

# Salad dressing spells success



Jennifer MacDonald, BESC'94, MESC'95, proved oil does float to the top when her Omega 3 salad dressing won her a deal with the 'Dragons' on CBC-TV's *Dragons' Den* in early October 2006.

A reality-based TV show, *Dragons' Den* allows entrepreneurs to pitch product ideas to a group of five Canadian business moguls for investment. MacDonald's business pitch won out over five others on the show's premiere October 11, 2006.

That evening, MacDonald secured a \$200,000 investment from two of the Dragons – Jim Treliving, the man behind Boston Pizza, and Jennifer Wood, an influential businesswoman in Western Canada. "The deal officially closed in Edmonton in December," explains MacDonald. "Jim and Jennifer are now members of my Board of Directors. They are both very excited about working with a young, growing company."

MacDonald, a Strathroy resident, founded Cenabal, a company that makes salad dressings and oils. In the spring of 2001, one of her three sons developed serious childhood eczema. Prescription creams were effective at treating the condition, but could not prevent the painful eczema from erupting all over her baby's skin. She went searching for a natural treatment to augment what her doctor prescribed. That was when she learned about the amazing qualities of flax oil.

Flax oil not only helped to decrease the severity of the eczema, but reduced the number of breakouts. The only downside to flax oil is its strong, sometimes bitter, flavour. After many attempts to hide the powerful taste of flax oil in her son's food, MacDonald began developing recipes for sauces, dips and salad dressings which were delicious and an excellent source of omega-3 polyunsaturated essential fatty acids.

She used her Engineering background to develop a proprietary process which limits heat, light and oxygen during the production of an innovative line of omega-3 rich, certified organic, gourmet foods. By combining a true love of organic, unprocessed food with a passion for cooking and a background in Engineering, MacDonald has started a unique organic gourmet food manufacturing company, Cenabal Gourmet Organics. Cenabal products are made in Canada with primarily Canadian Ingredients.

Just one year ago, Cenabal products were available in six locations – one Strathroy location and five London locations. Today, Cenabal products can be found in 80 locations across Canada.

For MacDonald, business growth is just one advantage to appearing on the show. The other advantages include tapping into Treliving's and Wood's network of resources.

"Jim's management company has provided me with accounting and legal services," explains MacDonald. "I can now do projections at levels I could have never done before. We are also working on a three-year business plan."

As Cenabal continues to grow and new products are developed, MacDonald has no intentions of leaving the basement of her Strathroy home.

"I have always traveled for my business," say MacDonald. "But now I can pay people to do demos, so I can continue to spend time with my kids."

The \$200,000 investment MacDonald received will be put towards equipment, research & development, marketing and additional personnel.

More information about *Dragons' Den* can be found at [cbc.ca/dragonsden](http://cbc.ca/dragonsden).

[www.cenabal.com](http://www.cenabal.com)