

Soralla Gonzalez with Delicious Healthy Bakes

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 Soralla Gonzalez, who is a member of my new Cottage Food Pro membership. As you'll hear today, Soralla made some business mistakes early on that could have been avoided if she had someone to mentor her.

One of the benefits of Cottage Food Pro is our monthly group calls, and Soralla has attended every single call thus far. Over the past few months, I have seen her make many adjustments to her business that are setting her up for long-term success. As I said, Cottage Food Pro is new and it's still quite small, so it's a great opportunity to get personalized feedback directly from me and other members like Soralla.

In addition to our monthly calls, Cottage Food Pro also contains tutorials that are designed to boost your business without breaking the bank. To learn more about my new membership, go to cottagefoodpro.com.

Alright, so as you know, I have Soralla on the show today. She lives in Tampa Bay, Florida, and sells sourdough and other healthy baked goods with her cottage food business. Delicious Healthy Bakes. Soralla started selling baked goods at the beginning of 2023 and initially thought she'd focus on keto products, but struggled to find enough demand for them in her area.

But one day she brought some sourdough bread to a market and it sold out immediately. She's now switched over to selling mostly sourdough baked goods, but still has had many ups and downs in trying to find the right customers for her healthy baked items. In this episode, Soralla shares how she has overcome struggles and has steadily grown her bakery by being resilient, implementing various marketing strategies, failing fast, and staying focused on her true passion.

With that, let's jump right into this episode.

Welcome to the show, Soralla. Nice to have you here.

[00:01:59] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Hey David, how are you?

[00:02:01] **David Crabill:** Good. Yeah, so normally I start an episode with you know, take me back to how you got started, but I actually know you quite well, Soralla, you're

in my Cottage Food Pro membership and you have been my most active student. And it's good to finally have you on.

[00:02:18] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I am so excited to be here because I remember the first time that I even heard about you. I reached out to you and I said, maybe in two years I'll be on your podcast. It was like something I wanted to do and here I am,

[00:02:31] **David Crabill:** Yeah. And it's been about that, right? About two years.

[00:02:34] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Maybe a little more.

[00:02:36] **David Crabill:** Well, I was looking back and it looked like you started about in early 2023, and now here we are in mid 2025, So yeah, it's cool that it's finally come and become a reality. And honestly, I should have had you on the podcast sooner. I don't know why I didn't schedule you in before, but it's really cool to see just how much your business has grown. But let's take it back to the beginning.

You know, thinking about those early days when it was just a dream. What did you want the business to be? Or what was it like in the early days?

[00:03:10] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I didn't really have a business in mind per se, but I know that I was looking for a bakery that made sugar-free, gluten-free cakes. 'cause it was my daughter's turn when she turned five. So my daughter has vitiligo, which are like little white spots that pop up on your body, and I am into functional medicine. and I was looking for a root cause or how to fix that. And it just happened that I listened to a lot of podcasts. The next podcast that I ran into was by Dr.

Mark Hyman and he talked about vitiligo as the topic of that episode and I listened to it and he said the root cause of it is gluten, like bread and things like that. So the minute that we cut out, like bread and things with gluten for her, she no longer had new spots emerging.

'cause Now what's there is there, but I haven't seen anything new. and we haven't given her sugar since pretty much she was born like we let her taste her first birthday cake. We never gave her sugar. 'cause we knew from the beginning that sugar's just not good for you. I didn't know anything about gluten. I thought it was just people who can't tolerate gluten. And for daycare, like you're not allowed to make your own stuff. It has to be prepared in a commercial kitchen and I literally could not find a healthy bakery.

sugar-free and gluten-free. Everything was either organic, like gourmet types of expensive cupcakes and things like that, but nothing specific to what I was looking for and that's how it kind of all started for me.

[00:04:45] **David Crabill:** I'm thinking about Kristi. She was on episode 126 and she's also in Florida and sells healthy baked goods and she mentioned that she had a real problem trying to sell healthy baked goods. And you mentioned you didn't have any healthy baked goods in your area and it just seems like there's not a whole lot of demand for healthy baked goods in certain parts of Florida.

And I know that that's been a challenge for you. So what has it been like to try to promote something that just might not be what people are looking for.

[00:05:17] **Soralla Gonzalez:** It is very difficult because there's just such a small percentage of the people that get it to the point where I kind of had to add, like sourdough. Baked goods and sourdough breads and things like that. 'cause that ended up doing so much better than my, my baked, desserts. But then again, you know, like you don't eat a dessert like every single day and they're expensive too.

So it is, it's just a hard sell all the way around if that's all you wanna do. Like, I don't see myself living off of an income of just sugar-free, gluten-free dessert in this area.

[00:05:55] **David Crabill:** So what did your vision start at? Like what did you start selling in the beginning?

[00:06:02] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I started selling cakes and cupcakes and cookies. For a little while, I was getting a lot of orders for people just wanting a smash cake for the baby's first birthday, and then they would have like a regular cake for the rest of the party, but for the baby specifically, like there's a few people that really don't wanna give their babies like sugar.

And that's what I was doing a lot of, and also adults with diabetes. But that too just dwindles. I haven't really had many orders of that, or even the same people that like for their next year's birthday that I, I don't hear from them.

[00:06:38] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I mean, you said you're selling cakes, cupcakes, but these were really specific cakes, right? They had no sugar, no gluten, right? Like you, you weren't selling uh, regular, regular baked goods. Right?

[00:06:52] **Soralla Gonzalez:** No, I don't even know how to bake a regular cake unless it's from the box. I wouldn't know how to make a cake.

[00:07:00] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I saw that way back when you started as Delicious Keto Bakes. Now you've transitioned to delicious healthy bakes. So, Was that the goal was just to focus only on keto products?

[00:07:16] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah.

[00:07:17] **David Crabill:** But you know your daughter, it's not just keto, right? Like, so is this, your own personal diet? Like Were you following the keto diet? Were you sugar free? Were you gluten-free yourself?

[00:07:30] **Soralla Gonzalez:** As much as possible, I do eat carbs, but not like, um, carbs. I will never eat treats and things like that, like sweet stuff. I won't touch it. It just comes naturally, I guess, gluten-free because of the almond flour that I use. but I got on a cake that, like, I found out how harmful sugar is and that it's a toxin. It's an acid to the body and it's not good for us to eat, especially the amount of sugar that is out there.

