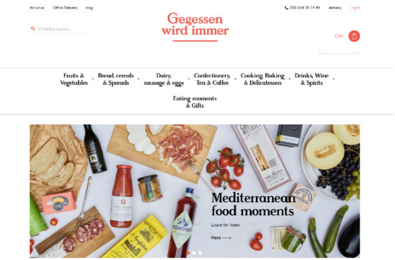
How a Berlin Startup is Bringing Artisan Food Back to Everyday Life

CUSTOMER STORIES WRITTEN BY MARINA PAPE

We all have to eat. But that's not a very inspiring starting point for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

One passionate team of foodies in Berlin have made it their mission to address the food ambivalence that our crazy, busy lives push us towards — and instead gently shift the German-grocery status quo of over-reliance on supermarkets and processed food **back to having artisan food in everyday lives**.



Gegessen Wird Immer is bringing artisan food back to everyday lives for German eaters.

Read on the for the story of how Gegessen Wird Immer grew to be a thriving, wholehearted online business that's blazing a farm fresh trail across Germany to deliver fresh quality produce to homes and offices with WooCommerce.

The Gegessen Wird Immer team, happy folks.

Beginnings, background, mission and a name to remind

Gegessen Wird Immer actually means "you always have to eat" in German. Co-founder Friederike explains they chose it over a simpler (and shorter) name as they wanted to provoke thought right from the get-go.

A foundational philosophy of Gegessen Wird Immer is that **food and eating should be central and celebrated**, not something done as an afterthought, on the side at the end of a long day in the office. What are you eating, with whom, when? Baked into the very name of the company is the vision of getting people to think about whether they are eating mindfully.

Friederike, Beatrice and Philipp started deinBiogarten.de in 2011, which grew to be Gegessen Wird Immer in May 2015.

The trio of founders have a variety of experience across entrepreneurship, marketing, buying and eCommerce. Their collaboration began in August 2011 when they started an organic fruit and vegetable store, *deinBiogarten.de*, which they ran for four years.

The store did well but Philipp, Beatrice and Friederike realised there were many amazing products that lacked the correct certification to be listed in their range (as it was then defined). Germany has some of the strictest food certification laws out there — a good thing, but a challenge for small-batchers:

> ***Some producers are just too small and can't afford the label, they might just have a tiny team of two and have no time to go through all the paperwork. — Friederike Tschacksch, co-founder***

Given the sea of biological, organic and other food certifications in Germany (and indeed, the world), browsing in an uncurated supermarket can be pretty overwhelming. It's hard to know what really is quality or not, and decipher the various level of organic-ness.

Deciphering what is and isn't "healthy" food can be a trick. Gegessen Wird Immer aims to make it much easier.

A new idea took shape: **to create a brand and store that people would trust even beyond certifications and labels**, where they could shop with confidence and have access to great stuff to eat no matter their address.

Why does the cheese taste different in summer and winter? Why don't we have goats cheese in winter? These are the types of things one wouldn't scratch the surface of picking between blocks in a fluorescent lit aisle, but Gegessen Wird Immer address head on.

The mission: "*to bring food, made with an artisan care, back into everyday life for as many people as possible.*"

These look tasty.

Choosing a means of distribution and the importance of winning trust

An option would have been to start a beautiful brick and mortar store in all the major cities, but *Gegessen Wird Immer* wanted to democratise artisanal eating (as far as budgets allow).

Within bigger cities, people have the opportunity to go to market and stores, where they have really nice products, **but in the countryside there is no chance**. All that can be found are huge discount supermarkets.

> ***We wanted to use our eCommerce shop to deliver to everyone in every area — remote or city — so everyone has the chance to experience great food. The internet creates a platform everyone can access, giving an equal chance to all to buy.***

Supermarkets will always be needed for staples — Gegessen Wird Immer don't sell toilet paper — but for special items, treats, luxury and finer things, their pages are open for business.

