

Feelgood foodie

Cooking nutritious meals for his sick wife opened Adrian's eyes to making baby food better

WHO: Adrian Pike, 39, is originally from England. He now lives with his son Harry, 6, in Hawkes Bay, New Zealand

WAS: A restaurateur in London

NOW: Founder and owner of Rafferty's Garden baby food

While caring for his wife, Jacqui, who passed away a year ago after a four-year battle with cancer, Adrian learnt a lot about nutrition. He decided to set up a company that made nutritious, delicious food for babies and toddlers, and Rafferty's Garden was born.

What's the big idea?

My wife's illness massively encouraged my interest in nutrition. I spent four years looking into what was good for you and what wasn't. Combined with looking after my son, and realising that a lot of kids aren't getting the nutrition they should be, I decided I wanted to produce a premium baby food, like I made for my son at home, in convenient packaging.

When did it strike?

Nearly three years ago my parents, my brother and his wife and their 6-month-old daughter Matilda came over for a holiday. My mother refuses to cook when I am around so they sent me into the kitchen and I went to work (I got out of the washing up, so that was something). Matilda wouldn't eat bought baby food, so I was cooking and mixing fruit and vegetables because



I knew how important it was to get vegies into children. She ate it and loved it. The idea came out of that.

Spreading the word

I had no idea how to go about it but we decided to advertise in some major magazines. We made our advertising a little bit cheeky to get readers' attention: 'There's a new ingredient in baby food – taste'.

And now?

A lot of hard work has gone into it. We are the second-largest seller of 'wet' baby food in Australia. We have a natural range and have just launched an organic range. We're also about to

move into the Asian market. We have four people in the office now and, indirectly, probably employ about 300.

How does Harry fit in?

I have a full-time carer for Harry, but now he's at school I make sure I'm home to cook dinner and spend time with him before tucking him into bed. He's a fantastic eater – how many boys eat brussels sprouts and parsnips?

The best bits

Knowing that, each and every day, my business is helping families provide their children with the very best baby food.

The hardest part

Being a small team in a big world. I work over 14-15 hours a day and do a lot of work at night once Harry's in bed. **PP**

Lessons learnt

1. Never give up.
2. Keep fighting for what you believe in for children.
3. Parents do want the best for their babies, and that is reflected in the rapid growth of this baby food range.