

## LA TORTILLA FACTORY – SANTA ROSA, CA



“Most of the deals we do at Bay Area Development Company are real estate related, but we are also actively using 504 to finance capital equipment. It was great working with La Tortilla Factory to secure financing for machinery and equipment that will directly expand their capacity; in this case, through the addition of a large tortilla production line.”

**ROBERT THOMPSON**  
Vice President and Loan Officer  
Bay Area Development Company

When Carlos Tamayo established La Tortilla Factory in Santa Rosa 30 years ago, he did so with the wholehearted support of his entire family. Carlos’ dream was to start a business with his parents and he saw a need in the marketplace for high quality, wholesome Mexican food, especially tortilla products. Eager to fill the void, Carlos’ parents contributed their vast restaurant experience to the business, with his father going so far as to quit his job to work at a tortilla factory in order to learn the industry from the inside out. Carlos himself left his banking job in order to shadow a friend who owned a tortilla factory. One of Carlos’ brothers also quit his banking job to join the family business while a second brother attended the American Institute of Baking to ensure they delivered great tasting products that were innovative and healthy.

La Tortilla Factory prides itself on being a step ahead of others in the marketplace by offering consumers precisely what they want. In answer to the low carbohydrate craze, the company produced the first low-carb, whole wheat tortillas, which are now featured in several national weight loss programs. Fat-free tortillas, flavored wraps and preservative-free corn and flour tortillas were also added to their product mix. In 2004, working with Bob Thompson of Bay Area Development Company and Kim August of Exchange Bank, La Tortilla Factory obtained a 504 loan to purchase equipment needed to accommodate its continued growth as well as the introduction of a third production line.

Today, La Tortilla Factory distributes its products nationwide and plans to introduce a gluten-free line of tortilla products, proof of the company’s continued commitment to maintain a competitive edge through market innovation. With 160 employees, the La Tortilla Factory “family” has grown considerably in the last 30 years, but upholds its close-knit culture. And, Carlos points out with extreme pride that those employees include his son, who attended the Culinary Institute of America, and a nephew, which he sees as the greatest possible legacy and thank you to his parents for their hard work and sacrifice three decades ago.