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FEATURED

16-year-old baker gaining business experience at farmers markets

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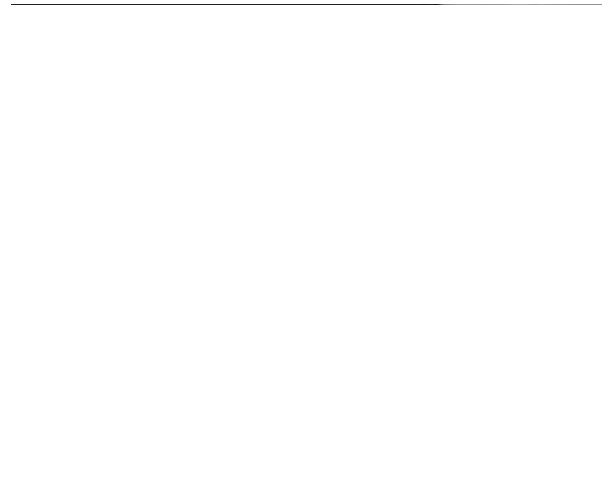
Chasedy Rotramel, left, gains business experience at the Fair Grove Farmers Market, where she operates Little Lucy's Bakery. She also is a weekly vendor at the Buffalo Farmers Market. Rebecca McDaniel, right, buys a baked good from Chasedy.

REFLEX PHOTO BY ANDREW C. JENKINS

One of the younger entrepreneurs at the Buffalo and Fair Grove farmers markets is Chasedy Rotramel.

The 16-year-old Buffalo native runs Little Lucy's Bakery, so named because of the nickname Chasedy's father gave her.

Despite her age, Chasedy offers a wide selection of baked goods at the two farmers markets, which she has set up at since last year. Some of her offerings include pepperoni bread, jalapeno cheese bread, cinnamon rolls, fruit pies, angel food cakes, butter crescents and jellies. Chasedy's baking sometimes is determined by what's in season: When gooseberries are ripe, a gooseberry pie might be in order.



Chasedy's passion for baking took off when she started making homemade bread with her mother.

"I just started helping Mom in the kitchen, and it grew," Chasedy said.

In addition to the farmers markets, Chasedy said she bakes special orders and hopes to further expand in that direction.

Coming up with new recipes — such as the pepperoni bread — is part of the baking process that Chasedy said she particularly enjoys. She said her favorite foods to cook are breads, partly because of the surprise of seeing how they change from batter to finished product in the oven.

"It's just fun seeing it through from beginning to end," Chasedy said.

Some of her recipes are from family members or friends, but Chasedy said many of her recipes are tweaked variations of existing recipes or original creations.

In the future Chasedy would like to open a bakery shop.

“It’s something I really enjoy,” she said. “It gives me pleasure. It’s something I’d like to do all my life.”

The farmers markets will continue to provide Chasedy with experience in not only business management and marketing but also customers. She said she’s enjoyed visiting with people at the markets and sharing her food with others.

In her spare time, Chasedy, the daughter of David and Bobbie Rotramel, plays the mandolin in a bluegrass band, Brett Dudenhoeffer and Young Guns. The band is scheduled to perform at the upcoming 28th annual Starvy Creek Bluegrass Festival, which is July 4-6 in Conway.

Little Lucy’s Bakery can be found at the Buffalo Farmers Market from 2 to 6 p.m. Tuesdays at the Pet Center parking lot or at the Fair Grove Farmers Market from 3 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays at the corner of Mo. 125 and Main Street at the Mill. For more information about Little Lucy’s Bakery, call (417) 733-0304.