Like, It's okay once in a blue, but I, and the, the thing is, is that there's enough sugar and natural foods that we eat, the right amount that's supposed to be there, it's that added sugar that, you know, is so harmful.

[00:08:12] **David Crabill:** So, we weren't doing sourdough when you started the business. Right? That's something that you discovered along the way.

[00:08:20] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah, I'm always on Instagram looking at cooking videos and things like that, and I saw this girl make really simple bread. And from that one, you know how Instagram will start suggesting things that lead into people talking about sourdough bread.

And I decided I wanted to try to make one and it's a lot of trial and error. Once I discovered the health benefits of it and that the gluten is very on it, like it's very low due to the fermentation process, it eats up most of the gluten. I decided to give that a try and it did really well.

Like when I took it to a market, when I felt comfortable selling it, I took like three to a market and they sold before anything else. So that's what got [00:09:00] me into making the sourdough breads and adding that to the menu. And then that's when it went from keto, 'cause that's not keto to just delicious healthy bakes.

To be a little bit more broad. But I want people to understand that what I do is still different than. You know, a public bakery.

[00:09:17] **David Crabill:** Yeah. And I feel like now the sourdoughs have taken over, right? Like how much of your business is sourdough related products?

[00:09:25] **Soralla Gonzalez:** more than 80%.

[00:09:28] **David Crabill:** Yeah that's, that's just so interesting. And you know, the other thing about this is that you started as delicious keto bakes. Now your delicious healthy bakes, but then there's also Ugly Bundt Cakes, which I think still is your LLC.

[00:09:42] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah, it started like that. So that delicious, healthy bakes is the third time I've changed the name. So with Ugly Bundt Cakes is because when I first started making cake, the cupcakes were not very pretty. They were ugly butt cakes. And I thought that that would be like the funniest.

[00:10:00] Things to tell people. Oh, Ugly Bundt Cakes came from ugly butt cakes. 'cause they were not cute at all. They were so ugly. But then I had, I, then I had to change the name because people don't know what you do with that. And I don't make bundt cakes. I'm like, man, I wish I would've thought about it. I just, I, I wish I could do, do it all over and I would've just said, Delicious Healthy Bake you know? But what can I do?

[00:10:25] **David Crabill:** That's kind of the part of businesses you just learned. I mean, was it, was it really that hard to, to transition names?

[00:10:32] **Soralla Gonzalez:** No, I did from one day to the next here, here's my new name, y'all.

[00:10:37] **David Crabill:** Well, And you still have that as your LLC, right? Like you still have an LLC called Ugly Bundt Cakes.

[00:10:44] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah. That's still the LLC. And then I just recently added um, doing business as delicious healthy bakes.

[00:10:51] **David Crabill:** yeah, that's just business. It just takes you to different places as you discovered, right? With the, you started with one vision and [00:11:00] now it looks completely different from what you started, as with the mostly selling sourdough bread.

Now, what, what got you interested in pursuing this as a business in the first place? 'cause it's one thing to just, you know, want to make healthy food for your daughter, but then. You gotta take it to another level to actually want to turn it into a business.

[00:11:23] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I don't know why anybody would want to do this because it is 10 times harder than me being a nurse and just doing my nursing job. I feel like this is more of an assignment that I was given a task that it was told, this is what you're here to do now and you need to do it. Because I tell myself, why do I want to do this?

It is, I work so much harder physically. And it's not just that you gotta do taxes. There's just so much to keep track of when you're opening a [00:12:00] business. And I imagine it's the same for any business. It's not just baking. But for any business, I'm like, oh my God, I don't know why I would wanna do this.

And then I just keep hearing a little voice in the back of my head that just says, this is your assignment. You know, this is what you're supposed to do.

[00:12:14] **David Crabill:** That's funny 'cause a lot of people that get into this industry come from nursing. You know, nursing is a very service oriented business. Running a food business is a very service oriented business as well. But I hear the opposite where people say nursing wears them out, they're just wiped.

And then baking is like a reprieve, you know, it's like something they do for fun, it gets their mind off things. Usually people don't talk about it being harder nursing. So that's a very interesting perspective.

[00:12:47] **Soralla Gonzalez:** But I work per diem, so that's the kicker. Where I get control of my schedule the most is when I work per diem.

I don't work full time. Like they don't own my time basically Monday through Friday or Sunday to Saturday. Basically, that's how now if I did that then I would totally be burnt out and like the other nurses that you're talking about. I do per diem and I thank you God that I'm able to do that and that there's enough work to sustain for me to be able to do that.

Because if I worked in a hospital or had to work full time for someone, yeah, I wouldn't be able to do baking and I would totally be burnt out from nursing big time.

[00:13:25] **David Crabill:** Yeah. And you are not a traditional nurse, right? You're a traveling nurse.

[00:13:30] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah, people would understand it as travel nursing because I'm in my car driving around a lot and going to like the next county over, but it's just home health where I go to people's homes and see them there.

[00:13:43] **David Crabill:** I, I saw that shortly before you started this business, you had a TV spot about your travel nursing. It was a pretty significant TV spot too.

[00:13:54] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I know, and I reached out to her trying to get my business on, on TV.

[00:14:01] **David Crabill:** Well, how did you get on TV in the first place? 'cause there are a lot of travel nurses out there. Why did you get featured? Was it something you did?

[00:14:10] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I was the only one willing to do it. You know how I am. I'm like, real social and I, and I like to try different things, so I was the only one they asked and I said, yeah, I'm gonna do it.

[00:14:22] **David Crabill:** I did notice when I was looking into your social media. This is not the first time that you've pursued a business. You've pursued a business many times. This is like, well, I don't even know how many businesses you've tried to start, I saw you tried to do Color Street Nails at one point.

you were a realtor, about the time when you started this business. So something about your personality wants to start a business and, and have something be your own. Do you know where that comes from?

