

# Ana Delgado with Apple & Jars

**David Crabill:** Welcome to the Forrager Podcast where I talk with cottage food entrepreneurs about their strategies for running a food business from home. I'm David Crabill, and today I'm talking with Anna Delgado.

But first, I have some very exciting news to share. Next year, in the spring of 2026, I'll be speaking at [CottageFoodieCon](#), the first ever in-person nationwide cottage food conference. I have wanted to see an in-person conference for our industry for a long time. I simply haven't had the time or resources to put one on myself. And now thanks to the cottage foodie and my custom bakes who are hosting the conference, it's finally coming.

The conference will be located in one of the most active cottage food hubs in the country, and it'll have everything you'd want in a conference. Keynotes classes, vendors, panels, food, and most importantly, the opportunity to connect with cottage food entrepreneurs around the nation.

To learn more about the conference and to get email updates when registration opens.

Go to [cottagefoodiecon.com](https://cottagefoodiecon.com).

Alright, so I have Ana on the show today. She lives in Windale, New York and sells caramel apples and other treats with her cottage food, business, apples and jars. Ana has an incredible business journey that has taken many turns. She started in 2017 and although her business was very successful, she became overwhelmed and took a break from baking.

Then she restarted her business out of a commercial kitchen, But while she was building that up one day. Much of her life fell apart, unexpectedly determined not to quit.

She restarted again from home. And has now become very successful without any signs of slowing down. And with that, let's jump right into this episode.

[00:02:00] **David Crabill:** Welcome to the show, Anna. Nice to have you here.

[00:02:02] **Ana Delgado:** Thank you for having me. I'm so excited to be here.

[00:02:06] **David Crabill:** Well, Anna, you have a very interesting story. Can you take me back to how you got started with wanting to sell treats?

[00:02:15] **Ana Delgado:** So I've always, um, as a young teenager, I've always liked to cook and make treats for my family and friends and I always felt happy whenever somebody had my food or anything like that. I wanted to go to culinary school as a young child, but we couldn't afford it.

And I kind of just put it all behind me for a little while. I became a dental assistant for many years, and when I was pregnant with my second son was when I decided to put more into it. I became obsessed with hosting parties and gatherings for my family and friends where I was able to start making more treats.

I started with chocolate covered treats and cupcakes and stuff like that. And everybody just loved it and they were always taking pictures of it and posting it on social media. And my family and my friends boosted me up to start a business doing it. Everybody kept saying how great I was at everything that I did for the parties.

So that's how it started.

[00:03:15] **David Crabill:** And you said it was when you had your second child, so what year was that?

[00:03:19] **Ana Delgado:** That was 2017.

[00:03:22] **David Crabill:** So this is interesting that you wanted to go to culinary school. You wanted to pursue the food industry, but you just couldn't afford to. So did you have any other, like food service experience beforehand?

[00:03:36] **Ana Delgado:** No, I'm self-taught. My mom always cooked from scratch, so every time I had a question about it, I would ask her. And that's how I started doing everything on my own. Just looking online for stuff and going on YouTube. And that's how I learned how to do everything I know now.

[00:03:53] **David Crabill:** So your career took you into the dental world, and how long did you work in the dental field?

[00:03:59] **Ana Delgado:** I was working in the dental field for about 18 years. I was really young when I started working there. and then I stopped once I had my second child.

[00:04:10] **David Crabill:** Did you quit your job in 2017 because you had your second child and wanted to spend more time with them or. Was it because you were trying to get this business off the ground?

[00:04:21] **Ana Delgado:** So I was not happy working in the dental field. I've been working there for many years and I just, I wasn't happy with the decision that I made in my life. I used to always cook and bring it to work, and my coworkers always loved what I did as well. And when I was on maternity leave was when I just started really thinking about it.

Once I saw my family and friends. Loved everything that I did, and then they started sharing pictures on their social media. I started getting people calling me and asking me if I can make them treats. So while I was on maternity leave, I said, you know what, this would be pretty cool if this business was to kick off.

And then I get to stay home with my son because I also have an older son, but it's a 17 year age gap. So when I had my second child, my first son was already graduating, once he graduated, he moved to Maryland. So it was just me, my fiancé, and my second son. And once I saw that I can make this into a business, people were actually buying my treats and ordering for parties, that's when I decided I'm not gonna go back to work.

I'm gonna stay and do this and be at home with my baby.

[00:05:31] **David Crabill:** So how did it go? What was the first year like when you started trying to sell your treats?

[00:05:38] **Ana Delgado:** So once I decided to make it a business, it actually was called Simply Delish, NYC. I opened up Instagram and I started posting all my pictures there and so many people started ordering. I had to do research instead of doing the research, like, how can I make this business legit?

It was really hard. I had nobody to talk to about it and I couldn't ask anybody questions, nobody was a business owner that I knew everybody, you know, like always just worked the nine to five. And, I took every order that I could get. And in the beginning it was really fun for me, but then I became overwhelmed because I started getting so many orders and I would never say no to them.

And people would ask me for like five different colored treats, and I would say yes, and I was just overworking myself and it became really, really hard for me to do at one point and then to take care of my baby. When I went to register my business name, they told me that I couldn't use Simply Delish NYC.

So I had a roadblock there. I didn't know what I was gonna do with that. But after about the first year, it became like a lot for me. So I hit this place where I didn't know if I

wanted to continue to do it, and I was thinking, you know what? This is just not meant for me.

I'm just gonna go back to work. So I actually. Stopped doing it for a little bit and then went back to work. But just for a short time after I went back to the dental field for like, maybe like six months after that. because, you know, I couldn't register my name, I had to think of another name. I didn't know what to do.

And then when I went back to the dentist that was when COVID hit. So when COVID hit everybody had to go home. Nobody couldn't work anymore. And then I thought about it again. I said, you know what? This is crazy. You know, I should really think about this and really decide what I really wanna do with myself.

Because now everybody's stuck at home. But my mother actually bought me and my fiance two apples from Mrs. Prindables. And when she brought me the apple, I never had one before. I never even saw a caramel apple. That way, dipped in chocolate, we had all these toppings. So when I ate it, I had an instant obsession.

