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Sweet treats and happy customers at Hurt Ridge Candy

FREEZE-DRIED
SWEETS

'KITLES
WILD BERRY

NET WT 4 OZ (113g)

GET
CRUNCHY!

HURT
RIDGE
CANDY

Read more about Frank and RaeLea Hurt's journey to their handmade business on the next page.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY FRANK HURT

HURT RIDGE CANDY: The journey to handmade business

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

Atop a windswept clay hill near South Heart is the Hurt Ridge Homestead, home to a couple whose aspirations of preserving garden produce turned into a sweet business.

Frank and RaeLea Hurt, owners and sole employees of Hurt Ridge Candy, found themselves pivoting into the candy industry after their original plan of freeze-dried garden produce was crushed by grasshoppers helping themselves to their garden. When considering their next steps, a friend recommended they try freeze drying candy.

From sweet experiments to real treats

The Hurts weren't too sure about what their friend was onto, but they decided to try it and take some products to vendor shows.

"Our friends insisted on us freeze drying candy," Frank says.

The freeze-drying process changes the candy, making it crunchier and sweeter, explained the Hurts, who found success after following their friend's recommendation.

"We kept selling out and thought, 'Maybe we need to lean into this,'" Frank says.

Their venture of freeze-dried candy took trial and error. Through the trials, the Hurts tested various candies and even found different freeze-drying machines and environmental factors impacted the final product. The Hurts' main goal then, and continues to be, delivering quality products to customers across North Dakota.

"We wanted to create something you feel comfortable gifting to a friend at Christmas or bringing home for the family to enjoy," Frank says.

After experimenting with varieties, infrastructure, drying times and external factors, the Hurts have been able to develop and sell a product that makes them proud.

Over the years, their operation has grown from their home kitchen to operating from a warehouse in Dickinson. Although there has been growth, you will still find Frank and RaeLea continuing to prep, process and package products for sale.

The face of the flavor

Frank recognized early that strong branding is key to standing out. Today, Hurt Ridge Candy's vibrant yellow packaging pays homage to the eye-catching aprons they wore (and continue to wear) at their first vendor show. Adding to the brand's charm is Crunchy



Frank and RaeLea Hurt have turned a simple idea into a business with Hurt Ridge Candy.

the Squirrel, their playful mascot, which helps bring the story and personality of Hurt Ridge Candy to life.

Some of the sweet treats sold at Hurt Ridge Candy include 'Kittles, Ice Cream Sammiches, Fruit Frenzy Squirrel Bait, Candy Enchiladas with 'Kittles and more. Uniquely enough, through the relationships the Hurts have formed at vendor shows, they have partnered with other North Dakota businesses to bring their customers specialized treats. The Spicy 'Kittles and Spicy Peach Rings feature Jaydobo, a local spice blend made by Jayson Parsons from Hebron. Another collaboration features treats from Rushmore Mountain Taffy ND in Medora. This includes freeze drying one of their beloved products, but also a new customer favorite (and Frank's favorite), peanut brittle.

Continuing to experiment and add product to the lineup, Squirrel Bait has been added. Squirrel Bait is a marshmallow-based product that comes in a fruity or chocolate flavor and can be enjoyed on its own or adds the perfect crunch to a trail or snack mix, the Hurts share.

Sweet treats, happy customers

As much as the Hurts have enjoyed creating new products for their customers, they also enjoy hearing from customers.

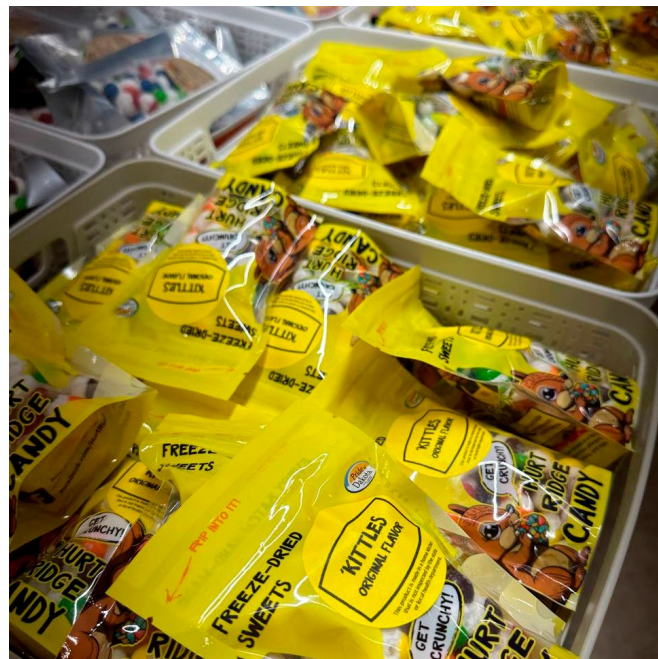
"Hearing from people who have tried and loved our candy," RaeLea responds when asked about her favorite part of the business. Frank agrees.

