

# Positive effect

AS A REACTION TO A MASSIVE HYGIENE SCANDAL IN A MAJOR GERMAN COMMERCIAL BAKERY LAST YEAR WHICH PROFOUNDLY SHOOK THE INDUSTRY'S PUBLIC IMAGE, A TEAM OF ADVISORS HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, THE ABS, TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE WITH INVESTMENT PROJECTS, COMPANY ORGANIZATION AND IN CRISIS SITUATIONS – EXTENDING FAR BEYOND THE TOPIC OF HYGIENE

**+** Each brings with them a good reputation and many years of success as a manager, head of production, scientist, lawyer or IFS specialist. They know and appreciate one another, which is why last year they came together after the closure of the Müller-Brot GmbH in Neufahrn, to respond to the event not only in the media but also in practice. They were aware that not only had the baking industry's public image been damaged, but also that more stringent monitoring by the supervisory authorities and/or customer audits would be expected.

## Their concept: Help for self-help

The range of services provided by the team comprises various modules that can be requested individually or collectively,

and extend from pure consultancy to implementation and supervision, depending on the customer's wishes.

- 1) Hygiene management: The ABS competence team checks the actual management structures and the decision-making and competence patterns, makes recommendations for changes and offers a customized training program for management teams. In parallel with this the team prepares calculations and cost estimates on the test bed, prepares risk analyses, and identifies where and how hygiene can also be implemented more economically.
- 2) The advisers take care to ensure an integrated hygiene and pest control concept that encompasses the whole of the supply chain, and the tools needed to comply with and monitor it.

## The ABS team of advisors



**1 Günther Behringer** (61) is a well-known personality in the German baked goods industry. As a production/plant manager and as a manager in various industrial bakeries he specializes in process analyses and management structures at senior management level. As President of the VDB (Bakery Industry Federation, a professional organization in Germany, Austria and Switzerland) he is also a perfect networker whose contacts extend far beyond the baking industry.

**2 Prof. Dr. Thomas Becker** (46) is a Professor at the Technische Universität München (Technical University of Munich). The subjects of his professorial chair also include cereals' technology and cereals' process engineering. He is currently the most important scientist in the cereals' processing area, and fortunately for the industry he is closely associated with the practical application of the science rather than living in an ivory tower. Together with the WIG (Weihenstephan Institute for Grain Research) his chair organizes an annual conference aimed at a fusion of practice and science.

**3 Andreas Swoboda** (44) studied Food Technology and Business Administration. He is now the CEO of the Quant Qualitätssicherung GmbH, a consulting institute for quality, nutrition and safety matters in the food industry. He is also a member of the Supervisory Board of International Featured Standards (IFS) and a member of the Advisory Council in the Genetically Unmodified Food Association (VLOG) and in the bio mit Gesicht GmbH.

**4 Helmut Martell** (66), a lawyer, executive director of food industry associations and for many years executive director of the Federation of German Industrial Bakeries, is now a partner in a law practice specializing in food and commercial law matters. His specialisms in the ABS team include crisis management, contacts with authorities and public relations.

**5 Konrad Mändli** (62) is the proprietor of the Mändli Bread and Baked Goods Consultancy service in Waldkirch, Switzerland. A master baker and confectioner and bakery technologist,

- 3) Analysis of the current actual situation, maintenance and investment plans for buildings and plant with a detailed assessment of the hygiene standards, and suggestions for improvement if necessary.
- 4) Process analysis regardless of established structures, identification of weak points, and formulation of alternatives.
- 5) Examination of quality management and quality assurance processes in consultation with the employees involved; efficiency analysis.
- 6) Producing company-specific test and action catalogues to comply with current legal regulations.
- 7) Preparing a customized food defence concept.
- 9) Support during crisis management.
- 9) Mediation during disputes with authorities and suppliers about hygiene issues and suggested solutions.

ABS places great value on securing, in the long term, the hygiene status that is achieved.

The competition is tough and cost pressure is high, which means that detailed analyses and strategic considerations often fall by the wayside. The ABS competence team has set itself the task of supporting the baking businesses as an independent helper. Florian Preuss, who is coordinating the work, can provide further information about the work: [PREUSS\\_F@quant-qs.de](mailto:PREUSS_F@quant-qs.de). +++

he brings with him his many years of experience in senior management positions in major Swiss bakery businesses. His specialisms in the ABS include process and organization design, bread and baked goods manufacturing technology, plant commissioning, quality management and crisis management.

6 After agricultural training, **Florian Preuss** (36) studied Ecological Agricultural Sciences and graduated with a degree in Engineering. Following his degree course, he worked for three years in Quality Assurance for an international wholesaler and retailer. He has been a member of the German Working Group of International Featured Standards (IFS) since 2005. He is now employed as Authorized Signatory for the Quant Qualitätssicherung GmbH. In the ABS team, his focus is the organization of quality assurance processes, quality management systems and issues of hygiene.

7 Following his practical apprenticeship as a baker and a degree course in Food Technology, **Markus Schirmer** (29) now works as a member of the scientific staff in the Cereals Process Engineering Consortium at the Chair of Brewing and Beverage Technology of the Technische Universität München in Freising, where he is also writing his doctoral thesis on the Structure of High-Viscosity Products containing Starch under the Effect of Thermal Heating. He is the link between theory and practice in the advisory team, and provides interdisciplinary food knowledge through connections in areas of industry outside the specialist sector.

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