I tasted the apple, I loved it so much, I ate my fiance's apple. And that was when it hit me. I'm like, you know what? I have to figure this out. Like I wonder if I can make these apples. Like during Covid, I started putting all my focus on learning how to make caramel apples.

And I had so much fun doing it. I said, you know what, I'm gonna change my name and I'm just gonna do caramel apples and dessert jars. Because while I was simply delish all the chocolate covered treats and the cupcakes, it became so much for me that it took all the fun out of what I was doing. So when I started learning how to make apples, I enjoyed it so much that I just said, I'm just gonna focus on this.

So. When I went to think of a name, my fiance actually said, well, what about Apples and Jars? And my family thought it was genius. Apples and Jars. That's genius. So I went to see if I could register that name and it was available. So that was how I started with the whole Apples and Jars business.

[00:08:45] **David Crabill:** Yeah, so that's interesting. So you essentially started this business twice. You started in 2017, and it sounds like you worked on it for a couple years before you went back to the dental field, then COVID hit and then eventually decided to quit the dental field again, it sounds like.

[00:09:00] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah. When everything started to reopen, they called me back to go into the office. But that's when I said no, In my new business, I was super excited

for it. I was happy doing the apples and the cake jar and everything, and I said no, that I wasn't going back. And that was when I really quit the dental field.

[00:09:17] **David Crabill:** So with the first attempt of the business in 2017 through I'd say 2019, what were you selling? You mentioned chocolate covered treats. What else were you selling with your business?

[00:09:29] **Ana Delgado:** Yes, I was selling cupcakes. cupcake cakes, you know, like whatever letters they wanted. I would do the cupcakes with whatever color buttercream they wanted. I did chocolate covered strawberries, chocolate covered pretzels, chocolate covered Oreos, like all the dessert table type treats.

[00:09:47] **David Crabill:** Yeah, and I have to just say, even going way back to the beginning of your social media account. Like, your products are so nicely designed.

I mean, they're impeccable, they're perfect. So I could definitely understand why your family and friends started to rave about them and say, you gotta sell these because you have this really good eye for design and Do you have any kind of artistic background?

[00:10:12] **Ana Delgado:** No, I really don't even know how I was able to do what I did. It is kind of like you just gave me a whole bunch of chocolate and treats and I just, like, everything just came so natural to me. If you go, I actually still have my old page up, Simply Delish NYC on Instagram. That's where you can see all the colors that I did.

I kind of like left that page open. So when people ask me what I used to do, I have that page there. 'cause I'm actually gonna start using it for my new journey that I'm starting now. So if you look at that page, you can see like all the treats that I did before.

[00:10:48] **David Crabill:** What if you hadn't discovered this caramel apple thing that's your primary focus now, but you know, you said you became obsessed with it during COVID and I'm just wondering like I. What if you hadn't become obsessed with something else? Right. Do you think that the break with COVID would've still got you rethinking going back to running a bakery again?

[00:11:10] **Ana Delgado:** Eventually, yes, I think so because I had my third baby during COVID and I'm sure I would've, wanted to be home with them and I would've eventually, you know, given up then too. I wanted a different life, but my oldest son, I couldn't spend much time with him 'because I was just always working.

So when I, as I got older and I had my two youngest kids, I felt like it was just so meant to be, I said, I have this talent, you know, that I can stay at home with my kids, spend time with them, make these treats and still have a business. You know, I don't have to do the nine to five anymore. Once I saw that it was actually working, I was scared to

take the leap, but I said, you know what, I have to take this leap because I just felt like it was just meant to be like everything was just coming into place for me at that time.

[00:11:58] **David Crabill:** So this is into COVID. When did you actually get the business off the ground?

[00:12:04] **Ana Delgado:** So, I was able to register the business and do everything in December 2021. That was when Apples and Jars was registered and I applied for the food establishment permit and I started working in a commercial kitchen in downtown Manhattan. And like January, February, everything started from there.

I started working in the kitchen. It was such an amazing feeling, you know, I felt so important to be in the kitchen working with other food entrepreneurs like me. It was very short-lived because six months after I registered my business we became homeless . Life took a turn and we ended up having to leave the Bronx where we were living, and we moved in with a friend. Up here in Windale, New York. I basically lost everything. So after I did all of that, I had to let everything go because where I'm living now, the commercial kitchens were so far away, it was like an hour drive.

And, um, we only had one car, so I couldn't do that anymore. So I had to let go of the food establishment permit, let go of the kitchen, and I had to figure out what was next for me.

[00:13:16] **David Crabill:** Wow. Did you just consider giving up on your food business dream at that point?

[00:13:24] **Ana Delgado:** I did and I didn't, when that happened, I felt like our life was crashing down You know, I had a good friend that opened her doors to not only me, but to me and my family and my fiance, and my two little kids. And my business was the only thing that I felt like I had a hold of. And I felt like I worked so hard to get why I, finally, you know, came and then for it to just be taken away.

I didn't wanna give up because I worked so hard for it. And I just felt like, you know what, maybe this is just, God's way of bringing me to something better. You know, maybe the city wasn't for me. Maybe I can create a new life here.

You know, I didn't know, I didn't wanna be negative about it. I was crying every day. I couldn't show my kids that though, so I had to just keep moving and I had to just figure it out one night. I'm just going through social media and I ran into this woman talking about her home bakery business, and her name is Chef Amanda Schonberg.

I had never seen her before on social media. Never heard of her. And just listening to her talk, I was like, oh my God. I felt like such a connection. with her, I usually watch

other people talking and other influencers about their home bakery business, but I never felt a real connection with them.

I kind of like to get lost easily. But listening to her, I feel like once I met her, it changed my life. So, yes, I was homeless, but I started to rebrand. I started to rethink like, okay, what am I gonna do now? So I started looking up home bakery businesses like, what can I do next?

What is the next permit I should do? And I joined her entrepreneur community and three months later we were able to find a home of our own. And, um, I was able to apply for a home processor's permit. So I started from scratch again.

[00:15:16] **David Crabill:** I just wanted to pause for a quick moment to talk more about Amanda Schoenberg's entrepreneur community. I can't think of a better business coach than Amanda, and as you're hearing from Ana, her guidance can help you take your business to the next level.