[00:14:53] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I don't like being told what to do, like I don't like having a boss, and so I've been trying all these different things. Real estate, I joined at like the worst time. Anybody could try to become a realtor. It was hard, even for experienced realtors when I got my license, it was hard for them, let alone someone who does, knows nothing about real estate.

I still have my license. I'm just not using it for anything. the Color Street thing, COVID messed that up. That was great. That's what gave me the experience of markets. But then COVID hit and all the markets stopped suddenly and nursing picked up a lot. I had to focus on where I was needed and just let Color Street go as well.

[00:15:39] **David Crabill:** all right, well, so you started selling at the beginning of 2023, and then when do you feel like you discovered sourdough?

[00:15:47] **Soralla Gonzalez:** It's probably been about two years since I've been doing sourdough, or a year and a half.

[00:15:54] **David Crabill:** Okay, but you feel like maybe at the end of 2023, like how long were you running your business before you introduced sourdough? Into the mix.

[00:16:04] **Soralla Gonzalez:** about a year and a half. So it's been like three years now. And it is right at the year and a half into.

[00:16:10] **David Crabill:** Okay. So what was that first year like before you had kind of found that signature product of yours and you were trying to start this business off the ground? Um, what was that first year like for you?

[00:16:23] **Soralla Gonzalez:** So I did, the very first market that I did was at a um, at an event called Fit Fest, where I did only keto stuff at that event. I made cupcakes and then

I ran out of cupcakes . It was a two day event and I had to bake Whoopi pies that night, and I sold those like crazy. I was like, good, I'm onto something, I'm onto something.

And its sales just went down from there and. with sourdough, it just helped me out so much. But that first year and a half, it was hot. It's not easy. It really isn't. With the keto stuff, like I said, it's a very specific group of people, and at the Fit Fest was perfect, that's where my people are, they had food there.

They had, they were selling hot dogs and burgers and stuff like that. And people were coming to my booth saying that despite that my thing was dessert. I had the healthiest thing to eat there and that was supposed to be a Fit Fest. And people were coming to my booth buying a, um, cupcake because it was better than eating burgers and fries.

[00:17:21] **David Crabill:** It's interesting though you said that your business went down from there. Like once you, typically, usually when you find success then the success starts to build. So why do you feel like you weren't able to build off that success or just not other events like that in your area that you could travel to?

[00:17:43] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah, there's no other events like that in the area. But at the same time I was not savvy and I don't even think I have run into your podcast at the time. Like I didn't even know David Crabill and all that stuff. ' Cause I was just listening to all kinds of podcasts about baking that I could find.

The twins, the cookie twins, that's how they mentioned your name on their podcast. That's how I discovered you. But I was not savvy enough to collect people's emails. Make them follow me on Instagram. I didn't do any, I just went there and sold stuff. I didn't know anything about marketing and like, trying to get people's emails so that I could have, I would've had thousands of people's emails at that event, you know, that I could have had for, I didn't know about ConvertKit.

That was you, that helped me get that going. I didn't know anything.

[00:18:33] **David Crabill:** I do recall you mentioning that you tried selling at your gym at some point. Maybe you still do that. Is that something that you tried back then? You know, 'Cause you found your people at the Fit Fest and it seems like those same people would be at the gym you attended.

[00:18:51] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I do advertise at my local gym where I go and I was advertising at um, uh, Shape. It's like a women's only gym. But still people see it as dessert. So it's so hard. It's so, because even people who are into fitness and things like that, they still don't get what I do. And if they're in competition mode, like they won't touch anything that looks like a dessert because it's a dessert. So even still with them,

it's so hard to get them 'cause they understand protein and they understand carbs when it comes to sugar-free, gluten-free, they can't wait till the second they step off that stage to go eat something that's full of sugar and gluten and all that stuff they know how to cut down.

But they don't understand. People just don't understand what it is that I do.

[00:19:35] **David Crabill:** But I know you also in the beginning had like protein bars that still, they just wouldn't touch those either.

[00:19:43] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Now I have protein bars. Those are new that I just recently started doing them and yeah, they love those. So, I got to make samples and take them to the gym for people to like to try them. Because they're, those two are sugar free, gluten free, they're dairy free. As healthy as I can make them, because my husband requested that I make him some protein bars.

He sent me the recipe and I thought, oh, I think I can make this a little bit better by finding something sugar free. So when I take those samples to like individual people, they like 'em. I sell them a lot at markets.

[00:20:17] **David Crabill:** So I know you found a lot of success at the Fit Fest. Then you said your business dwindled, so did you go to another market at some point after that and just not sell a lot or have a bad experience?

[00:20:32] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I sold. So that was like in July of whatever year I did that in 2023 I think it was. That was in July. And, the markets really don't start here until like September, October. I had to wait a little bit to get it at the markets. And so I was at markets and it was doing well. and even in 2023, I feel like I was really new to it, because it's not just baking.

You have to know business. And I'm still learning that I wasn't collecting people's emails. It wasn't until I joined you. Your pro membership thing that I started collecting people's emails. And how recent was that? I think it was like this year

Then, I started collecting emails and asking people to sign up for my email list.

[00:21:15] **David Crabill:** Yeah. And I know we tweaked that a little bit. 'cause initially you were just having a Jot form and then then trying to add people to the list and now you have it set up right, where people can just use a QR code and go straight to your landing page on Kit and then get added to your email list. And how do you get people to join your email list?

[00:21:36] **Soralla Gonzalez:** They are buying something from me. I say to them, Hey, do you, are you local? And they say, yes. Well, do you wanna sign up for my email list so you know where I'm gonna be next? I promise I'm not gonna spam you 'cause I don't have time for that. But if you sign up for my emails, you'll know where I'm gonna be next.

And 90% of the time people say yes.

[00:21:56] **David Crabill:** So, and, and many markets are you planning on doing or did you do earlier in the year?

[00:22:02] **Soralla Gonzalez:** in the year I was signing up for, it seemed like whatever I could find, if it was like every other Saturday and every other Sunday. But then the summer, then those ended. And the summer ones picked up. So I've been doing one in St. Pete, that's every single Sunday and they're year round.

She just started that year where she's year round. So I signed up for that one just to have an income for the business because I like to pay for stuff with the money that the bakery makes. I don't like having to work extra so that I can buy something for it, you know what I mean?

