

# French touch

**JEAN-FRANÇOIS MARETTE** IS THE NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF ESTEVE SAS, RIANS, FRANCE. HE EXPLAINED TO BAKING+BISCUIT INTERNATIONAL HOW THE COMPANY WILL PROVIDE OVERALL SUPPORT TO ITS CUSTOMERS

**+ bbi:** You have been the CEO of Esteve since the beginning of 2012. What was your first action in this function?

**+Marette:** It was to meet the women and men of the company, identify what makes the company successful, and its relevance to the market. I very quickly met the customers with the following questions: What are your reasons for placing an order to Esteve? What are the expectations for future cooperation?

**+ bbi:** And what were the answers to these questions?

**+Marette:** The answer to the first question was broad and referred to the expertise of Esteve and its ability to adapt its offer to match the technical requirements. The answer to the second question was oriented towards the future strategies of our customers. Notes like supporting them in their process quality (HACCP, IFS, BRC, ISO92000, etc.) and food security, proposing services solutions, providing qualified and guaranteed process and being a true partner for co-development were mentioned.

**+ bbi:** On what will you put emphasis in the short term and long term?

**+Marette:** In the short term, to consolidate the structuring work that was initiated in 2012, i.e. to align the organization to Esteve's strategy. In the long term, I want to develop partnerships with our customers to offer new industrial solutions based on the expertise of the company and its strong capacity for innovation.

**+ bbi:** The last big change at Esteve was in 2011, when the Groupe Breteche Industrie acquired Esteve. What has changed since then?

**+Marette:** This was a new start for the company, a start of a new cycle with the strength of a group with a turnover of more than EUR 160m and 780 employees. What has changed – and what will change – is Esteve's ability to support its customers even further in their industrial processes. That means, for example, direct synergies with VMI and DIOSNA in kneading, but also with other group entities with technical competences in liquid dispensing, clean in place etc.

**+ bbi:** How is Esteve's business situation now, for example, in terms of turnover?

**+Marette:** 2012 was an historic year as we surpassed the record turnover of the company by almost EUR 15m. The year 2013 looks good with major contracts that have already strong reputations.



++ figure 1

Jean-François Marette, CEO of Esteve SAS

## Personal data of Jean-François Marette

An engineer by training, Jean-François Marette (49) has always worked in the industry, mainly in capital goods. He started as R & D engineer and design manager, thus he had management by project as a leitmotiv. Marette initially spent more than 10 years at KUKA, a manufacturer of industrial robots for palletizing, welding and handling, where he managed two industrial sites. After that he became head of operations for two companies in the field of packaging. Marette says about himself that "I am particularly interested in industrial processes and the mix of technologies to provide a complete technical solution to solve a client issue. This is indeed the case in baking industry processes." +++



++ figure 2  
A centralized dosing station from Esteve

**+ bbi:** Let's take a closer look on the products of your company. On which product business (bulk storage, loading, conveying, dosing etc.) does the main focus lie at the moment?

**+ Marette:** That is not the way we look at our company, so I would have to say: All! Our focus is the traceability of our customer's recipes. All links in the chain of processes are designed to ensure the identification of incoming materials batches and compliance with hygiene and safety standards. The qualification of recipes, manual or automatic management of ingredients and dosage compliance enable bakers to ensure the quality of their products and through our interface with the enterprise resource planning (ERP): its production costs.

**+ bbi:** Everything is more and more internationalized. What are your core markets and what is the percentage of export?

**+ Marette:** The turnover in 2012 corresponds to a share of 60 % in France and 40 % abroad. For Esteve export means mainly major exporting outside the EEC. Our market consists largely of emerging countries with strong growth. Our areas of commercial development will therefore continue to be to the BRIICS (Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, China, South Africa), while continuing the development of the North America market where the "French Touch" remains a marketing element of know-how for customers.

**+ bbi:** And what does such a client expect at the moment from a company like Esteve? Have his/her requirements changed?

**+ Marette:** Our customers are always working to optimize their production by minimizing industrial risks. In addition, we must accompany them around the world with solutions suiting the volumes, products and countries, to understand the local context. This means that on the basis on our qualified

processes, we must respond just as much to "retrofit" installation in sub-Saharan Africa as to a new high-speed factory with a high-grade dosing system in Russia. The issues are different, but often the solutions converge towards a reduction of manual dosing operations, either for reasons of operating costs or reliability of the recipe. Our expertise enables us to provide a comprehensive response (equipment, process, control) to the client with regard to food safety, cross contamination, allergens etc.

**+ bbi:** According to your homepage Esteve plays an active role in developing new IT & communications applications. What does this mean in concrete terms?

**+ Marette:** Esteve pioneered the use of radio-frequency identification (RFID) in the traceability of dough in the baking industry. Our partnership with Siemens – we are a "Solution Partner" of Siemens – allows us to benefit from new developments that we transfer in our activity areas for the benefit of our clients. The use of the latest developments in the computer field enables us to offer innovations such as the portability of our dosing solutions and traceability on touch-pads. The virtualization of our formulation and traceability systems on "clouds" is now operational.

**+ bbi:** What is the latest innovation at Esteve?

**+ Marette:** We will make a first industrial project in 2013 where Esteve will control, monitor and trace all the recipes from "powder to dough". It is a fusion of the expertise of the Groupe Breteche around a single turnkey solution: storage, conveying, dosing and mixing. For the customer, this is a major simplification of the process before cooking, both in terms of engineering and controlling the line.

**+ bbi:** If we look a little bit forward into 2013: Esteve will be present at the IBIE in October this year. Where will your focus be for this trade fair? And how important is the American market for you, anyway?

**+ Marette:** We will set up a new production line in California in the second half of 2013. We have been in the North American market for many years, which explains our presence at the IBIE show. The French brands of our clients, their origins, show us that the "French Touch" is an important marketing strategy for players in the pastry and bakery markets. French bakery specialties are experiencing a real success and we have a solid expertise in this branch. At the IBIE 2013, Esteve will focus its communication on quality in the broadest sense: sifting for standardization and safety, rational dosage of water and full management traceability of ingredients.

**+ bbi:** And the last question: what plans does Esteve have for the future?

**+ Marette:** In June we will inaugurate our "products/processes" test center for our clients. This will allow us to offer the qualification of specific products, fragile or complex in handling and/or dispensing.

**+ bbi:** Mr. Marette, thank you for the interview. +++