I've reviewed her community portal, and I must say it is the real deal. It's community plus content plus coaching, and in my opinion, it's worth far more than what she's charging. To learn more about Amanda's community, go to [forrager.com/Amanda](https://forrager.com/Amanda). Now back to the episode.

Yeah, I love Chef Amanda. She was on episode 80 I've considered to be one of the best episodes of the podcast. Now I'm just curious, you know, you decided to.

Restart your business during the pandemic and you decide to use a commercial kitchen. So why didn't you decide to start it from home the second time?

[00:16:14] **Ana Delgado:** I wanted to be able to sell everything, and I know that with a home permit, you can't do chocolate and. When I started it was chocolate covered treats. I was making, um, my cupcakes from scratch, my buttercream from scratch. And I knew with the commercial kitchen permit, I would be able to keep everything that I was doing.

[00:16:35] **David Crabill:** So what's changed now with the home processor permit?

[00:16:41] **Ana Delgado:** So once I looked up, you know, their rules on what I can make, I had to really start from scratch. I had to delete my entire menu that I was offering to everybody, and I had to figure out what I could put together now that doesn't have chocolate? Because everything that I made had chocolate and all the cakes that I made had buttercream from scratch.



So I had to figure out what I was gonna do, but I had to make it happen because I was gonna move forward with the home processor and I was just gonna try to build a life up here. My business and just make it work. So I started thinking about what kind of caramel apples can I make that does not have chocolate?

And I came up with all these toppings for my apples and I didn't know if it was gonna work or not, but I did one market and I said, I'm gonna come out here and I'm gonna just show these apples. And to me, in the beginning when I first started, I felt like it wasn't exciting because the apples with chocolate, caramel apples dipped in chocolate with toppings were so exciting.

And they were like eye popping and everybody loved to see them. So now that I couldn't have the chocolate anymore, I didn't know how it was gonna work. But with all the different toppings that I created and I put together for my apples, the public loved them. They couldn't believe it. And when I started looking up caramel apple places around me, they all had chocolate.

Not one place around me sells caramel apples like me. So. I actually was proud of myself. I was like, oh my God, look, I actually have something that I stand out, besides, you know, just chocolate covered apples like everybody else has. So it kind of made me happy. And then um, I switched for the cakes.

Since I couldn't use buttercream, I started a line of brownie jars and homemade granola jars. I basically just had to work with what I had. So, you know, with the home processor, they have specific rules and I just made it happen with those rules.

[00:18:34] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I mean, New York is very unique in that they don't allow chocolate and I still honestly don't get it. and I understand your desire to continue doing the chocolate because I have seen older images of those and they look phenomenal. And you said that others in your area sell chocolate caramel apples, but they probably don't look quite like yours. Yeah, yeah. They look really incredible. So, obviously you thought that that was a way that you could succeed, but. as it turned out, even what you do with the toppings and just the caramel has worked out far better than you expected. And I also was gonna say you were mentioning the other things that you've sold, granola and brownie jars, and I was just kind of blown away when scrolling through your social media account, all of the different things you've tried.

And I actually counted 'em up and you've, you've had at least 17 different. Types of products in your business. And when I say 17, that might not sound like a lot, you've really marketed each one, you know, created packaging for each one. So they're really 17 completely different products that you have created.



And I think it's just so telling of you as an individual, because a lot of people, they just wanna sell one thing and if it doesn't work out, then they might give up. What do you think has caused you to keep pushing forward and keep trying new things and adapting to keep this business alive?

[00:20:10] **Ana Delgado:** what keeps me going is my children, you know, my oldest son, he tells me all the time that he admires my strength and how I keep pushing, and that's how he keeps pushing I feel like I can't give up because, and if I give up, he is going to give up. And my little ones, they get so excited when they see me making the treats.

They are so excited to tell their friends that their mommy makes these treats. They ask me for all different types of stuff. Like my 7-year-old asked me for a giant gummy bear. He said, I know you can make this, can you make this for my birthday? It makes me happy and it kind of reminds me why I can't give up because they need to see that no matter how hard life gets you just find a way and you will make it happen as long as you keep pushing forward.

[00:20:56] **David Crabill:** Since you moved into your new home and started this as a home processor. Do you feel like there have been times where you really seriously considered quitting?

[00:21:08] **Ana Delgado:** Yes I have. Trying to find my customers once I moved up here was very difficult. I would reach out to events and markets you know, all these new people didn't know who I was. And I would just make all these treats every week and go out there no matter what the weather is, rain, snow, I did winter markets and a lot of times when I first started, since the people didn't know me, they wouldn't buy from me and I would work so hard just.

Struggling and staying up late at night, no sleep, trying to get everything done. Another thing about me is that I like to make everything fresh and I drive myself crazy. Like the last three days before the event. I'm like in the kitchen at all types of hours, just making the apples, making the caramel so everything could be fresh for the customer.

And then when I leave these events and don't do anything, I almost give up. And I kept saying, you know what, when my daughter starts school, she's my youngest. I'm done. I'm leaving. I'm not gonna do this anymore and I'm just gonna go back to work. But I'm at a point right now where that was a lesson for me.

I just had to find my customer. That's like the biggest struggle is finding who your customer is. And now I kind of like went through all of that with the events and

everything, so I'm better now. Like I'm not at a point where I want to give up anymore. I'm actually starting a new journey.

[00:22:37] **David Crabill:** What do you feel like allowing you to find your customer? Was it just going to enough events where you developed a customer base or was there something that was a turning point?

[00:22:47] **Ana Delgado:** Well, I just, what I did, like how I started I started being in farmer's markets, right? I went to three different farmer's markets, three different towns thinking that my customers were gonna be there and I was gonna gain, you know, people were gonna call me back and everything.

And going through the farmer's market, I realized that that's not where I should be, even though I've had days where I sold out. people that go to the farmer's markets, they want big, pastries and. Vegetables and fruits. So I decided to leave there and I started doing food festivals and you know, like big events and stuff like that.

And that's where I found my customers. My customers are at the food festival. People that pay for tickets, you know, to go into these events. They want all different types of treats and they don't mind, you know, buying what you have. And that's basically how I found my customers in events. But now I'm at a point where I don't have to do events, but I have customers reaching out to me, placing their orders for their parties and their get-togethers and just ordering because they want a caramel apple.

