

Location:

166 Fava Farm Road
Scenery Hill, PA 15360
emeraldvalleyartisans.com

County:

Washington

Description:

Business Expansion

Total Project Cost:

\$254,709



Emerald Valley Artisans

People:

Alisa Fava-Fasnacht was born into dairy farming, but stumbled into cheese making. On a lark, she decided to make a batch of ricotta using milk from her prize-winning dairy herd, but brought in “way too much milk” and went overboard. “So I shared it with friends,” she says. “Everybody was having a pretty big reaction to it, saying, ‘You have to keep making this stuff!’” Over the next five years, she and husband Alan Fasnacht built their business with a focus on quality and old world style craftsmanship.

Progress:

When grocery stores asked to carry their products, Alisa and Alan got advice from the University of Pittsburgh’s SBDC. She talked with banks about borrowing, but got “a gut feeling that it was going to be a stretch for them.” The Progress Fund loaned her

\$78,209 using funds from the U.S.

Department of Agriculture. After another four years, Alisa was ready to take her business to a higher level and knew she could count on The Progress Fund, which provided \$174,000 for additional equipment, inventory, marketing and a refrigerated truck.

Impact:

With funding, Emerald Valley Artisans now has the time to age its inventory to create proprietary, premium aged cheeses and deliver their products to a wider variety of distributors, retailers, restaurants, universities and wineries. Their crafted cheeses exemplify the art of cheese making and proudly carry the PA Preferred™ designation. That brings recognition to Southwestern Pennsylvania agriculture. “We want people to know,” says Alisa, “that we are Pittsburgh’s cheese.”

The Progress Fund is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