[00:22:37] **David Crabill:** And how much is your email list growing or has it grown since you started collecting emails at markets?

[00:22:44] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Quite a bit. It's not like a thousand people or anything like that, but it's a couple hundred.

[00:22:50] **David Crabill:** And how often do you email the people on your email list

[00:22:56] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I email them on Fridays when I'm gonna do a market once a week. If I'm doing a market.

[00:23:03] **David Crabill:** And do you know, like if that's increased your returning customer count? Like, I don't know if you ever tracked that, but like once you started sending out the emails, is that bringing people back or letting people find you who wanna find your stuff?

[00:23:19] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Sometimes. Yeah, sometimes yes. Especially for the area where I live. A lot of the people that and order for like porch pickups and stuff like that, those are people who have bought from me before, if they don't sign up for my email list, they're probably on my Instagram and I'll post on Instagram, Hey guys, I just sent out an email to everybody, and they'll go from there.

But I'll send little emails and sometimes I'll ask them, Hey, you see my email? And they'll say, yeah, it was from the email or it was from Instagram that they saw me post, that I was baking.

[00:23:52] **David Crabill:** Yeah, and sometimes people don't necessarily take action on the email, right? They don't like to see the email and they're like, oh, I'm gonna go out to the market to find her today. But You still stay top of mind right by having that presence in their inbox so you know that they don't forget about you because they're just so many options and so many things to think about in our busy lives and, and it's just helpful to kind of keep yourself top of mind for the people who, care about your products.

[00:24:21] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah, I'm looking at Kit right now, and it says that the average open rate is 40%. So not even everybody from there is opening the email, but 1.9100000000000001% click on the link. Order something. So that's why I try to get as many emails as possible and like to offer that to everybody who's interested or buying something from me.

[00:24:43] **David Crabill:** I know that might, that might sound low, but those are actually pretty decent numbers. I mean, especially the 40% open rate is a good, uh, open rate for sure. I mean, I've heard maybe as high as like 60% would be like a really exceptional open rate, but speaking, you're one and half, like over 20% open rate.

So you're well above that. You know, you, You have a pretty engaged list to have a 40% open rate. That means you're doing a pretty good job with your emails and, and people wanna hear from you. then like 1.9 or like 2% of people that actually click to order something. That's on the lower end, but you would generally see like maybe a two to 5% click through rate on an email.

But that would be more like emails where you're really trying to get the person to take an action. Whereas it sounds like the purpose of your emails is a lot of times just to tell people where you are and where you get to be. So it's not always oh, I have a sale. Oh, I'm trying to promote something.

Oh, I want you to click through and buy right now. Which is where we'd be a little bit more cognizant of like a click through rate. I don't think your emails typically fall into that category.

But anyway, even 2% is pretty good for more of a passive email like that.

[00:25:57] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah,

[00:25:59] **David Crabill:** So I know you found value in email and that's something that you didn't do, and maybe if you had been capturing your customer's email addresses

back when you did Fit Fest, maybe your business would've taken a different trajectory. What are some other things that you feel like you've learned about businesses that have helped you grow?

[00:26:17] **Soralla Gonzalez:** You have to be consistent. I'm trying my best to stay in because it seems like there's more down than there is like highlights. And if you focus on, I'm not selling anything, nothing's happening. It'll stay that way. I think and I hear that from other people in business that they say consistency.

You have to be consistent. You have to just keep going and keep going at it. And the only people who fail are the ones who quit.

[00:26:46] **David Crabill:** It's interesting to hear you say that there's been more downs and ups because I feel like I've seen a lot of ups, but then I only see the highlights. Right. Like what are some of the challenges you feel like you've faced? Especially, I know the beginning first year was [00:27:00] tough 'cause you hadn't found sourdough, but like, let's say in the last year or just even just this year, what do you think has been really challenging about your business?

[00:27:09] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Well, you know, I opened that little Airstream well, I already closed it because it was just costing me money. So, that right there is uh, down post, I only posted one post that, Hey, today's the last day that I'm gonna be open, but I closed it. I think like two months after I opened it, or a month and a half, something like that.

you know, When you go to markets, it's hit or miss. Either you sell out or you're coming home with a lot of stuff. Last Sunday, I came home with a lot of things I hardly sold. I probably sold like 12 loaves out of 40 that I took. so I, I'm not gonna post that.

I don't even feel good about it when stuff like that happens.

[00:27:50] **David Crabill:** And had you been to that market before and sold well?

[00:27:55] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah. I started that market when it first started, maybe like a month ago, and if I was doing really well for like two, three weeks in a row and I'm like, oh, good, fine. You know, I can do this. And then. Last week and even yesterday, the foot traffic was really slow. And I don't like to say that and admit to it like, because to me, I feel like I'm speaking it into existence.

But I just talked to the lady next to me. I'm like, I don't wanna say this out loud, loud, but I'm, this is what I'm thinking. Do you feel like it's a little bit slower? And she goes, oh, definitely. I'm not even at half of what I normally make here. And then there's a hummus

guy that he does super well there, and he said that yesterday's market was the worst that he's had he's been going there forever.

[00:28:41] **David Crabill:** Yeah, so it's not, it's not really your product, right? It was a market issue.

[00:28:47] **Soralla Gonzalez:** It makes you feel like it is though, because there's two other sourdough girls there and one of them sells out every single time. I'm like, what am I doing wrong? Like, is it me? Is it the place where I'm sitting because there's like two entrances to the market and I'm in the middle.

So the first girl is when you come in through the left, you're gonna run into hers before you come to mine. And if you come in from the right, you're gonna run into the other girl's sourdough before you see mine. So unless there's been a few people that go specifically for me because of my keto stuff, and if while they're there, they'll just buy sourdough.

But I'm like, is it my product? Is it the place where I'm sitting? I asked to be moved, but she said, you know, no, it's already set for the season. Like I already got people in the place where, because I'm kind of new, I'm new to that market and they, there's been people that have been going there for a long time.

But I don't know, it makes you feel like it's your product sometimes when it's like that.