[00:23:52] **David Crabill:** Yeah, you know, I actually faced the same thing. I sell fudge with my business and I tried to do the farmer's market thing and it just didn't work. I think people that go to farmer's markets are generally speaking, a little bit more health conscious,

[00:24:05] **Ana Delgado:** Yes, yes.

[00:24:06] **David Crabill:** So, you know, pop ups, especially for me, fudge, holiday pop ups have, turned out to work the best.

So I definitely understand. So I know you sell caramel apples, that's a big thing. What else do you currently sell with your business?

[00:24:22] **Ana Delgado:** So I sell, um, the caramel apples. I sell hard candy apples because when I started offering caramel apples, people kept on asking me, what about the candy apples? You do hard candy apples. So I started that too. After a lot of burns, I finally perfected the candy apple. I also do that. I do, brownie jars. Granola jars and caramel pretzels. So the caramel pretzels, I used to make them before, but with chocolate and caramel. And then once I got the home process and I had to switch, I just

started using the same toppings that I put on the apples on the pretzels, and those pretzels became a hit.

I have people that come and they'll buy everything I have on my tray.

[00:25:06] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I thought the pretzels were a brilliant idea. 'cause you know, it's the same thing. You know, you just, you're, You're a dip. It is the same and makes it in the same toppings, but just with a different base. Have you thought about doing other bases too, like marshmallows with all your different flavors or something like that?

[00:25:26] **Ana Delgado:** I was thinking about it like what else I can do, but I decided that I'm just gonna keep the line, like my menu the way it is now, so I won't have like overkill and I don't get overwhelmed like I did when I was doing the Simply Delish. But I decided that my next step in my business is going to be selling my recipes.

So now that I perfected my caramel apple and my brownies and my granola and my pretzels, I decided that I'm gonna start selling my recipes. I, since I was already a part of the entrepreneur community, I'm now a member of the digital product community. So that's my new journey now, is basically selling my recipes.

[00:26:07] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I saw that. 'cause you have a few recipes posted. A couple cake recipes. A couple cookie recipes, but I was thinking you know people really wanna know how you make those caramel apples.

[00:26:18] **Ana Delgado:** I know. Well, when I started the digital product community, I kept saying, I am not gonna sell my caramel recipe. I'm only gonna sell the cakes that I used to make since I had to, you know, switch over to the home processor. I couldn't make my buttercream, but I felt like, well, I can at least sell the recipes.

And Chef Schonberg said the same thing. She is like, you know what, girl? Everybody wants those caramel apples and now, like, everybody sells cake recipes. So it took me a while to decide, you know, if I wanted to do it or not. 'cause I was afraid. I kept saying, well then, if I sell the recipe then nobody's gonna buy from me.

I learned now that that's not true and it is just a different stream of income. It grows my business and I decided to do it. So, over the summer, I am going to start creating that class on how to make my caramel apples, so that way I can put it out there right before the fall.

[00:27:14] **David Crabill:** Yeah, there's definitely a market there. There's definitely an opportunity there to sell because it's really hard to make a really good caramel or candy apple, and it looks like your candy apples have edible glitter in them.

Like they're, they're sparkling.

[00:27:29] **Ana Delgado:** Oh yeah, that's the color. Yeah.

[00:27:33] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I mean, is Everything you do looks fantastic.

[00:27:36] **Ana Delgado:** Oh, thank you. Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

[00:27:39] **David Crabill:** And we have talked about the apples because. You have so many different flavors of Apple and really creative ones too. And I, I went through and I found over 20 different flavors that you've done. Probably done even far more than that. Can you just talk a little bit about, you know, some of the flavors that are the most popular.

[00:28:01] **Ana Delgado:** So my apples, I came up with all these different types of flavors. I just started thinking about the chocolate apples and then just taking the chocolate out because when I was making the caramel apples with my chocolate, I was putting some of the flavors together. So I figured, you know what?

I'm gonna try it without the chocolate. Like my iconic Oreo is the caramel apple rolled in, crushed Oreos. That's my most popular apple, which is crazy. cause it's just Oreos on the caramel, but people love that one. My next one is Nana's apple pie, where I dipped the apple in caramel. And then I made an apple pie crumble.

I put it together with like graham crackers and all that stuff, and I had to make that apple all year round. That was only a holiday apple that I had for Thanksgiving and Christmas, but people kept asking for it, so I had to make it like an all year flavor. so Nana is my mother and my kids call her nana.

That's why I, and she will always make apple pie, so that's why I called it Nana's apple pie. Another short story is Chef Schonberg is the one that told us, you wanna name all of your products, so, you know, it could be different from everybody else's. You don't wanna just have like Oreo, caramel apples.

So since I came from the city, I decided to name everything that I have, like after the city. You know, What the city meant to me. So I felt like New York City is iconic. So I named my Oreo, Apple Iconic Oreo. I also have a popular one that is toffee and chopped walnuts, and that one is called Bronx Butter Crunch.

That's my top selling nut apple. I have coconut almond, which is called Isai Almond. That's also a popular one. And then I have my, the classic is my nutty elegance, which is just chopped peanuts. I have so many flavors. I have butter pecan, I have chopped cashews on one. My confetti caramel apple is called Broadway Sprinkle.

That's a popular one. The kids that Apple actually attracts the kids to my table when they see that one.

[00:30:03] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I, I saw those creative names. It was a really fun touch and cool to hear that there was Amanda that inspired you to do that. I was curious though, did you sell your caramel apples for a while without having those creative names and then switched over and noticed any kind of a difference?

[00:30:22] **Ana Delgado:** I did, I did. So in the beginning I didn't know what to name them, so I, she kept saying it too. She would always say, you know, in the membership, in the classes, name your products, name your product. And in the beginning, I didn't, but once I did, I immediately felt different. Like customers would come, oh, can I have an iconic Oreo?

Once they started asking for them by names, it was funny to me, but I was like, so excited to hear somebody ask for an Apple with a name. I said, And then I had customers come to me, oh, Bronx Butter, you're from the Bronx. And then it would spark conversation when they realized that. I was from the city and like they kind of knew already based on the names that I would, I'm not like from here, but I'm from the city .

