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## Brooklyn foodies get promotional push

Tiny businesses are booming in the borough, but many need marketing help.

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After Chris Woehrle co-founded Kings County Jerky in 2009, he and his business partner, Robert Stout, realized they didn't have enough time to promote the product, which they make by hand from grass-fed beef in a small factory in Bushwick, Brooklyn. Their two-person business, which sells its jerky at markets such as the Smorgasburg in Brooklyn and New Amsterdam Market in lower Manhattan, generates \$250,000 in sales and is increasingly profitable.

For help, in December 2011 they turned to Dara Furlow, a Culinary Institute of America graduate who runs [With Love, From Brooklyn](#). Her business, based in Bedford-Stuyvesant, sells the beef jerky alongside other Brooklyn-made products, such as pickles and hot sauce, on its e-commerce site.

With Love, From Brooklyn now brings in about 20% of Kings County Jerky's annual sales. Ms. Furlow's company takes a wholesale-to-retail markup of about 50%. "We don't have the time or manpower to market ourselves, so it's a perfect marriage," said Mr. Woehrle.



*Buck Ennis*

Dara Furlow of With Love, From Brooklyn helps Brooklyn food makers reach new clients and is the life of the party.

### MICROBUSINESS BOOM

Thanks to the increasing presence of businesses like Mr. Woehrle's, Brooklyn is one of the fastest-growing hubs of microbusiness in the nation. In May, the U.S. Census Bureau released a report on tiny "nonemployer" businesses—typically staffed only by an owner or two—showing that Kings County added 8,455 such firms across all industries in 2011. That was the fourth-highest increase in counties across the country and brought the borough's total to 242,546. Aggregate receipts for these firms rose 7.8% over 2010, more than in any other county in the nation, to \$890 million.

Though some of these tiny businesses are picking up traction, many find it tough to promote themselves and break into the right venues to sell their products. As a result, some have turned to groups such as Fare Trade NYC, the Food Systems Network NYC and the NYC Food Artists Cooperative for marketing assistance and to exchange ideas. With Love, From Brooklyn takes the idea of business development a step beyond that, by actually selling the products for the artisans.

"I'm proud to be someone who exports Brooklyn's unique culture to not only other New Yorkers but to people from all over the world," said Ms. Furlow. She generates annual gross revenue between \$100,000 and \$150,000 from the profitable business, founded in 2011.

To expose her clients to local foodies, Ms. Furlow has started participating in local markets. Last year, she sold products from her website in a booth at the annual five-week holiday fair in Grand Central Terminal, as its only food vendor.

"Dara does everything right, from her website to the products she selects to sell to the layout of her display space," said Laura Blaustein, assistant general manager at Jones Lang LaSalle, retail managers for the fair, who spotted her online store and invited her to apply.

The holiday sale generated about 90% of her revenue for 2012, though she and friends had to hand-carry items there after Hurricane Sandy prevented suppliers' deliveries.

She has since been invited back by Grand Central to set up a kiosk in Graybar Passage as part of a rotating roster of vendors. She was there in January, February, May and June, and will go back for the holiday fair in November. Meanwhile, she is gearing up for the 2013 holiday fair—good news for the tiny food makers she represents. "Once we went face-to-face with people, we were building an enormous database of potential customers, which has turned into sales," she said.



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