The grocery list says “hot sauce,” but if you don’t have a go-to peppery pep-up, you may find yourself staring at shelves of little bottles, wondering, “What’s the difference?”

Fortunately, one uniquely North Carolina sauce breaks the condiment mold. Cackalacky™ Spice Sauce isn’t merely a hot sauce. “We intentionally call it a spice sauce,” says owner and creator Page Skelton, Sr. “It’s much more than a hot sauce. The flavor profile and layers of flavor make it stand out.”

Slightly sweet, a pinch piquant, and seriously orange, Cackalacky’s thickener is what makes this sauce one-of-a-kind. North Carolina sweet potatoes provide color and sweetness and are the perfect vehicle for bringing the other ingredients together. Along with the sweet heat of sweet potatoes and chilies is a hint of smoke and notes of Key lime juice.

And while this Chapel Hill-born sauce is a standalone knockout, enthusiasts suggest recipes from wings to baked beans to dip to pie. The sauce is as versatile as it is tasty: “My wife won’t eat scrambled eggs without it,” Skelton adds.

Unfulfilled by the corporate grind, Skelton says he became obsessed with sauce-making. “I would just come home from my day job and experiment. I was like a mad scientist.” After months of trial and error, “I tried the sweet potatoes, and knew I had it when I came home from work and my wife was putting Cackalacky on crackers.”

That was 2001. Since then Skelton has taken his sauce out of his kitchen and into retail locales across the country. From his first account at A Southern Season to today’s triumphs, this orange potion has allowed Skelton to work on his own terms. From demos at Costco to delivering Cackalacky to stores, to being a stay-at-home dad to his son Page Jr., this ambassador of the sweetest spud is driven to succeed. “I look at my business every day like I’m going out of business,” he says. “I put in 110 percent every day. It’s my passion in life.”

For more information, including delicious “zestipes,” visit www.cackalacky.com.