But it's pretty cool 'cause a lot of the customers, they, that's how they start conversation. And I've had so many people tell me how they love all the names of my apples.

[00:31:13] **David Crabill:** And you had mentioned that the apple pie was something you had. To move to an all year round thing. I did wanna ask you about that because, you know, think caramel apples, you think holidays, right? Like you think of the fall. And it sounds like these have sold well, all year long. Like was that ever an issue?

[00:31:32] **Ana Delgado:** When I first started, like in the farmer's markets, it was, but once I started doing food festivals. No, it was never issued. The customers were actually so excited, like when they would see me, oh my god, caramel apples. I haven't had caramel apples for years now since I was a little kid. And so many people come to me and they tell me it's so hard to find a good caramel apple at this time of year.

It's so hard, you know, to even find somebody who makes candy apples. It's actually pretty amazing because even though it's like summer, you see me out in the food festivals or my refrigerator. I have a countertop refrigerator where I put all the apples so when people walk by, they see it and it's visually appealing to them.

So it brings them to the table and they're like excited that I even have that at that time of year. So I have, you know, a good thing I've been doing pretty well even during the summer.

[00:32:20] **David Crabill:** Do you find that certain products do better in certain seasons of the year?

[00:32:25] **Ana Delgado:** Well, I sell way more caramel apples during the fall and the winter. But um, no, I've been doing pretty good lately, even in the summer.

[00:32:36] **David Crabill:** Yeah, when I think of caramel apples or candy apples, the only time I see them outside of the holidays is usually at a fair or maybe an amusement park. Have you ever sold at a fair?

[00:32:48] **Ana Delgado:** no, because we have the Dutchess County Fair over here, and everybody keeps telling me that I should do it. I'm just afraid because it's like a week long. It is like, how many apples do I have to make to be in this fair? I'm, I'm afraid of not having enough, or I'm gonna just kill myself and to make it like a thousand apples to be in fair.

I haven't gained the courage to be in a fair yet.

[00:33:13] **David Crabill:** Yeah, it is quite hard to do a huge event from your home, you know, at that point you might need to run outta a commercial kitchen or something to make it work. But now I can see that your presentation is immaculate. You know, you're a perfectionist. You, You make everything perfect.

And is important to you to make sure that the apple itself is good. Where do you get your apples from?

[00:33:35] **Ana Delgado:** I have a friend, we have a family friend that owns a big market and I get my apples from him 'because he knows how, you know, I am about the apples. I can't even have a dent on them. So I just get my apples from him and he checks 'em all out. And that's where I get them from.

Everybody laughs at me, but I can't, it's like if it has a dent or a little bruise, not gonna use that because I don't want nobody ever cutting into my apple and seeing a dark spot or anything. I'm so used to people always complimenting my apples and how fresh they are and crunchy, you know, I have a reputation, so I get my apples through him.

And, um, I have a lot of people that own farms. They also come to me and tell me that I can, you know, buy my apples from them too. But I've noticed that a lot of people don't really care, like how to handle the apples. Like even in the beginning, I would have to buy them from the supermarket and I would literally be there going through each and every apple.

And I would put four of them in a bag by themselves. So when I would go to the register, I would have all these individual bags and I would ask the cashier like, can you please you know, like when she scanned them just to be so gentle because anything, even like throwing the apples to the bottom or letting them hit the bag in the bottom, it would dent them. So I know that it would stress me out a lot, but my customers appreciate it.

[00:34:55] **David Crabill:** And obviously your caramel sauce is a big part of the apple. What do you think makes your caramel special?

[00:35:04] **Ana Delgado:** I use quality ingredients in my caramel. My vanilla is top notch and I feel like that's what makes it so good. I've tried different caramels. It took me a long time, lots of trying, never trying to figure out the right caramel sauce and I would just let my family taste it and tell me what they thought until I got it packed.

So now the people that never tried it, I'll give them a piece of the caramel by itself they will always tell me, oh my goodness, this is the best caramel I've ever had. So once they tasted the apple, I never got one bad complaint, knock on wood from my caramel sauce.

Everybody always says how delicious my caramel is and how my apples are like apples they've never had before. That's why I was hesitant to sell my recipe.

[00:35:54] **David Crabill:** It's a good opportunity, honestly. And, it is not gonna reduce your business. I mean, most of your customers are not gonna go out and make it themselves, right?

Because they're, they're gonna want someone to do it for them, you know?

[00:36:05] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah. I was more worried about like other vendors, you know, that see me, because when I go to a lot of markets, you know, the vendors, they come to you and they, they tell me like, oh, you know, your apples, you do so amazing in your apples and you always selling out. And most of them will give me compliments.

But then, you know, you have those other business owners that will say, oh, well, she's always selling out. I think about those people and I'm like, they're gonna get my recipe and then they're gonna come to an event with my apples. That's like my worst fear.

[00:36:36] **David Crabill:** Yeah, it is always a concern. Makes people really nervous, but I think it's just, you know, even though you have an amazing product and that's a big part of your business, you yourself are also a big part of your business and you know, people I'm sure will come back to you. You know, And especially if the exact same product was popping up at an event from another vendor, that could honestly be used to help market your own business, right?



Say like, look, they, you know, are using my recipe to try to sell my own product. And people like, fight for you. So you never know. I feel like it's probably not gonna happen. Like the likelihood of that happening is extremely low. But even if it did it might have some unforeseen, like positive consequences.

You never know. But most importantly, I just think, you know, the potential of selling the recipe and, you know, helping other people across the nation, the potential of that digital product business is like so great that, to be worried about your local competition. I just think it's worth the risk.

It's worth trying.

[00:37:40] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah, I'm gonna do it. I created a free guide in my store just to kind of get my name out there. I haven't put it out on my social media yet, like I have the link there, but I haven't put it out yet. So my audience really, they don't know yet about my digital products. It's kind of just like hiding in there.

So I still have to put it out there and maybe make it like an introduction post for my digital products because nobody really knows that I even have that yet.

