

DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Ginsburg Bakery opts for even more bagel-making capacity, selecting a system that brings flexibility and automation

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Ginsburg Bakery depends on the skills of (from left) Dan, Mike, Jack, Chris and John Mulloy to succeed in an increasingly competitive bakery environment.

Success promotes growth. Rye bread and bagel specialist Ginsburg Bakery found its niche as a “baker’s baker,” and managers thought the Atlantic City, NJ plant had enough bagel capacity. Then, last year, Ginsburg’s VIP bagel customer wanted even more of the company’s output. This time, the customer requested authentic New York-style boiled bagels.

“It really comes down to supply and demand,” said Jack Mulloy, c.e.o. and head of the family that has owned and operated Ginsburg for more than 25 years.

In choosing an automated system, the family also opted for flexibility. “Before, with just two ovens, we could make more than we could bake,” said Daniel Mulloy, Ginsburg’s c.f.o. “Now we can make as many kinds of products as our customers want.”

A BAKER’S BAKER. Established in 1903, Ginsburg Bakery was acquired in 1979 by Jack Mulloy, then a Philadelphia deli and supermarket operator. His business partner at that time was a baker, another factor in his decision. Ginsburg operated as a totally fresh, full-service bakery supplying bread, cakes and pastries to retail grocers up and down the Jersey Coast.

SEA CHANGE. Another turning point occurred in 1992, when a large bagel company approached Ginsburg, asking it to produce and package its bagels. “That company needed a co-packer,” Mr. Mulloy said. “They really taught us a lot: how to put in controls, how to manage quality assurance, how to audit, clean and more. It was great for us. Many procedures were put in place then that remain with us now. And we still have that customer today.”

“This is a 24/7 bakery, operating 365 days a year,” Mr. Mulloy said. “Summer is still the ‘season’ here, but our casino business continues through the year-end holidays and the NFL Super Bowl. It gets slower for the next three months, and then the cycle starts up again.”

Today, the bakery operates with Jack Mulloy as president. His sons Dan, John, Michael and Chris. As c.f.o., Dan handles not only “the numbers” but also sales and customer services, while John functions as general manager and plant manager. Production operations are under Michael and Chris’ control.

The bakery’s chief engineer is George Sanderlin, and its Sanitarian is Jose Lugo. Dan described his father as “the big thinker” responsible for the company’s direction, but its daily responsibilities reside with the four brothers.

“Our father put us into different departments and switched us around,” he continued. “At that time, we had a plant manager from outside the family, and we reported to him. With experience, we rose in the organization.”

MORE BAGELS. During the second half of 2005, a co-pack customer asked Ginsburg to supply it with boiled bagels. “We wanted to answer their need,” Mr. Mulloy said. But the bakery lacked bagel boiling equipment, and even more significantly, it did not have room in its building to accommodate the equipment needed.

“Our 60-ft oven is from 1963, so we already had questions about capacity,” he continued. “Then I saw how big the boiler was!” That’s when the family made its decision to add to the size of the bakery to accommodate an automatic peel board unloader, the boiler and an 80-ft oven.

“Everyone in the industry told us that the Heat and Control boiler was the technology of choice,” Mr. Mulloy said. “We knew we wanted another Werner & Pfleiderer oven, so we went right to Gemini Bakery Equipment Company for that.



Frames assure proper shape for Ginsburg’s rye breads.



Rye bread is expertly cut before baking to assure optimum interior structure and appearance.

Quality of machinery and service ranked at the top of Ginsburg’s criteria, according to Mr. Mulloy.

“And Gemini helped us with the line layout,” he said.

SHOEHORN FIT. The 5,200-sq-ft addition began in February. With the walls up, it was time to bring in the equipment. But even careful planning

can sometimes miss a point or two. Bakery managers and their vendors went through dozens of drawings and layouts. It got to the point where Dan Mulloy said he went out into the bakery and paced off the length of new oven, putting a mark on the wall to show where it would end. "Even so, I was a couple feet off," he said, pointing to the mark.