Gutes Olivenöl
Worauf es beim Kauf ankommt
Zum Blog ⟶

Laundry detergent isn't their specialty, but fine food is aplenty.

At this stage, there are not many companies in Germany attempting artisanal food eCommerce. Friederike explains that German people are slower in adopting to new technology and that there is still a lack of trust towards ordering food online.

They needed to build up their business from scratch and win the trust of people on the other side of the internet. They did this through being transparent, providing compelling information and meticulously curating a selection of high quality produce and producers.

Only the highest quality: choosing producers and having team tastings

> ***Quality comes first. We prove this with our daily use. We learn all about the producers, they get know us and we get to know their ingredients and way of working.***

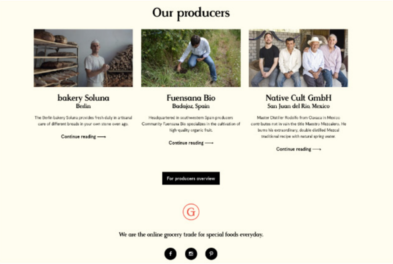
When it comes to choosing producers, Gegessen Wird Immer take great care. There is a lot of talking and much of the negotiating is "old handshake business." They make sure philosophies are aligned, then **all products are checked and tested by an internal team** including a food scientist and someone who studied biological planting.

The next stage is taste-testing by the whole team at a weekly gathering. Great wine but thumbs down from the team? Out.

A jam test going on at Gegessen Wird Immer HQ.

They work hard to **create a connection with the producers**: each one has a page on the site with photos, story and even a map showing where the product is from. They look for an honest passion and curiosity, high quality and environmental awareness that means a producer would never increase quantity at the expense of quality.

> *It's like show and tell, we show the testers and let the customers see and decide. It's not like buying Nike shoes. People need to trust first, then they'll buy. They don't know the jam lady, but we do.*



Our producers

bakery Soluna
Berlin

The Berlin bakery Soluna provides fresh daily in artisanal care of different breads in your own stone oven ago.

Fuensana Bio
Badajoz, Spain

Headquartered in southwestern Spain producers Community Fuensana Bio specializes in the cultivation of high-quality organic fruit.

Native Cult GmbH
San Juan del Rio, Mexico

Master Distiller Rodolfo from Oaxaca in Mexico contributes not in vain the title Maestro Mezcalero. He burns his extraordinary, double distilled Mezcal traditional recipe with natural spring water.

We are the online grocery trade for special foods everyday.

Every producer has a dedicated page, telling their story and taking the customer into the origin of the product.

Ongoing relationship management and making banana jam

The relationship with producers is ongoing, and conversations happen weekly or biweekly. Unlike other industries where buying takes place once or twice a year, there can be changes and variations on a daily basis.

> *"Why did you make the last bread like that? It's little harder than before." We keep in very close contact. Sometimes good products are just not available anymore. It's really important to us not to throw away or order too much. We use almost everything, what we don't sell we cook for team lunch!*

Gegessen Wird Immer don't work on consignment, so that the risk is theirs and not on the producer. They plan weekly, buy and store produce in their warehouse in Berlin, predicting demand as accurately as they can. When there is marketing activity or blogger collaboration, potential spikes need to be taken into consideration.

> *Today I made risotto for sixteen people with asparagus from last week. We would never throw away stuff. We get more than two tonnes of fruit every week and we don't throw away anything.*

Lunch for the team!

In their quest to throw away the minimum, they have also begun to look at repurposing extra fruit and veg into new collaborative products. Most recently they partnered with a café in Berlin. who used their ripe fruit to make the best ice cream, banana bread and fresh juices in town.

Something Gegessen Wird Immer have learnt, is to **see through the smoke and mirrors of marketing**:

> ***You get to know some producer, and think they are nice, then realize the products aren't good. It's easy to paint a picture that isn't real. Are they passionate? If not, why are they doing what they're doing?***

Tips for building trust with your store

The Gegessen Wird Immer team have put a lot of effort into creating an online presence that is friendly, open, informative and trust-building. What do you need to do this?

