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## Boosting breast milk supply: 2 Singaporean men go for nuts and more to sell lactation-aid food

BY EVELINE GAN



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Mr Lee Chee Leong (left) and Mr David Ho (right), the men behind the startup 2NutGuys.

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These days, the common trend is a shift towards healthier food choices — even better if it is sustainable and transparently sourced.

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This has had a tangible impact on the food scene here as well.

In a three-part series, TODAY takes a look at a few homegrown brands to learn how they are doing their part to make positive changes to [Singaporeans' dietary choices and eating habits](#).

If you missed the first part, read it [here](#).

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This week, two men talked about why they started a business to fortify the nutritional needs of pregnant and lactating women.

## A MISSION THAT BEGAN WITH S\$5,000

A conversation with two grown men about galactagogues — substances that aid breast milk production and supply — may seem strange.

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But that is exactly what Mr David Ho, 35, and Mr Lee Chee Leong, 39 have been doing on a regular basis since they founded 2NutGuys at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

The startup offers nutritious nut butter and nut products aimed at helping breastfeeding mothers to increase or maintain their milk supply.

Its first product, Mummy's Nutmond Butter, is a nut butter containing lactogenic foods that are touted to support lactation. They include almonds, brewers' yeast, flax and chia seeds, and almond oil.

Its products are available on its online store. For example, the Baby Nutmond Butter, which contains roasted almonds and walnuts, flaxseed meal and medjool dates, is catered to pregnant women, weaning babies and toddlers, Mr Lee said.

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There are also other plant-based products such as an oat milk-based gelato and roasted almond milk.

From its humble beginnings — they started the business with S\$5,000, of which half was used to buy an industrial standard blender — the brand has since flourished in the lactation nutrition space.

“ **Both of us are quite thick-skinned — we asked mothers and looked around our network of friends and contacts on the struggles they faced during their breastfeeding journey, before zooming in on those who were nursing at the time.**

Mr David Ho, on asking women to try 2NutGuys' products

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A year into the business, they moved their home-based business to larger production spaces to cater to higher demand.

The business started at a time when Mr Lee had just lost his job after spending most of his career in sales and business development.

Mr Ho, who is married, oversees a human resource technology company and invests in a few startups. The two men got acquainted through networking site LinkedIn during Singapore's Covid-19 partial lockdown.

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They decided to work on a lactation nutrition solution to help support mothers' breastfeeding journey after observing gaps in the market for this consumer group.

Mr Lee said that they kicked off the brand with a nut butter because he was already experimenting with roasting nuts for his own consumption for health and fitness reasons.

“Almond is something that I like a lot. As we researched more, we found out that it’s also a galactagogue,” he added.

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For Mr Lee, the move to introduce a lactation food product was partly due to personal reasons. He recalled how his wife had struggled with a low breast milk supply after their child was born in 2018.

“I tried to help but I wasn’t very helpful. It’s my regret — that I was not involved enough in my wife’s breastfeeding journey.”

The two men said that they did a lot of research on foods that could aid breast milk supply and they also consulted a dietitian.

They invested in getting [nutritional labels](#) for their products by working closely with a dietitian in private practice here.

Mr Lee said that it is important to be “as clear and transparent as we can” about what they put in their products.

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Instrumental to their success was their network of friends and contacts who are mothers. They provided constructive feedback and helped test their products.

“Both of us are quite thick-skinned — we asked mothers and looked around our network of friends and contacts on the struggles they faced during their breastfeeding journey, before zooming in on those who were nursing at the time,” Mr Ho recalled.

When orders started coming in from mothers whom they do not know, Mr Ho and Mr Lee knew that their product had made a difference to those who tried it.



Some of the products from 2NutGuys.

Being males in the female-dominated market, they have had their fair share of scepticism from people they know as well as online users.

Mr Lee remembered his mother's reaction when he told her about his business idea. "My mum was, like, 'Are you serious? I didn't even breastfeed you!'" he said with a laugh.

The first media coverage on their foray into the lactation nutrient market drew a few negative comments, but there were also encouraging ones.

"We had several comments along the lines of, 'Ewww'. But we're also determined people and those comments spurred us on further.

"At the same time, we also received a lot of amazing feedback and encouragement from mothers," Mr Lee said.

Ms Lee Lishan, who has a seven-month-old baby, was anxious about having a low breast milk supply when she chanced upon 2NutGuys via Instagram. She decided to try their products after reading reviews from other breastfeeding mothers.

"I was building up my stash of breast milk to prepare to return to work (after maternity leave). It was quite stressful as I was worried that I might not have a sustainable milk stash for my baby while I'm back working full-time," the 33-year-old programme coordinator said.



Ms Lee also tried lactation cookies from other brands but felt “guilty” about consuming them because they were high in calories, and she was watching her health and weight.

She was “elated and relieved” when she noticed that her breast milk supply seemed to have significantly improved after consuming the Roasted Almond Milk from 2NutGuys twice a day. The plant-based milk is sweetened with Medjool dates, and contains less than 4 per cent sugar and 282 calories a serving.

“I notice a difference a few days after I drank the almond milk... It seems that I have finally found the (most) suitable lactation products for myself,” she added.

2NutGuys' products are available on its [webstore](#).

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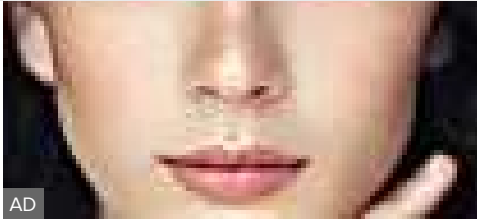
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