[00:38:10] **David Crabill:** Yeah. Well, I know this is all part of what Chef Amanda teaches, right? She's got this new digital product course, and so you're creating this free guide, which is, uh. known as a lead magnet, to help attract people to uh, come into your world.

And I know you haven't put it out there on social media yet, but you're on a podcast now. You can, You can put it out there. So, can you tell everyone what your um, new guide is and how they can get it?

[00:38:35] **Ana Delgado:** So I made a guide about my top tools that I use in my business and like why I love them, why I use them, and I also put links in it to make it easier for other bakers and treat makers to purchase it if they wanted to. And I put a few tips in there and yeah, it's. You can get it at my Stan store.

I think my name is Create with Anna, so it's stanstore/createwithana. Or if they go to my Instagram on Apples and Jars, the link is right on my bio.

[00:39:08] **David Crabill:** Yeah. And we'll put a link to that in the show notes for sure. I just wanted to pause for a quick moment to talk more about Amanda Schoenberg's new starter course for digital products. It is super affordable and her course will help you make extra money by adding digital products to your business. Just like Ana has done, let this be the year that you start to earn extra income and have success. The digital

way. To learn more about Amanda's starter course, go to [forrager.com/digital](http://forrager.com/digital). Now, back to the episode.

So obviously you have a very premium product with these caramel apples. Let's talk about pricing. What is your pricing looking like and how has it changed?

[00:39:57] **Ana Delgado:** So my price right now, I sell my caramel apples with no nuts for \$11, and then I sell the apples with nuts for \$12.

[00:40:08] **David Crabill:** And is that comparable to what others are selling their products for?

[00:40:15] **Ana Delgado:** Other caramel apples. So I don't really have that many around here. I know there's like another girl that sells a whole bunch of other treats, but when she brings apples out on the hall, she charges \$10. The store is a little bit um, like a few towns over, they charge \$10 too. So I'm, I guess, a little bit more, I thought about lowering it.

I'm like, well, maybe I should be \$10 too. But I'm like, everything is going up and I don't, like, I don't use store brand butter, you know, and I pay a lot for my vanilla. So I just kept it. I said, you know, I'm gonna keep it like this. I'm not gonna change it. And people buy it. So if I go to events and people are paying \$11 and \$12, I just leave it like that.

[00:40:56] **David Crabill:** Yeah. You said you often sell out. Have you considered increasing the price?

[00:41:01] **Ana Delgado:** I considered it, but I'm afraid that, 'cause I have people now, they'll say, oh my god, \$12 for an apple. And you know, some of the people walk away. But, then you have those people that don't care 'cause they had it already and they buy apples by the fours and fives. And, you know, I've sold out so many markets and I even had \$1,000 a day.

I don't know if you ever heard of Chef Amanda Schonberg. She has like \$1,000 days where you sell a thousand in sales. And I've had that. So I don't know. I want to raise them, but I'm just kind of afraid of what my customers are gonna say. Like, oh my God, you raising it? Like if I raise it.

[00:41:43] **David Crabill:** And so where did you start? I mean, you're at \$11 and \$12 now. Was that where you were priced when you started the business?

[00:41:53] **Ana Delgado:** No, I was doing like \$9 and \$10. If I had chocolate I would put \$10 and then the rest of them was \$9.

[00:42:02] **David Crabill:** Well, so it doesn't sound like you started out super cheap. That's oftentimes a mistake that people make, which they just way under price themselves. But of course you had already run a whole other business before starting this one, so, um.

[00:42:15] **Ana Delgado:** Yes, yes, yes. So I kind of had an idea already, like you know how to start because when I started with the chocolate covered treats, everything was so cheap. To me, it wasn't like I would do all these different colors, you know, oh, I want pink, blue, yellow, and purple. And I would be there doing all these different colors.

And with me, I do everything. Like I don't, I wasn't buying chocolate milks. I was really buying like white chocolate and then coloring the chocolate to match whatever theme they wanted, and then the fondants and all that stuff. So once I started with the apples and I saw how much I was putting into it, I didn't wanna downplay everything that was putting into it in my prices.

[00:43:01] **David Crabill:** So, I know you've done a lot of popups. You're still doing a lot of popups. Do you offer samples at the events? I

[00:43:09] **Ana Delgado:** No, I do not. I did, but then I saw that people were just coming for the samples, like this was before. And then once I got the home processor, I didn't. I can do it. So like once I got that, I know that um, I read that they don't even give you a warning with the home processor. It's like the first time they see that you mess up, like you're out.

So I didn't give any samples after that.

[00:43:35] **David Crabill:** Yeah, it could be, sometimes samples aren't allowed. I can't remember about New York specifically. And of course a caramel apple is a harder thing to sample, you know, just with,

[00:43:44] **Ana Delgado:** Oh yeah. No, No, I wouldn't, I wouldn't sample the apple. I would sample the caramel.

[00:43:50] **David Crabill:** That's what I was thinking. The caramel would be easy to sample. So what would you say is like the most successful event that you've done?

[00:44:00] **Ana Delgado:** The most successful event that I've done was the Wing Fest in Poughkeepsie, New York. I sold out before the event was even over. And I couldn't leave, so I had to sit there. Me and my fiancé, we just had to sit there with an empty table and just give out my business cards. Right. Everybody that came to the table that wanted to know what I even had on my table.

[00:44:22] **David Crabill:** And it's a great problem to have.

[00:44:24] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah. Yeah. It was, It was, I, in the beginning I was like, oh my goodness, maybe I should have made more stuff, even though I was up for two days making everything. But then I'm like, you know what? At least they see that I have a good product and when they see me again at the next event, which ended up working like that, some people that went to the Ring Fest saw me in another festival after, and they were like, I'm getting my apple now.

I'm not waiting. You know, So it was a good thing.

[00:44:48] **David Crabill:** And you said, you know, you've done a lot of popups that kind of got your name out there, but now you've done a lot more custom orders, right?

[00:44:57] **Ana Delgado:** Yes. So I'm doing a lot more custom orders now and I wanna go for corporate, so I wanna move out of the events and do more custom and corporate orders on top of the digital products. Of course.

[00:45:12] **David Crabill:** Are you trying to just focus on apples for corporate events or do you want it to be more like an array of desserts?

