

## *Aultimate Produce Cafe*

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For several years, Gary Souther and dear friend, Carmen Lucero, tried and tried to establish their business, Aultimate Produce Café. Gary, a graduate from the University of Northern Colorado and long-time farmer, along with Carmen, a long-time waitress, felt that their life needed a change. From the beginning, both Gary and Carmen knew they wanted their business to be successful.

Their business began by selling roasted chilies by the bushel. Eventually, both realized that a seasonal product such as roasted chilies would not help their business grow. Carmen, confident about her hand held burritos and green chili began to sell them. Carmen put it will when she stated "Everyone loved my burritos." Yet, after eight months of running the restaurant, Gary began to worry. "I realized at the end of each month, I was adding \$2,000 of my own money to keep the restaurant afloat." Gary and Carmen knew they needed help in order to keep their dream successful.



*Owners Gary Souther and Carmen Lucero smile along with the rest of the gang.*



*Proud owners of Aultimate Produce Café: Gary Souther and Carmen Lucero.*

Gary and Carmen decided to visit the Greeley/Weld Small Business Development Center and they expressed their concerns to consultant, Jesse Esparza. After a few counseling sessions, Jesse realized there were some basic components missing from Gary and Carmen's business. One major concern was cash flow. Also missing from the business were monthly balance sheets, data records, and a marketing plan. Overall, there was no organizational structure. Through hard work and dedication, along with the help of consultant, Jesse Esparza, Gary and Carmen developed a business plan.

Within four short months both owners began to see a profit within their business. Their business plan helped them make strategic decisions which allowed them to put money back into their business to make it more profitable.

With the aid of the Greeley/Weld Small Business Development Center, Gary and Carmen were able to see their dream come back to life. Owning a successful business!

**For more information regarding the Aultimate Produce Café, please contact Gary Souther or Carmen Lucero at (970) 834-2707 or stop by the restaurant located at 215 1<sup>st</sup> Street in Ault.**