

Entrepreneur's Passion for Healthy Asian Meals Makes Impact at Meijer

For decades, Ying Stoller has been showing people how to make healthy and delicious Asian meals at home. From what started as a passion, she turned it into her own business, Ying's Kitchen, a variety of bottled stir-fry sauces carried in many of our stores.

Ying's entrepreneurial journey began cooking healthy Asian meals for her family and friends along with her three young children. Soon, she began receiving requests for cooking lessons, which led to teaching at community centers, colleges and libraries.

When asked to compile all her recipes, she self-published a cookbook, "Ying's Chinese Cookbook, Authentic but Simple." Over the years, she gained an ever-growing, loyal following who loved her casual, fun teaching style.

When she decided it was time to take her passion to the next level, many suggested she bottle her stir-fry sauces.

"I had no idea how to do it," Ying said, but someone offered to help sell the sauces and connected her to an incubator kitchen. She produced her first bottled sauces in 2009. Like the recipes in her cookbook, Ying's sauces deliver authentic, easy-to-use Asian flavors with low sodium content and healthy ingredients.

Today, her products are featured on retail shelves across the nation. About six years ago, Meijer began carrying Ying's Kitchen in several stores. In 2021, the Meijer World's Food Buyer introduced Ying to the Meijer Supplier Inclusion team.

"They put a lot of effort into helping me grow my presence on Meijer shelves," Ying said.

As a longtime Meijer shopper, having her products featured at Meijer felt like a significant milestone.

"I love Meijer, so this has been really exciting," said Ying, who lives in the Chicago area and operates the business in a community outside of Racine, Wisc. "They really work with us closely."

Not only is Ying one of Meijer's diverse-owned businesses, but she is also a local vendor. As a result, she was invited to take part in a recent Roadmap to Retail event for local Wisconsin businesses, where entrepreneurs could show off their products, receive feedback from Store Directors, and learn from the Meijer Supplier Inclusion team. The event only helped her grow her presence at Meijer, with plans to add more Ying's Kitchen products to the Wisconsin market.

Much like our deep commitment to food pantries, Ying's Kitchen also donates to local food pantries. Another way Ying contributes to her community is through her leadership in Asian business associations in Wisconsin and Illinois, sharing her cooking skills, and sponsoring and supporting business association activities and events.

Reflecting on her journey, Ying shared how far she's come since immigrating to the U.S. from northeastern China in the late 1980s to earn her MBA. A back injury from a skiing accident put her education on hold and forced her to take a job in accounting to support herself. There, she met her now husband, Wes, and the rest is history. Today, the couple have three children, who are now grown, and Wes recently joined the business, using his engineering expertise to oversee production.

While the food industry wasn't the path she initially envisioned, she knows how proud her family is of her accomplishments.

"I'm happy to help people make healthy and delicious Asian meals at home," Ying said.

We are glad to support Ying's Kitchen by offering her products on our shelves.

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