Focus on customer service

Email is a crucial feedback loop for Gegessen Wird Immer. While regular customers will reach out before purchasing, new customers tend to get in touch after-sale asking with help about what to make.

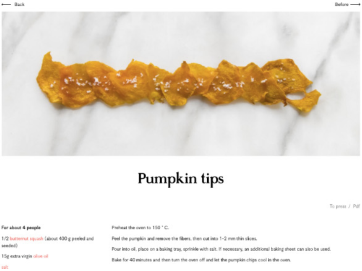
If someone calls, even if they are unhappy, Gegessen Wird Immer see it as good — **it helps them to improve the delivery and service they offer**.

> *Sometimes customers bring up good ideas, sometimes they complain and they help us to improve.*

Create a blog to educate your customers

This business is built around a huge topic! Everyone in the team lives the mission, and their blog is where they are able to go beyond basic product information and give more detail, recipes, inspiration, and education.

For example, on their blog you can learn how to make cinnamon rolls, find a recipe for lentil soup or get tips for what to do with pumpkin.



Pumpkin tips

For about 4 people

1/2 butternut squash (about 400 g peeled and seeded)

15g extra virgin olive oil

salt

Preheat the oven to 150 ° C.

Peel the pumpkin and remove the fibers, then cut into 1-2 mm thin slices.

Pour into oil, place on a baking tray, sprinkle with salt. If necessary, an additional baking sheet can also be used.

Bake for 40 minutes and then turn the oven off and let the pumpkin chips cool in the oven.

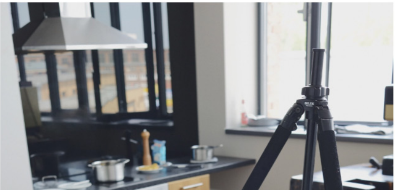
Create detailed, beautiful product pages

Many eCommerce store owners take the less is more route for their product pages, but on this store you will find some of the longest descriptions you've ever seen.

And it works. **It's not for SEO, it's for interest — and because Gegessen Wird Immer know their customers are interested**. Can you freeze products? Why shouldn't bananas be side by side? We love that they chose to go long on their products pages.

> *In a normal supermarket you get a tiny bit of shelf and a stock model. [For us] it's not a fake person showing the eggs. It's the guy who actually lives with the hens.*

And, the images are absolutely beautiful. Shot in-house, they capture the freshness and vibrance of fresh food.



All of the product photos are shot in-house, to ensure quality graphics across the website.

> *We wanted to seize the opportunities of digitization, so that producers and consumers can meet again — even if [there are] sometimes hundreds of kilometers in between.*
> *With 20,000 products in a supermarket, how can you show the producers?*

Three snips of advice for aspiring eCommerce startups

These final tips were given to us directly from Friederike, Beatrice and Philip:

1. **Build a team that is engaged** and personally involved in your products. The team all love food and are eating all day.
2. Have a very good plan, but **think about plan B**. Don't stick to plan A if you realise what you are currently doing might not be the best idea.
3. **Be willing to roll with each day**. Believe that you will make it through, but know it's possible it won't be done the way you planned to get there.

Passion for food and the customer experience makes this store shine

We love the passion and philosophy that drive this fresh online food business. **The integrity really shines through, and we're not surprised they've taken Germany by storm**.

In fact, when in Berlin in July for our Woo team meetup, I even spied one of their boxes in a shop window:

Gegessen
wird immer
Gegessen
Gegessen

Whilst on WooTrip in Berlin, I spotted some boxes in a coffee shop that had likely just delivered something very tasty.

Would you ever switch to doing your grocery shopping online? Do you already? Chat with us in the comments.

Thanks for reading — and if you happen to live in Germany, do give this store a visit 🙂