[00:29:46] **David Crabill:** Well, definitely market placement can make a huge difference in sales. And it sounds like in that specific situation, you've got like, that's like the worst possible scenario, right? Especially when you have competition and most people are going to see another option before they see yours. But then again, those other two bakers at the market, I'm sure have been selling for a lot longer than you have.

And that's, part of it too, is like maybe they were selling in the middle for their first year or their first two years and they had to deal with someone else's competition, but then they just stuck with it long enough where they became the market leader. That's part of it too, right? You know?

It does. It does take that consistency and that persistence sometimes to get over the hurdle.

[00:30:30] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah, the girl that she always liked last week was my worst market there. I didn't do well at all. And she came over and she said, Hey, how'd you do? And I said, I hardly sold anything. How'd you do? She goes, I have one loaf left. And she brings other things. She doesn't just do it. She does like cookies and cinnamon rolls, sweets and stuff like that.

And she sold everything and she's, I only have one loaf left.

[00:31:00] **David Crabill:** [00:31:00] You know, it was interesting how you, you were saying you didn't wanna talk about it because you'd be speaking into an existence, and I know that that's the, I've noticed that where the mindset thing is really big for you, how you think.

can you share a little bit about that and like, how you think about your business and how it affects it.

[00:31:18] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I know that when I go, if I let other things bother me it's hard as a girl . We're very emotional to not let things bother us and not think about it. I try my best to steer away from things like, if something negative happened and it could be small, but still negative is negative I noticed that it must emit out to the universe because my sales will be a little bit lower when I'm coming in with not the best attitude. And on really good days when I'm feeling really well and not thinking about anything outside I do well. So, Yeah, I think it's what you attract and it's almost like you have this aura around your body that's attracting whatever it is that you are now what I want, it's what I am. So if I'm being negative, it shows through, you know, I'll, I'll have people come by and say goofy things to me that I don't wanna hear.

And I'm like, oh my God, here we go. And I, and then it's almost like I've reinforced it and I'm like, stop doing that. Don't do that. Be positive.

[00:32:19] **David Crabill:** I think it's one thing to like to say, oh, I, I should be positive or I shouldn't let negative thoughts in, but it's harder to implement, right? Like it's, it's harder to actually be that. Like what do you do that helps you stay positive? Especially when things aren't going well, like as you mentioned, sometimes they don't.

[00:32:39] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I talk a lot to myself and whenever I'm talking to other people, they always tell me, oh, you're so positive. And I try to remember that, that people tell me that, oh man, I, yeah, you're right. I need to be more positive, or You're such a good motivator for things like that, and I need to do that for myself.

' let's say a friend of mine was feeling or thinking the things that I was feeling and thinking, I would never reinforce her and say, oh yeah, you're right, like you suck. Or it, you would never say that to your friend, so why be hard on yourself? So I try to remember that I am my own best friend. And I need to see myself and talk to myself like a friend. So you wouldn't be mean to your friends?

And I am grateful every day that I wake up, it is such a privilege. Like people don't understand the privilege it is to be a human being because I could have been a fly. I tell

people their feelings that, you know, you could have been a fly and God chose you to be, and I'm spiritual.

I'm not religious. I'm just very spiritual. So when I say God, it means. The entity that you believe in. And I tell them, you're so lucky that you were chosen to be a human being. You, I am so lucky to wake up every day, that means I got to wake up today, then that means that I still have purpose and need and whatever it is that I'm supposed to go do, that's what I'm, I need to go do.

I'm here for a purpose. You're not just here for nothing.

[00:34:04] **David Crabill:** I noticed this quote and I thought it was really notable. You said you're the most important person in your life, and if you don't take care of your own mental health, then how are you gonna take care of anybody else?

[00:34:15] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Where'd you see that? It sounds familiar.

[00:34:17] **David Crabill:** you, you said it in that, that traveling nursing video.

[00:34:21] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Oh. In that video. Wow. That's around the time. I think that was like 2021. And that's around the time when I started discovering what true health is and how things like nutrition and things started really changing for me around that time.

And when I changed my nutrition, it affected my mind. I see things as a whole, I used to be real negative and I see the positive in everything now.

[00:34:47] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I know you've had challenges selling healthy items in your area, but is that the reason why you were unwilling to try selling something that would be more popular? It was just like a moral conscious thing.

[00:35:00] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah, if I won't give it to my family, then I'm not gonna sell it to somebody else. I just won't do it then.

[00:35:09] **David Crabill:** Well, I know that you've struggled at times. You know, you, you haven't done well at this market. Then I know you had the Airstream, like that trailer they tried. But one thing I've noticed is that you are willing to try anything. Like you try a lot of things and you get a lot of things done within a day.

I remember one of our monthly meetings, 'cause within the Cottage Food Pro membership, we do these monthly meetings and I think one day you were like, oh, I really wish I could ship my products, but I can't. 'cause I, I live in Florida and I wish I

could start an Etsy store. And I said, well actually Florida's one of the only places where you can sell out of state.

It actually allows that. And you're like, oh wow. You know, I get to start an Etsy store and we do these like, monthly goals. Right? and I had you down for, uh. Story, an Etsy shop with your monthly goals, and then the next day you were like, I just made my first sale on Etsy. And I was like, wait,

How did you already start your Etsy store within a day?

[00:36:08] **Soralla Gonzalez:** You know? me I could, we were still in the meeting and I was on my phone, you know, had the phone down on for the video and then I was on my laptop. I pulled out the laptop and just started doing that. While we were still talking. I like to just, if I'm gonna do it, let's go get it done right away.

'cause why procrastinate? What am I gonna wait a month for? You know?

[00:36:29] **David Crabill:** Yeah. But most people aren't like that. 'cause most people would be like, oh, I'm gonna start an Etsy store. Okay, let's make sure all my pictures are up to snap. Let's see, what am I gonna put on my menu? Let's see. Let's do research on how to start an Etsy store. You know, like. Take a course on it or something, I don't know.

And, you just did it. and you've done that many times. You know, with that trailer it was like we were on, on our call and there was no mention of the trailer and like the next week you're like, Hey, look what I just did. So, um, It's just like your personality and I have learned that you don't need our monthly meetings for accountability.

