



Still, the CEO of Golden Bonbon replies with patience. Marco knows most North Americans have yet to learn that nougat—known as *torrone* in Italy—is a sought-after delicacy in Western Europe, or that the crunchy, nutty version originated around the 10th century in the Middle East.

“Honey is the centrepiece,” Mazzucco tells the *Connection*. “The softer version of nougat is light, fluffy and dessert-like—almost an extension of the marshmallow—with a nice aftertaste.”

Golden Bonbon maintains its standards in response to loyal customers: those who prefer their candy subtle and naturally sweet, made with fresh, locally sourced ingredients like clover honey, blueberries and cranberries, and Canadian maple syrup, along with air-roasted California almonds and premium cream and sea salt from France. Meringue-making follows the traditional family recipe; employees still process much of it by hand.

Mazzucco’s father, Ricardo, moved operations from Australia to western Canada in 1992, and the company built a relationship with Costco just a few years later. Costco targeted robust specialty markets and Golden Bonbon experimented from time to time with new products, always refusing to skimp on quality.

“We just stick to what we do; what we put inside the package stays the same,” Mazzucco says. “There’s a lot to be said for simplicity.” —*Dana Tye Rally*

## SAUCES ET MARINADES DG

**Location** Alma, Quebec

**Products** Twin packs of 750-ml bottles of DG Meat Marinade (Item XXXXXX)

**Availability** Brossard, Candiac, Chicoutimi, Drummondville, Gatineau, Lebourgneuf, Lévis, Montréal-Centre, St-Hubert, Terrebonne, Trois-Rivières

The vast selection of bottled marinades on the market doesn’t faze Patrick Fortier, a dairy farmer and honey producer who owns Sauces et Marinades DG. “Ours are the best, no question,” he says.

Housed on the Fortier family farm, along with a sister food company (salad dressing maker Vio), 200 dairy cattle, hundreds of beehives and a bee museum, DG produces a dozen marinades for meat and fish, as well as sauces for everything from vegetables and seafood to fondues and raclettes.

According to Fortier, who runs his farm and businesses with his wife, Shirley Tremblay, and the couple’s four children, all of DG’s products generate positive feedback from consumers on social media and anecdotally from family and friends.

But, he says, one product—DG Meat, a marinade designed to tenderize and add flavour to all kinds of meat before cook-





LEFT TO RIGHT: CREDIT TK; VANDERVEEN'S GREENHOUSES



Left to right: Patrick Fortier and Shirley Tremblay; a Vanderveen Greenhouse; Kelvin Vanderveen with his sons, Jordan and Kenton.

ing—is a cut above the rest when it comes to both sales and customer satisfaction.

“People simply rave about it,” Fortier says about his top-selling marinade. “They say that once you soak meat in it for eight to 12 hours before cooking, you’ll never try anything else. Some people have even told me their kids learned to enjoy eating meat thanks to our marinade.” —*Mark Cardwell*

## VANDERVEEN'S GREENHOUSES

**Location** Carman, Manitoba

**Products** Christmas poinsettias, Easter lilies, hydrangeas and bedding plants

**Availability** Manitoba, northern Ontario, Saskatchewan

The Vanderveen family has been adding beauty and colour to Christmas and Easter celebrations and backyard gardens for almost 50 years. As owners and operators of Vanderveen's Greenhouses, they supply poinsettias, lilies, hydrangeas and a variety of bedding plants to Costco warehouses across Manitoba, Saskatchewan and northern Ontario.

“My father and mother, Jack and Louwina Vanderveen, started the greenhouses in 1975,” explains Kelvin Vanderveen. “They lived in a small farming community with most people having either grain or livestock farms. They were not interested in that, but the flower industry piqued their interest and they had the land and water supply to go into this.”

With the support and encouragement of the industry, Jack and Louwina enjoyed early success and gradually expanded their business. It is now owned by Kelvin and his sons, Kenton and Jordan, and encompasses 20 acres of greenhouses that produce flowers and plants year-round.

Vanderveen's Greenhouses became a Costco regional supplier about 15 years ago. “We have had a great relationship with Costco,” Kelvin says. “The floral teams have always been easy to communicate with and very open to dialogue before, during and after shipping, and the receiving staff are very friendly and care about the products.”

“We have built a good rapport with everyone involved,” he adds.

Considering the mutual respect that Vanderveen's Greenhouses and Costco have for one another, there is no doubt that their relationship will continue to blossom. —*Sharon Chisvin* ■