

## Brothers Get Into a Pickle

• Michigan just keeps adding more and more appeal to the nation's lunch tables.

**McClure's Pickles** has joined a host of other locally made common-man pleasures that include Better Made potato chips, Faygo pop, and Zingerman's bread.

The pickles are the project of Joe and Bob McClure, brothers from Southfield who grew up helping their family make holiday gift batches of peppery pickles using a recipe handed down from their great-grandmother. Last August, the brothers turned the family hobby into a business, brewing up vats of pickles, stuffing them into jars with peppers and whole garlic cloves, and selling them locally at Black Lotus Brewing Co. and Bel Cibo Bistro and Market in Clawson, and in markets and restaurants in New York, where Bob, an actor, lives in Brooklyn. They also sell online at [mcclurespickles.com](http://mcclurespickles.com).

It's been a pickle-making, recipe-tweaking whirlwind ever since their summertime debut. In December, Black Lotus hosted a jam-packed pickle launch party. In January, the brothers secured a manufacturing facility in Ann Arbor that allowed them to quadruple production (though they still struggle to satisfy demand), and the pickles have garnered write-ups in *The New York Times* and *Time Out New York*.

Joe, 26, a doctoral candidate at Wayne State University, runs the Michigan end of the business, while Bob, 28, oversees the New York side; parents Jenny and Mike McClure pitch in with production. The brothers spend their free time scouting local produce and experimenting with new products (so far, relish, parsnips, and carrots seem promising, watermelon rinds less so). A garlic pickle that debuted last winter has received an "excellent response," Joe says.

Future plans include supplying gourmet-food retailers and determining who is going to ultimately assume full-time operation of the business. "Somebody is going to have to quit something," Joe says.

For now, they're content to be making every batch themselves.

"I like getting my hands dirty," Joe says. "I like going to Eastern Market at 3 in the morning and talking with those guys and trying to bargain. It's just something we really believe in — the product, supporting local farms, and getting away from those typical pickles." — *Alexa Stanard*

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN NATHAN URBANEK



**> DILL-SEEKERS**  
Bob (left) and Joe McClure in their Ann Arbor pickle manufacturing facility.