If you set your mind to something, you are just going to go ahead and do it. And you feel like you're just an A type person? Like it's just your personality? Or is it something that you cultivated in yourself to be super proactive?

[00:37:17] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I don't know. I don't know what a type personality really is, but you say I'm successful and I don't see it that way. And that's probably why I'm not as successful as I should be because I don't feel like I am, but I'm trying all kinds of things.

What is gonna be the one thing to get me? 'cause I'm trying to retire myself from nursing. I don't wanna do it anymore. And I see so many other girls. That they just bake from home or they just have their home bakery and that's how they make a living. So I'm trying all kinds of things to see what is the thing that's finally gonna get me to that point.

And I follow a lot of other entrepreneurs that say, you know, you're gonna make mistakes, like you gotta fail fast. If something's gonna fail, hurry up, and just do it to see if it works or not.

[00:38:02] **David Crabill:** You know, I said that you're successful. And I don't mean that in that way, you have the very most successful business I've ever seen. Or, you know, you're at a point where you're consistently making a lot of money, I mean, you do make quite a bit of money at some of these markets, but what I mean is that I feel like you're just destined for success because I see how you are as an entrepreneur.

I see the way you think, I see the way you approach things and I see you growing. I don't know, maybe I just have that bigger time horizon. Having seen so many cottage food businesses over the years, I sort of know it takes time to start this kind of business. And as you said yourself, it was just this year that you started implementing.

Some of these business techniques are, you know, fundamental in building up your business. But I know there'll be ups and downs, but I do feel like you're on this trajectory path towards being very successful. You've got all the parts there, you know, you have a product that people really love.

You have that personality. You're positive, you're social, you're outgoing, so you're really able to engage people. And at this point you're just building it. You're growing it, you're trying new things. Some will work, some won't, but I would be pretty surprised if in a year or two years you don't have a pretty consistent revenue coming off of this business.

[00:39:30] **Soralla Gonzalez:** That's what I'm hoping for. So that's why I try so many different things to see what, what's gonna be the thing that if it's gonna work. Then do it. Why hesitate if it's gonna not work again? Hurry up and see if it's not gonna work either way, like it's a 50-50 shot.

[00:39:46] **David Crabill:** Yeah. With that Airstream, with the trailer. Walk me through that decision because I had known, you know, last we touched base was at the beginning of the summer, and I, I knew you just started that. I didn't know you'd closed that down already, but, how did that whole opportunity come about?

[00:40:03] **Soralla Gonzalez:** When I take my daughter to school, I pass by the community I live in called Winthrop. And so I drive by these little Airstreams and I notice that there's like little businesses and I'm like, Hey, what is that? And I saw one that was just empty. Like every time I would drive by it's empty.

And so I was picking my daughter up from school and I talked to one of the guys who was. There. And I said, Hey, if you don't mind me asking about the Airstream. So he gave me the brief and I had already kind of looked up the information beforehand and found out the person who I needed to talk to, and he confirmed, yeah, that's the person that you would need to talk to.

So I called her and it just went from there. And the rent was really, really cheap, to get started. And it basically, like, it was cheap and she just let you, if it works, it works. You can keep it for however long you want or you can just cancel the lease whenever you want to. So it was really easy to just jump in and jump. But I didn't think, 'cause I'm the kind of person that just jumps into things, okay, oh, you're gonna have a store. Who's gonna bake? Who's gonna, you know, work? 'cause I still have bills to pay that the bakery is not sustaining right now. you know, how are you gonna work all this out?

So my son is, um, available to be there physically just selling the stuff. So I would bring everything over there and just sell the stuff. But I was paying him and I, I was lucky if one person a day came by, it's costing me a lot more than just the rent and ingredients, So I told my son, Hey, we're gonna have to close the store. 'cause even on Saturdays when I'd be open, nobody would come.

[00:41:35] **David Crabill:** And I know. This trailer was in a series of others, like there were five there, maybe Were they getting business? Not necessarily, no. At least I didn't see it for them either. But one lady next to me, she sells, she's an older lady and I honestly think that she just does it for just a hobby. She likes it, you know, the rent is really cheap. So she goes there sometimes, and sometimes she's closed.

[00:42:05] **Soralla Gonzalez:** There's another guy who's a guitar guy, so he's been in business for like 20 years before he opened the Airstream, like maybe going on a year ago. repairs guitars, so he doesn't necessarily need a lot of foot traffic; he's not so much selling something right then and there. He just wanted to get his business out of his house, so he gets a lot of customers from before.

[00:42:30] **David Crabill:** So was this just kind of an area that didn't have a lot of foot traffic? It was just like a, not a good location.

[00:42:37] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I think that's the spot where it's at, 'cause there's other businesses there like MOS and Starbucks, but they're hidden. The Airstreams are like behind all that stuff. Like people had a hard time finding me and it's almost right where the house is, like in the community where the houses are, where people live. So it's not out, you can't see it from the street. You have to go into the community. Like you, like if you're going to a person's house. And people who live in the community, they knew I

was there, but if they're working, you know, I would take it to, I, if they wanted something, they'd just send me a text.

But it'd be so rare they'd have to be on their phone at work to know that I'm open to see, to be reminded of me. Very little foot traffic, like people just walking. 'cause the only people that would be walking through there are people who are living in the community and they're just out exercising.

[00:43:30] **David Crabill:** Anyway, it just sounds like the location was an issue there, but it didn't work, but it was something to try. Right? And you tried it, but, even more notably than the fact that you tried it, you also stopped, which is something that people have a hard time with. You know, like if they start something, then it's like, then they don't cut the cord when it's obvious that you need to end and try something else.

So that's also a good thing where you, like you said, fail fast. You will try something, but then you also are good about moving on if you need to.

[00:44:05] **Soralla Gonzalez:** And I kept, like, I just didn't attach emotion to it. cause I kind of knew that from the beginning that if it doesn't work then it just doesn't work. It's just another thing that I'm gonna try. So I knew to just not have any attachment to that. So the day that I closed treated it like any other Saturday where I was just picking up.

'cause I was using the same equipment for the store as I was for my market. So I just treated it like any other ordinary Saturday where I'm just picking up my tables, emptying the Airstream to go to the market the next day. So I just kept out of it.

