



FORT MYERS, FL

76°

RAIN

Sunrise 06:58 am
Sunset 08:07 pm
NO ALERTS

CURRENTLY

PRECIP	80%
HUMIDITY	94%
VISIBILITY	10 mi
WIND	at 0mph
DEWPOINT	74°
PRESSURE	30.01 in



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After dramatic weight loss, Immokalee grocery store owner helps customers eat healthier

by Sean Martinelli — August 7, 2020 2 min read



IMMOKALEE, Fla. — Franck LeGrand had been gaining weight so quickly he didn't realize just how bad things had started to get. Just a few years after the Immokalee native took over his father's grocery store, he had ballooned to more than 300 pounds. LeGrand's doctor gave him a stern warning: change your eating habits or die.

"That was an eye opener," LeGrand said. "No one has ever [told me] if you don't do this soon, you're going to die."

LeGrand knew he had to start eating healthier. Within a span of just a few years, his father, wife, child and mother-in-law all passed away unexpectedly.

"The last thing that I want is for my kids to lose somebody else that is meaningful in their life," LeGrand said.



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After making significant changes to his diet, LeGrand traded high-sodium and fried foods for more fruits and vegetables. He lost more than 100 pounds and is now inspiring his customers at LeGrand Caribbean Market in Immokalee to do the same.

In 2017, LeGrand teamed up with the Blue Zones Project, an initiative that works with communities to encourage healthy eating habits. Even though Immokalee produces millions of pounds of fresh produce each year, access to fruits and vegetables in grocery stores there is still lacking. With the help of Blue Zones, LeGrand was able to significantly expand his produce offerings for customers.

"I think what Franck's has shown so well is... you can have those great tasting foods that you really enjoy, but they don't have to be bad for you," David Longfield-Smith, who works for the Blue-Zones Project said.

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LeGrand is now noticing more customers choose healthier options at his store and hopes to expand offerings even more.

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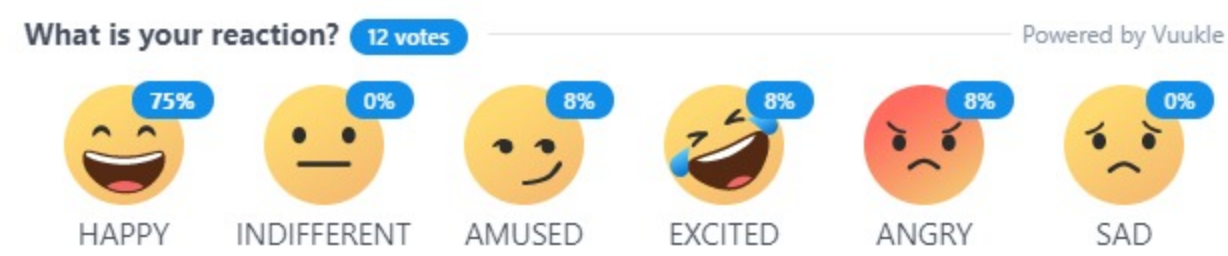
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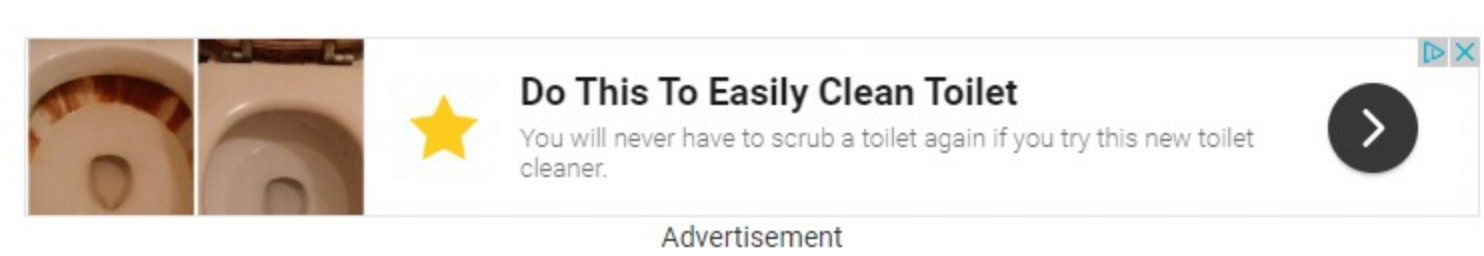
"If my story can help anyone else, I'm more than willing to tell it," LeGrand said.



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