper, Savannah Bee Company

