

Couple Brings Versatile, Durable, Renewable Bamboo Kitchenware to the West



bambu® develops a portfolio of well-designed daily use items for the kitchen and table that are made from certified organic and renewable bamboo and other materials nearly all of which are USDA Certified Biobased Products.



Jeff Delkin and Rachel Speth, founders of bambu® eco-friendly homewares, wanted to prove that you could have it all. Sustainable products with direct oversight, social responsibility and a financially successful business. For nearly 20 years, their goal has remained the same.



bambu products are created from certified organic bamboo and designed to be different. The company's kitchenware and compostable dinnerware, under the Veneerware® brand, which



includes plates and cutlery, cutting boards, and cooking, eating and serving utensils, offer both an upscale design and an alternative to petroleum-based products—especially disposable



single use plastic utensils. Nearly all bambu products and their packaging are USDA Certified Biobased.

“We saw this interesting material being utilized everywhere, but not at all in the United States,” she explained. “It’s durable and functional. It’s a material that was common generations ago. We thought, ‘What if we could introduce this renewable resource in a different way in the West, with a modern aesthetic and well-designed products that will last?’”

Before launching bambu, Rachel was working overseas in Taiwan. She and Jeff noticed that across Asia, bamboo was the predominate material used to make chopsticks, baskets, furniture, clothes pins, and daily use items.

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To tap into the United States’ increasing focus on food, health and wellness, Rachel and Jeff decided the best way to engage the West was to start in the kitchen. They spent an extensive period researching bamboo, learning how it’s grown, harvested and managed, and how it can be manipulated to develop products.

“We realized bamboo is incredibly versatile. You can peel it, weave it, carve it, and bend it, and it’s long lasting. You can go into antique shops and see old baskets or back scratchers that were used long ago,” she said. In 2003, they participated in an industry trade show in San Francisco, arriving with just a booth and product samples. That event afforded them their first break and led to bambu’s first orders for utensils, cutting boards, and baskets.



bambu was also an early pioneer in getting their products USDA Certified Biobased, to distinguish them in the market and showcase the company’s commitment to using renewable materials and sustainable practices. In addition to becoming USDA Certified Biobased in 2011, the company’s bamboo source is USDA Certified Organic.





“Third party certification differentiates us. Greenwashing is a huge issue. We want to show our consumers that we’re not like other companies, or like other products. The certifications help us do that. They validate what we say about our products, and we have to continually work to maintain our certifications,” Rachel said. “The biobased certification and certifications in general give customers more transparency into our business. These become ‘trust marks’ to help customer distinguish between legitimate products and materials.”



Today, while the product line has expanded, Jeff and Rachel still hold fast to their original vision for bamboo.

“Daily use doesn’t have to mean plastic. And it shouldn’t lack good design or craftsmanship. We’re proud to offer quality daily use items crafted from natural materials that are durable, affordable, and attractive,” Rachel said.

“Being a good example to other companies is important. We’re hoping to demonstrate that you can have a business that gives

back, cares for the planet, treats people well, and can be profitable.”

Want to explore how you can get your products and packaging USDA Certified Biobased? Go to www.biopreferred.gov. Or, contact us at: help@usdabiopreferred.net.