[00:45:23] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah. So I was, because I also do cupcakes for like custom orders, so if somebody wants cupcakes, I still offer the cupcakes because I have a lot of people, you know, that like the fondant designs and everything still. So. I feel like, in the corporate world, I would probably sell more cupcakes or maybe like my pretzels or something like that.

Even though I wanna put my apples out there, I would rather them buy the apples. But I don't know. I just gotta see how it goes.

[00:45:52] **David Crabill:** Yeah, the cupcakes, I mean, we, we should touch on that because you, you mentioned the fondant. You have these fondant toppers that are amazingly well designed and honest. That could be its own business. You know, like I could see somebody just having a cottage food business focused on that because they really do look incredible.

You do a great job with the design, and I imagine you're, you're hand making them, correct?

[00:46:19] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah. I sit here with a whole bunch, oh, my little tools and shapers and.

[00:46:25] **David Crabill:** You clearly have a great eye for design and um, only challenges with that business would just be like, sometimes it could be so labor intensive that the numbers don't work out financially.

[00:46:37] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah. That's what ended up happening. So when I was doing a lot of the Fond in cupcakes, when I was still with Simply Delish, you'll see like a lot more on that page. And it was just a lot of work. Especially my Alice and Wonderland. I had to do that, which was pretty difficult. I mean, they're pretty to look at, so every time somebody would ask, I'll say, yeah, I'll do it.

So I can have pictures. And then when I'm doing it, I'm just like, oh.

[00:47:05] **David Crabill:** And it looked like you just recently started wholesale.

[00:47:09] **Ana Delgado:** Yes, because a lot of people I will meet at events will ask me if I do wholesale and then in one of my markets a customer actually gave a store in Millbrook, New York, their store, Marone's market, my number, and she introduced us and she was like, oh, I have to have your apples in here.

So, And then a lot of the customers were saying that I was only in that market once a month, and they didn't wanna wait once a month for an apple. They wanted the apples, like where they were living or at all times. So I started wholesaling with her and it is amazing to actually hear people say, oh, I got your apples at Mar's market, it was pretty cool.

[00:47:47] **David Crabill:** How long have you been wholesaling now?

[00:47:50] **Ana Delgado:** I just started in the fall.

[00:47:52] **David Crabill:** Yeah, so over half a year. And how do you feel like it's been working?

[00:47:58] **Ana Delgado:** So it's only during the fall. So I was constantly filling up the fridge the whole season. I'm not doing it now until fall again. So it's just like a fall thing.

[00:48:10] **David Crabill:** Okay. That makes sense. Are you wanting to do more wholesale accounts?

[00:48:16] **Ana Delgado:** don't know. Not really. I just feel like I am still doing the same work and everything and then I have to discount the price for you, to go and raise the price. It's kind of like, not really working for me.

[00:48:31] **David Crabill:** Well, that, yeah, that's the thing is wholesale is great for just, you know, you make the product, you don't have to market it, but it sounds like there is enough demand for your products from people that, that love them and want to buy them, that you don't necessarily need the wholesale in order to get customers.

[00:48:49] **Ana Delgado:** Right. Yeah. I mean, I took that, but it was a great absolute when she offered it to me and I took it and I'm gonna still work with her this coming fall too.

[00:48:58] **David Crabill:** Is that because you can't say no.

[00:49:01] **Ana Delgado:** I know. Yeah. You know what? Yeah, I guess I mean, I don't know. I mean, Well, I'm not in that farmer's market anymore, you know, I got out of the farmer's market, so I kind of feel bad that the customers up there are not gonna get my apples unless my apples are in Mars's market. So I'm like, you know, I'll still do the wholesale with her.

So the customers up there could still buy.

[00:49:22] **David Crabill:** I can't remember New York, but are you able to offer shipping?

[00:49:28] **Ana Delgado:** I can offer shipping. It just has to be within New York State, which that's what I'm working on now since I wanna move away from having the events. I wanna work on shipping. I'm just trying to figure out my packaging. You know, With caramel apples, it can't just sit in a box for two days until it gets to you.

I'm trying to figure out the ice situation and how to keep the apples cool and, you know, transport them. So I'm trying to figure that out now. And when I like, I definitely do want to ship. I just wanna make sure that I do it the correct way.

[00:50:01] **David Crabill:** You just need to reverse engineer Ms. Printables' system.

[00:50:05] **Ana Delgado:** I know, right. But I was always thinking about that. I. They just came in a box with egg foam, and that was it. So I didn't get it. I'm like, how does this work without being cool.

[00:50:19] **David Crabill:** I think it's just when you stick the stick into the apple, you know, you puncture the apple and at that point the health department would say this needs to be kept refrigerated.

So I'm not sure exactly why they could ship without it being refrigerated. Are you saying that's still the case?

[00:50:35] **Ana Delgado:** I dunno, I haven't bought one from them because mine tastes better. But um, wanna be able to keep them cold every single time, even if it's in the winter. I just wanna like, I don't wanna mess it up, so I'm just trying to make sure I get all my information correct and I kind of like to test it out and see if it works.

I do have a lot of customers asking me if I ship, so I know that once I do start shipping. It

[00:51:00] **David Crabill:** [00:51:00] Well, I mean that thing about having to ship something that's perishable and having to keep cold is it just adds a lot to the shipping cost. So

[00:51:08] **Ana Delgado:** be amazing. Yeah, it does.

[00:51:10] **David Crabill:** It doesn't work out, but you do have a really premium product, you know, and especially if you're selling like two apples or three apples, you'd be surprised how much people are willing to spend, you know, you could get like a \$50 order for three apples.

And with the packaging and the shipping, it would still work.

Especially for selling to people in the city. Right.

[00:51:30] **Ana Delgado:** Right, right,

[00:51:31] **David Crabill:** Probably a higher price point, you know, there people are willing to spend more.

[00:51:36] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah. That's another thing. You know, when you do events, you have to pick, you know, your spot. You have to really think about where you're gonna go. Bring apples when you send them to events, like different places because then, you know, you don't get the sales that you thought you were gonna get, but it's all because of the place you went.

[00:51:54] **David Crabill:** What types of places have you found work better than others?

Other than the farmer's markets, we already know the farmer's markets didn't work.