To further connect with customers, Hurt Ridge Candy has a candy club through which customers can enroll and receive inside access to discounts, alerts about sales and limited releases.

As Frank and RaeLea reflect on their business, they are grateful for the support of their customers and their community, whose reactions have helped drive Hurt Ridge Candy.

"We feel fortunate to live where we do and have the support that we do," Frank says.

To locate Hurt Ride Candy products, visit **HurtRidge.com**, where you can view a product location map or have products delivered to your doorstep. Hurt Ridge Candy can be found on Facebook. Hurt Ridge Candy will also be under a bright yellow canopy at the Pride of Dakota vendor show Sept. 12 and 13 in Dickinson. ■



These bright yellow packages house a familiar candy but freeze drying enhances the flavor and makes them pop like popcorn!



Freeze drying a traditional sweet treat like ice cream sandwiches gives it a sweet and crunchy texture that is allows you to have a mess-free ice cream experience!

MANAGER'S MESSAGE: **Benefits of SmartHub**



Travis Kupper

*Co-General Manager/
CEO*

Roughrider Electric Cooperative is dedicated to continuously enhancing the experience for our members. As part of this commitment, we partnered with the National Information Solutions Cooperative years ago to introduce SmartHub, an invaluable tool that has become essential for our membership.

While many of our members already benefit from SmartHub, we wanted to take a moment to remind you of its

features and how you can maximize its advantages.

SmartHub makes managing your bills easier than ever. You can view current and past statements, set up automatic payments and receive reminders for due dates, all from the convenience of your phone or computer. This is particularly useful for those who may not have regular access to their mail or for members traveling on extended vacations.

Additionally, SmartHub offers valuable insights into

your energy usage. With detailed reports, you can understand when and how you consume electricity, empowering you to make informed decisions that optimize your energy efficiency.

Updating your information or requesting assistance is simple with SmartHub. Manage your account anytime, anywhere, putting you in control of your energy needs.

The SmartHub app is available on both iOS and Android, allowing you to access your account and energy data whenever you need it. If you prefer not to use the app, you can easily login through our website.

We encourage you to explore SmartHub and discover how it can help you take charge of your energy usage. Your engagement strengthens our cooperative, and together we can work toward a more efficient and sustainable future.

As always, if you have any questions about the technology or need assistance, our member service department is here to help. ■



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MESSAGE FROM MEMBER SERVICES:

Youth opportunities



Brad Quenette

Member Services Manager

As a proud member of our community, Roughrider Electric Cooperative is committed to supporting our local schools and empowering the next generation. We believe in investing in our youth and providing them with opportunities to foster personal and academic growth.

As the school year begins, we wanted to remind you about the programs and opportunities Roughrider Electric offers to our

community to benefit students.

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

One Roughrider Electric high school sophomore or junior can win an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., and embark on the journey of a lifetime in June.

To apply, students submit an essay for a chance to represent Roughrider Electric as part of the North Dakota delegation on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Applications for the Youth Tour open soon, so watch our social media and website for more information.

North Dakota Career Tour

Seniors, juniors and sophomores are invited to take part in our newest initiative, the North Dakota Career Tour. From coal mines to wind turbines, power plants to cooperatives, dive deep into the heart of North Dakota's energy sector. Students can learn about different career paths, technological advancements and the pivotal role you could play in powering tomorrow's world. This two-day tour is scheduled for June 24-25, 2026.

High school scholarships

We offer scholarships for high school seniors who demonstrate academic excellence, leadership and community involvement. These funds are designed to support students as they further their education and pursue their career goals.

Educational resources

Our employees have a vast amount of knowledge and are available to provide students with information on how energy services are provided and how to stay safe around electricity. You may see our employees around the community at touch-a-trucks, county fairs and other events sharing about electricity and safety. We look forward to partnering at events in the future.

If you have any questions about these youth opportunities, please give us a call at 800-748-5533 and visit with Brad. We look forward to a successful 2025-26 school year! ■



MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: **LiDAR at work**



Shawn Olson

Chief of Staff/
Operations Manager

Throughout the summer, Roughrider Electric Cooperative's service area was hit with storms, which caused damage to infrastructure. During storm restoration, Roughrider Electric's operations department worked to repair outages in an efficient manner.

Roughrider Electric was able to make streamlined restoration decisions by referencing data collected and analyzed to ensure a strong grid. Roughrider Electric worked with

Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative's (IEA) engineering department to use light detection and ranging (LiDAR) technology to help make effective decisions on new and existing infrastructure.

IEA is a cooperative owned by four electric distribution cooperatives in North Dakota, including Roughrider Electric.

LiDAR technology

Each year, Roughrider Electric's power lines are patrolled overhead by helicopters, which utilize this imagery technology with help from IEA's engineering department. IEA's engineering department examines the data provided and assesses how the current structures and power lines are performing. From the reviewed data, they work on how the infrastructure can be improved to withstand future energy loads, weather conditions and foliage growth.

