



**Marcus Sheanshang, JBM Envelope Co.,
Manufacturer of Home Garden Seed Packets
Lebanon, OH**



JBM Envelope Company is a second generation family business. When Greg Sheanshang started it in 1985, he named it for his three children: Jennifer, Bridget and Marcus. Marcus Sheanshang bought the business in 2008 after working in different capacities on the factory floor starting at age 11. “Some of the people I worked with as a kid are still here today,” he notes. Likewise, his 12-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son come in on snow days and in summer. “They do some filing, and put together sample kits.” Will they eventually take over the business? “Only if it makes them happy,” says Marcus.

When visitors come to the 100,000 square foot facility they can’t help but notice two 20 x 40 foot garden beds right in front. Tended by small rotating groups of people and led by garden committee head Jane Snyder, the garden hints at the breadth and depth of the community spirit that permeates the company. Harvested vegetables are sold to employees, and the money is donated to a worthy organization. The goal, Marcus explains, is to provide fresh, healthy food to team members as part of the company’s wellness program, while also helping out the Interfaith Hospitality Network, a local non-profit organization that provides support for homeless families. Over the years, almost \$6000 has been donated in this fashion. How do they deal with weeds? “Lots of straw,” laughs Marcus. As for planting and harvesting, “a list goes up every week and team members sign up.”

Marcus refers to the 150 JBM workers “team members,” and it’s not just words. The business *is* a team effort. The three factory shifts meet monthly to discuss company initiatives, sustainable practices, and other important topics. In addition to these company-wide meetings, Executive, Leadership, and Innovation teams get together regularly to work collaboratively on exploring solutions to problems. This focus on communications is time well spent, Marcus believes. “We want to make the company culture the best it can be, and offer team members the tools they need to be the best versions of themselves.” One of these tools is a program that offers step-by-step advice on money management, including debt reduction and budgeting plans. Any JBM worker that wants to schedule a consultation about their personal finances can do so, and the tab is picked up by the company. “We want our team members to have a good life,” explains Marcus.

The busy Sheanshang family life is focused around the garden and sports, and the occasional hunting expedition. Kristie, Marcus' wife has her own consulting business in which she inspires and empowers women. The entire family enjoys planting a large vegetable and flower garden on their 3½-acre property. "We have chickens and dogs," notes Marcus. "Last year we planted 17 tomato plants on what had been a chicken run. We gave away bushels of heirloom tomatoes. And the kids had a tomato stand!"



The company garden, started about eight years ago, produces tomatoes, squash, spinach, lettuce, and other vegetables.

JBM Packaging has been making home garden seed packets since 2013. They represent an important, and growing, component of a diverse customer base that includes fragrance packagers, chocolatiers, pharmaceutical companies, banks, and more. Recently the company invested in a new printing press and upgraded folding equipment to expedite seed packet production. The corporate mission is to "deliver meaningfully unique solutions which solve customers' problems." In the seed packet business that might mean working with inks that don't fade in the sun, sourcing paper that holds up to the rigors of the garden, and developing seal-and-reseal packets that withstand repeated use and rough handling. A tall order, for sure. "We're in it for the long run," states Marcus. "We love having an opportunity to impact family-minded companies like the independent seed businesses. And we believe that better solutions lead to better lives which, in turn, make a better world."