[00:52:02] **Ana Delgado:** No, they don't work. events. I don't wanna hurt people's feelings by saying like, people like, where, where I'm at now is so small. But um, for example there's like a. Big flea market here, not far um, Stormville New York and thousands and thousands of people go through that flea market and everybody kept telling me like 10,000 people over the weekend, like, you know, you should do it.



And in the beginning, I didn't wanna do it 'cause I'm like a flea market. I'm not gonna be in a flea market, but so many vendors go there, they have like a hundred vendors or something like that. It's insane. So I tried it and it was a total disaster. Like nobody wasn't trying to pay \$11 for an apple there, even though there were so many people.

But it just didn't work for me. And I said, you know what? I shoulda kind of known already, but I just wanted to give it a try to see if it works, because so many people walked through there, but that just didn't work.

[00:53:03] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I mean, it makes sense because the flea market is gonna attract your, you know, bargain hunters. you know, You have to try, you know, that's the thing you, you never really know. So it's definitely worth trying basically anything, you know, to see if it works.

[00:53:17] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah, that's why I said I'm just gonna put myself out there and see what works for me. Like right now. I did like a craft fair here when I first moved here, and I only sold one apple. And I know it's because everybody's looking at me like, who are you? Where did you come from? Because they're used to seeing the same faces all the time.

So what I did was the apples that I had, I gave them away. I gave one to the host of the craft fair. I gave an apple to my neighbor, whoever I was talking to. And by doing that, that put the word out that when I joined the craft fair, the second year. I had so many people coming to my table like, oh my goodness.

Well, we tried the apple that you gave so and so last year. It was amazing. All of a sudden I sold out every apple I had on that table. I couldn't believe it. So now I do every community event, even if it's smaller, because they like it, they get excited to know that I'm gonna be there. So it was pretty cool.

[00:54:12] **David Crabill:** Well, you obviously are selling a lot of apples now. You're selling a lot of other things too. You're pretty busy. Have you hired any help?

[00:54:21] **Ana Delgado:** No, it's just me, my, my fiance helps with my packaging and he's always up late printing my labels and putting them on the apples and stuff like that. And they make sure that all my ingredients, labels are there. But as far as making everything, no, it's just, it's just me.

[00:54:39] **David Crabill:** I mean, Is that something you're looking towards? Like, do you ever feel overwhelmed or like you're facing burnout?

[00:54:46] **Ana Delgado:** I do feel that way. But like, when I do think about getting somebody to help me, it's always like to clean after me. I'm more worried about

somebody working with me and stealing my recipes. So I guess that's why I haven't really thought of hiring anybody to help me in that part. You know? I feel like if you get somebody, and I live so far from my family, I can't have, like my little sister helping me. She's 17. And then my oldest son, he lives in Maryland. So, no, I know it's a fear that I have to get over, but maybe one day.

[00:55:20] **David Crabill:** Anna, you gotta do it. You're definitely ready. just ask um, chef Amanda about it. And she'll say, you gotta, you gotta do it. You gotta take that step.

[00:55:29] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah.

[00:55:30] **David Crabill:** it doesn't have to be for a lot of time each week. but you know, Otherwise you might face the same thing that you felt back in 2019 where you just felt like I can't keep it going.

Um, Yeah. So that's a risk. And it sounds like things are going well and things are growing, so, just hiring someone will allow you to take that next step in your journey.

[00:55:50] **Ana Delgado:** Right. Yeah. I

[00:55:54] **David Crabill:** Well, as you look forward to the Apple business, you know, I know you're interested in selling your recipes and growing your digital course business. but with the actual Apple business that you have, what do you feel like are your next steps?

[00:56:10] **Ana Delgado:** The goal is to buy a house where I can run my bakery business. Like in the basement area where I'm able to get a commercial license and then I can bring back my chocolate so I can expand my line of apples. I'll keep all the apples that I have right now, but then I'll have additions with chocolate too.

I learned a lot with my home processor, but I feel like I'm ready to have the next permit, so I wanna, that's like my focus now is for us to just get a bigger home with an attachment where I can use that for my baking business and be able to get the permit that I really want.

[00:56:49] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I, I'd agree. I mean, adding the chalk. chocolate and the white chocolate will probably be a big boost. And, you know, maybe we need to look into trying to get the law changed in

[00:57:00] **Ana Delgado:** I know.

[00:57:00] **David Crabill:** New York. Get them back on the same page as the rest of the country. So,

[00:57:06] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah. I don't know what the big deal with chocolate is.

[00:57:10] **David Crabill:** Yeah, they have a frequently asked question about that on their website. I think they just say like, theoretically, it could cause a health concern, but I dunno, I personally sell chocolate. I've never seen someone who sells chocolate that has had a health claim

[00:57:27] **Ana Delgado:** Yeah, right. Yeah, me too. Me too. The only chocolate I can use, it has to be shelved. So like I have a caramel apple that I sell that has chocolate, but it is just, you know, it's.

[00:57:41] **David Crabill:** Right. It's commercially processed and you're not reprocessing it at all. Yeah. Well, you have a very unique story. You know, you've essentially started twice. What do you feel like you would tell someone who is starting out on their own journey?

[00:57:58] **Ana Delgado:** I would tell them, no matter how hard it gets to just keep pushing forward. As long as your heart is in it, you will make it happen.

[00:58:06] **David Crabill:** Well, thank you so much, Anna, for coming on now. If people would like to learn more about you, where can they find you or how can they reach out?

[00:58:14] **Ana Delgado:** So currently I am rebuilding my website, but somebody could still reach out to me. I have a landing page up at [applesandjars.com](http://applesandjars.com) or you could reach out to me on social media. I'm on Instagram, on Facebook @applesandjars.

[00:58:30] **David Crabill:** I'll put links to those in the show notes. And thank you so much for coming on the show and sharing with us today.

[00:58:37] **Ana Delgado:** Thank you so much for having me. It was fun.

[00:58:42] **David Crabill:** That wraps up another episode of the Forrager Podcast.

For more information about this episode, go to [forrager.com/podcast/143](http://forrager.com/podcast/143).

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Thanks for listening, and I'll see you in the next episode.