[00:44:40] **David Crabill:** Yeah. Something else that you're really good about doing is just getting things done and not getting them done perfectly. you get them completed and finished and get 'em to like a 70% or an 80% level to try it. That's the thing with this trailer that I think is really notable is that even though it was a down for you, like it didn't work, it still wasn't a huge investment because a lot of people who would've opened up their first storefront kind of thing into this trailer would've made a big deal of it.

They would've, you know, maybe done a full remodel or I know there were AC issues, or I don't, I don't know. But they would've put a lot of effort into setting it up, making it look perfect, getting signage, and you definitely didn't do that. You know, you moved in, you put your products in, but it was not perfect by any stretch of the imagination.

[00:45:35] **Soralla Gonzalez:** No, no it wasn't.

[00:45:39] **David Crabill:** But you were able to learn that it wasn't a good fit anyway, right? So if you had put all that effort into it, it probably would've been a waste of time.

[00:45:50] **Soralla Gonzalez:** And money. Yeah. I am a strong believer that done is better than perfect. But I recently joined her, Schonberg's um, her [00:46:00] mo more dough. Course for like corporate orders. And her thing is more like, no, everything needs to be perfect. I'm like, oh my God, I stay quiet in the class and I don't say anything.

'cause I've always believed that done is better than perfect. And she's like, your pictures have to be perfect. And I'm like, oh my God. Now I have to get a photographer to take, I'm gonna have to cook all this extra stuff and get a photographer and how am I gonna coordinate that stuff? It's like a catch 22 right now.

[00:46:28] **David Crabill:** You know, I think there's different schools of thought there, and I, I don't think that there's just one size fits all answer. I'm the kind of perfectionist type who likes everything to be perfect, but, usually I do see that that's more of a downside for me than anything.

And the people that I see who are the most successful entrepreneurs are people that just get stuff out there and get stuff done. And, you know, chef Amanda is actually pretty good about getting stuff out there. And it's not always perfect in the beginning. With her course on corporate orders, I think that might be a little bit different, right?

Where she's like, okay, if you're gonna be selling to businesses, if you're gonna be selling to corporations, you need to have your act together. You know? 'cause they don't have the time to deal with somebody who doesn't have their act together. So that might be why. But I'd say generally speaking, it's better to get things done and get things out there than to try to make them all perfect.

[00:47:29] **Soralla Gonzalez:** And even with that course that I'm taking with her, I'm still doing the things that she's suggesting as is until I can, I can get a photographer and I cook, you know, more stuff specifically just for a photo prop, you know, so I'm still just throwing it out there right now.

[00:47:47] **David Crabill:** So you've invested in that course. Another investment I know you have made in your business this year was your oven. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

[00:47:57] **Soralla Gonzalez:** So I was listening to one of your podcasts and one of the girls mentioned, oh, I got a Pico Plus, and I immediately like, hit pause. I looked that up and it's not from here, it's like in Europe somewhere, and like a week or two I said I'm just gonna get it it's gonna make my life so much easier.

And it really has. Like I said, I'm the type of person that just jumps into stuff without really doing a whole lot of research. So I didn't know that I needed an electrician to come. To be able to plug the thing in the wall that it needs a stand to be on top of. 'Cause it doesn't even come with the plug to plug in the wall.

It came with three prongs and I was like, what do you do with that? I had no idea. So I had to hire an electrician and so I bought it like we were on the phone with the meeting with you when it arrived and then by like that weekend I found an electrician to come that weekend and install it. The outlet.

[00:48:51] **David Crabill:** Yeah. You need a two 40 volt outlet.

[00:48:53] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah. And it has made my life a whole lot far as baking. It's just so much more efficient. I really would've loved the Simply Bread oven. Um, But I'm happy with the decision that I made because it's more than half the price of a Simply Bread oven. It was like a little over \$3,000 for the oven that I got. Even if I got two, it's still less than a Simply Bread oven for someone who just needs to do something. And that's the type of person that I am. I just need something better than what I have. So let's go.

[00:49:28] **David Crabill:** One thing I've noticed in our meetings is that you do a lot of planning. Like you're really good about writing things down, journaling, planning things out. I'm just wondering what processes are like for staying organized in your.

[00:49:44] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I can't remember everything and I have to stay organized 'cause I've got so many things going on between having to still work. people sometimes at the gym, they just throw something out at me that they say they want. You know, at that moment I know better for people to just go to my website and just order, but it just feels like a different relationship with the people at the gym.

So then I have to write that down. There's no way I can memorize every little thing that needs to be done. So I feel like planning is, I'll put it in my phone and I'll also put it in a calendar, like a handwritten calendar and like those orders that I get, or any order that comes in, whether it's Etsy online from my website or people told me they want something, or Instagram, I write it down and I on a handwritten order form and I'll put it on the refrigerator, like this is due on that.

And I'll put it for whoever wants, whichever one I'm supposed to do first to stay organized. 'cause I mean, if you're not organized, then I don't know how people function without knowing what they're doing.

[00:50:45] **David Crabill:** Do you set goals or like you like a big planner and like setting daily or weekly goals,

[00:50:53] **Soralla Gonzalez:** No, I need to be, everything just kind of happens so fast that it almost feels like I need, maybe I need to slow down [00:51:00] and think about the trajectory that I want to go in because it just seems like everything's happening so fast and I've got so many things to do that I don't even have time to sit there and think about.

Okay. By doing like, what is the point of doing a market just to sell? That's not what I really want to do. So I probably should just sit down and try to make some goals. 'Cause I want this to sustain, to pay my bills.

[00:51:25] **David Crabill:** So what do you want to do? Like what drives you to keep running this business and to keep growing it?

[00:51:34] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Like I had mentioned earlier, the fact that it feels like it's an assignment that's what keeps me going. Sometimes you don't feel like doing it. You really don't, um, you don't feel like, ugh, it would just be so much easier to work for someone else. But then when I really think about having to work for someone else for the rest of my life, or however long, I need to work for. It sounds depressing. The fact that I don't, I don't wanna fail. I've done so many other things and it doesn't, it hasn't worked out. I'm like, something has to give man. I really, why do I want this so bad if it's not meant to work?