The Ginsburg plant uses all its floor space to maximum potential. "When you bring a piece of equipment into the plant, it can affect everything else in the bakery," Mr. Mulloy said. "A couple years ago, we put in our first Werner & Pfleiderer 80-ft oven, and we had to move nearly every piece of equipment in the plant to accomplish this."

All this work was done during operating hours, so a temporary wall was put in place to isolate construction from production.

NEW LINE. Looking at the bakery's layout today, an observer sees the new oven set at a right angle to the other two ovens.

The bagel line is a Gemini/ABI four-lane rotary knife divider which cuts individual dough pieces that feed into four horizontal bagel formers. These shape the dough between mandrels and curved conveyor belts to produce the bagel's typical shape. Bagels drop onto cornmeal dusted peel boards and are conveyed to a rack loading station.

A quick trip through the hot water seals the bagel surfaces, giving the crust its taught, shiny appearance after baking. A Gemini/ABI transfer conveys the bagels out of the hot water and moves them under a seeder stationed ahead of the oven that applies sesame, poppy and other toppings as required. The Werner & Pfleiderer Ecotherm Plus Duo indirect-fired oven supplied by Gemini quickly bakes both boiled and steamed bagels. From the oven, bagels ride a conveyor upstairs to a spiral cooling system.

"Boiled bagels are new to us, so it's been a learning experience," Mr. Mulloy said. "With this oven, we doubled capacity and achieved more control. But we needed to retrain our people to deal with different constraints."

VOLUME RATED. Rye styles include unseeded, seeded, pumpernickel and marble in bulk, rounds, split loaves and sliced for retail and food service use. Bagel varieties — plain, cinnamon raisin, onion, pumpernickel, marble, sesame, poppy, "everything," blueberry and whole-wheat — come in 2-, 3- and 4-oz sizes and are available in bulk, fresh, frozen, sliced and bagged for retail. The company also produces rolls tailored to customer needs.

The bakery's second floor houses the dough mixing room and its Peerless Royal horizontal mixers. "We use a new-style trough to move doughs from the mixer to the floor chute," Dan Mulloy said. "It's basically a motorized conveyor on wheels, designed for us by G&F."



Boiling creates the taught, shiny crusts of New York-style bagels seen here traveling from the oven to the cooler.

Three processing lines occupy the bakery's main floor: a roll line, a bread line and the bagel line. Cooling operations involve both ambient and enclosed spiral coolers. "We recently added the ambient cooler to give us an extra two hours of dwell time," Mr. Mulloy explained. This is used primarily for rye, whole-wheat and white bread supplied fresh to casino service operations. The busy bakery employs 120 to 160 persons, depending on the season.

SUPERIOR STANDARD. Ginsburg positions itself as a custom baker, serving customers as both consultant and baker, "helping to identify, develop and produce the breads, rolls and bagels that consumers crave, with custom formulations and distinctive packaging solutions," as noted by the company's Web site, www.GinsburgBakery.com.

This means striving for, attaining and maintaining the highest standards. The bakery consistently earns the Superior rating from AIB International inspections.

Products baked at the Atlantic City facility are certified K Parve, a status granted by rabbinical supervision.

FLEXIBLE TO CHANGE. With its recent expansion, Ginsburg is thoroughly committed to bagels, but the new line brings additional flexibility.

"We are automated to a point but flexible to change," is how Dan Mulloy described plant operations. "And we are constantly changing things around here to accommodate growth."

"I believe we have about three years until we fill up capacity here again," Mr. Mulloy estimated. "One customer accounts for a quarter of the new line's capacity. We expect this and additional business to pick up over the next couple years."

The original bakery covered 43,000 sq ft; now, it's at 75,000 sq ft. "I think we have about 30 more linear feet on this site, but that's it," Mr. Mulloy said.

Ginsburg's business is good but demanding, "In the baking industry, you have to keep growing," Mr. Mulloy said. "The number of bakeries is shrinking. You have to find your niche, compete and grow. And with operating costs — fuel, energy, health insurance, ingredients, plastics — all going up in the past 18 months, you have to get faster, get leaner and improve output."



An 80-ft. indirect-fired oven was required to increase bagel baking capacity.

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