With the strong storms that hit Roughrider Electric's service area this summer, the operations department, along with IEA's engineers, were able to quickly reference models that have been created. These models helped the cooperative determine what infrastructure could be updated during the restoration process. The data also allows for additional efficiency during storm restoration. Once outage report data is gathered the operations department analyzes the existing infrastructure and determines what materials will be needed in the restoration process. This reduces line crews' exposure to the elements and ensures accurate materials are obtained.

Utilizing technology such as LiDAR helps Roughrider Electric make effective decisions when it matters most, further ensuring safe, reliable electric services to members. ■



SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Everyday electrical safety

Electricity plays many roles in our lives, from powering generators, cellphones and lighting to running HVAC systems and appliances. No wonder we get so comfortable with its instant availability. When we flip a switch, we expect most systems or devices to do the job. But that sense of reliability can lead to complacency, especially during the shift in seasons and the rush that comes with a new season.

"Fall is a busy time in the area," says Aaron Yantzer, journeyman lineworker. "And as the season begins to change, kids gear up for school and harvest begins, we want to remind members to take a look around your home and shop to check for potential safety hazards."

Below are a few connections to check to ensure your home and operation can continue to run smoothly.

Ground-fault circuit interrupters

What is it? A ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is designed to sense abnormal current flows, breaking the circuit to prevent potential electric shocks from devices plugged into the outlets. GFCI features are normally included in outdoor outlets or those in potentially damp locations, such as in the kitchen, bathroom or laundry room.

What can you do? Check them frequently by pressing the red test button, which will simulate a fault to ensure the GFCI is working properly. To restore power to the circuit, press the black reset button. If you notice any issues, contact a licensed electrician.

Loose or damaged outlets and switches

What should you look for? It is good to be aware of items you use every day, such as electrical outlets and wall switches. Signs of heat damage or discoloration in these items may be early warnings of potential shock or electrical fire hazards.

What can you do? Check your electrical outlets and wall switches to ensure they are properly connected. If you notice any issues, contact a licensed electrician.

Extension cords

What should you look for? If you use extension cords regularly to connect devices and equipment to your wall outlets, your home or shop may be underwired. Extension cords are designed for temporary, occasional or periodic use.

What can you do? If an extension cord gets



noticeably warm when in use, it could be undersized for the intended use. If it shows any signs of frayed, cracked or heat-damaged insulation, it should be replaced. If the grounding prong is missing, crimped or loose, a grounded cord will not provide the protection designed into its performance. Always make sure extension cords used in outdoor or potentially damp locations are rated for exterior use.

Electricity is an essential necessity for our everyday lives, and Roughrider Electric Cooperative is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable electric services to all our members. We hope you'll keep these electrical safety tips in mind so you can note any potential hazards before damage occurs. ■

Roughrider Electric board meeting highlights: June 27

The meeting of the board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative was held June 27 at the cooperative's Hazen office. The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. CT. A quorum was present. Also attending were co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief of Staff/Operations Manager Shawn Olson, Director of Key Accounts and Member Services Leonard Hibl, Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz and Board Liaison Connie Hill.

Reorganization of the board: Board reorganization took place. No changes were made to the executive seats.

Consent agenda: Amendments were proposed to the agenda. The agenda was approved as amended.

Strategic items: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on the Cooperative Finance Cooperation, Upper Missouri Power Cooperative and more. Several additional Basin Electric Power Cooperative

board documents were available for review.

Department reports: Kupper provided a financial report. Olson provided an operations report, which included an update on storm restoration and performance of the crews. Hibl provided a report, which included an annual meeting recap and community activities. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a report. Grosz provided an update on the status of projects.

Action items: The board reviewed and resolved various items, including board policies.

Discussion/general information: There were no other items brought to the board.

The meeting concluded with adjournment. Secretary Troy Sailer certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is 9 a.m. MT (10 a.m. CT) Sept. 26 in Dickinson. ■



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HAZEN OFFICE

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. CT Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box by Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Krause's Super Valu in Hazen or Bronson's Super Valu in Beulah.

DICKINSON OFFICE

701-483-5111 or 800-748-5533
P.O. Box 1038, 2156 4th Ave. E.
Dickinson, ND 58602
7 a.m. – 4 p.m. MT Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box west of Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or the west and south locations of Family Fare supermarkets.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Greg Steckler, President, Dunn Center 548-8122
Roger Kudrna, Vice President, Dickinson 483-8377
Troy Sailer, Secretary, Golden Valley 948-2427
Bruce Darcy, Treasurer, Golden Valley 983-4222
Jesse Flath, Hazen 880-0386
Darell Herman, Beulah 873-4371
Arnold Kainz, Dickinson 483-8207
Dan Price, Hensler 794-3779
Callen Schoch, New England 290-3836

MANAGEMENT

Travis Kupper Co-GM/CEO
Jason Bentz Co-GM/CEO



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