[00:52:10] **David Crabill:** So if another business opportunity came up that seemed like it was the right thing, do you feel like you would just drop the bakery entirely?

[00:52:20] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I don't know, like what, but maybe,

[00:52:23] **David Crabill:** Like you're not super driven to sell baked goods, right? You really are driven to have a successful business.

[00:52:33] **Soralla Gonzalez:** yeah, that, and it has to be something that's geared towards health and wellness and things like that. Because that's what I really like. I work out all the time. Day through Friday I work out and have to be health related. But the thought of doing something else. Start something else from scratch again, it just sounds like I.

[00:52:57] **David Crabill:** Well, like I said, it is growing and you're definitely on the path if you could stick with it for another two years, maybe even just one, but I think you'll search to see pretty big dividends and it does take that kind of. Uh, Stick with it attitude to get over the hurdles of business just because so many people quit.

So you do have to just stay at the market that, you know, you're stuck in the middle and you don't have the best placement, but, maybe you have to stay there for the next, I don't know, six months for you to get a better placement in the market or anything like that. Right. It's just, you have to deal with all those struggles in order to find success.

[00:53:41] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah.

[00:53:43] **David Crabill:** Well, you've been at this for a couple years and I know not everything has gone smoothly, which is normal in business, but what would you say to your former self? Like what would you say to someone who is starting out today?

[00:53:57] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Keep going and I've done this without accumulating a whole lot of debt. I just used my credit card. For the points, but I'm paying them off. So I'm doing this and I think that's why it's a lot slower for me too. I'm not putting anything in the oven, nothing. I'm not putting it on credit. But just keep going.

[00:54:17] **David Crabill:** So as you look forward, what are your plans? I know you're flying by the seat of your pants sometimes, but where would you like the business to go within the next year?

[00:54:29] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Well, I would like to work more from home. And I signed up for the corporate orders so that I can hopefully get into that as well. And that would keep me a lot more in my home, you know, still with a pretty good, um, schedule. I'm hoping for that.

[00:54:46] **David Crabill:** And your five year goals, where would you like to see yourself in five years?

[00:54:52] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I don't even know, honestly, if baking would be the thing, you know, because I like, like you were saying that I'm a business, [00:55:00] you know, I'm more into the business part of it. So I'm wondering is baking gonna be the thing or is it some other business type that I'm going to be doing? 'cause I, I don't know what I see myself doing.

Baking is hard. It's physically hard. Have you ever laminated dough? It's physical. It's physical work, and I don't see myself working that intensely for a very long time. I don't think that I want to do that. So I don't know if it'll just be something else I'll be doing. I don't know. I wish I knew.

[00:55:33] **David Crabill:** I, I could see like, you know, how you started the business focusing on keto cakes, keto cupcakes, and then you discovered sourdough and that, that's been more successful and that's taken over most of your business. But I could

actually see, somehow, some way you discover a product like a health conscious product.

I don't know if it would be a bar or what, but that would be really aligned with you wanting to focus on that care about health and fitness, but that'll also still allow you to be aligned with your food business and grow. Maybe it wouldn't even be a cottage food thing.

Like maybe you, this is leading you into something like a drink that you would be able to make, jump into the commercial space or something. I don't know. But I feel like I could see that happening where you're still trying to kind of find that passion for it. But this is leading you towards something that will be successful.

I mean, I feel like it already is successful. You haven't mentioned how much you sell at some of these markets. You definitely sell, I think you've sold over a thousand dollars of products at markets before, right?

[00:56:43] **Soralla Gonzalez:** That Fit Fest one, I did close to \$1,500 at that. That was a two day thing. So it was like something in one and the \$700 something the next day. I've done a lot of markets where I'm like \$800, \$600.

[00:57:00] **David Crabill:** Yeah. The point is that you're, you're selling, you're, you're, you're successful. You're, you're, you're selling products and people do like your products and come back for them. So, maybe, you can't see it yet, but there's something on the horizon that will allow it all to make sense.

[00:57:20] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Something's gotta give. I know what I have is unique and people want it. They just might not know about it or be informed about it. 'cause even the protein bars, like I did the math on the protein in each bar that I make. And it's about 18, almost 18 grams of protein for one bar. And both protein bars out there, they don't even have like 10 or 12 grams of protein. So something, something's gotta give. And

Something in me just keeps saying, keep going, just keep going. Like I had mentioned earlier, I listen to other entrepreneurs, not just in the baking industry, just entrepreneurs, like other business people, and they say that the only ones who fail are the ones that quit. And they could have been like, they were almost right there. Or they, they would've succeeded if they just you, you heard of like three feet from gold. That's how I feel that I am. Like I'm three feet from gold. You have to keep going. If you quit now and you, you could have just dug three more feet, you would've hit gold.

[00:58:23] **David Crabill:** Well, thank you so much, Soralla, for coming on and sharing with us today. Now, if someone would like to learn more about you, where can they find you or how can they reach out?

[00:58:34] **Soralla Gonzalez:** I'm very active in my social media, um, Instagram, so I'm [@delicioushealthybakes](#) on Instagram.

[00:58:41] **David Crabill:** And then you have the website too, right?

[00:58:44] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Yeah, it's [delicioushealthybakes.com](#).

[00:58:48] **David Crabill:** Well, thank you so much for coming on the show and sharing with us today.

[00:58:53] **Soralla Gonzalez:** Thank you too.

[00:58:57] **David Crabill:** That wraps up another episode of the Forrager Podcast.

And remember to check out my new [Cottage Food Pro membership](#), where you can get personalized feedback from me and other members like Soralla. To learn more, go to [cottagefoodpro.com](#).

For more information about this episode, go to [forrager.com/podcast/147](#).

If you feel like you've gotten a lot of value from this podcast, I have a favor to ask you. Could you take a quick moment right now and leave me either a review on Apple Podcasts or a rating on Spotify? It's truly the best way to support this show and help others like you find this podcast.

And finally, if you're thinking about selling your own homemade food, check out my free mini course where I walk you through the steps you need to take to get a cottage food business off the ground. To get the course, go to [cottagefoodcourse.com](#).

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