



THE SECRET RECIPE

Still a Secret

For years, Colonel Harland Sanders carried the secret formula for his Kentucky Fried Chicken in his head and the spice mixture in his car. Today, the recipe is locked away in a safe in Louisville, Kentucky. Only a handful of people know that multi-million dollar recipe, and each is obligated to strict confidentiality by contract.

The Beginning of the Original

The Colonel developed the formula back in the 1930s when he operated the Sanders Court & Cafe restaurant and motel in Corbin, Kentucky. There, his blend of 11 herbs and spices first developed a loyal following of customers.

"In those days, I hand-mixed the spices like mixing cement on a specially cleaned concrete floor on my back porch in Corbin," the Colonel recalled. "I used a scoop to make a tunnel in the flour and then carefully mixed in the herbs and spices."

The Recipe Goes High Tech

Today, security precautions protecting the recipe would make James Bond proud. One company blends a formulation that represents part of the recipe while another spice company blends the remainder. As a final safeguard, a computer processing system is used to standardize the blending of the products to ensure neither company has the complete recipe.

"It boggles the mind just to think of all the procedures and precautions the company takes to protect my recipe," the Colonel said, "especially when I think how Claudia and I used to operate. She was my packing girl, my warehouse supervisor, my delivery person—you name it. Our garage was the warehouse."

"After I hit the road selling franchises for my chicken, that left Claudia behind to fill the orders for the seasoned flour mix. She'd fill the day's orders in little paper sacks with cellophane linings and package them for shipment. Then she had to put them on a midnight train."

Little did the Colonel and Claudia dream in those days that his Secret Recipe of 11 Herbs & Spices would be famous around the world.