



Megan Sargent
Bagel entrepreneur

"Fear of failure has been a big motivator, especially during the times when the only other option was bankruptcy. We had a gut feeling it would work, even though just about everyone was saying it was a bad idea. We were both really stubborn that we were going to make it happen, even if that meant for a while living off bagels and always coming home from work after dark."

When Megan Sargent and fiancé Brent Milburn started Abe's Real Bagels a decade ago four banks refused them loans. That didn't put them off but the breakup of their relationship was a real challenge. Sargent and Milburn remained committed to the business, even managing to keep the split a secret from staff in case it was destabilising. Auckland's 1998 inner-city power crisis turned into a blessing in disguise when their café's generator meant they were one of the few still open for business and the pair capitalised on it with some inventive advertising. Three years ago they closed the café to concentrate on wholesale bagel production. Now they supply supermarkets nationally with around seven million bagels a year and a new product, Abe's Real Bagel Crisps, is expected to double turnover in the year ahead.