

Flexible baked snacks

PRODUCTION FLEXIBILITY IS KEY FOR INNOVATIVE PRODUCERS WHO INTEND TO KEEP PACE WITH CHANGING CONSUMER DEMANDS

✚ The growth of the baked snack food industry has been driven by a wide range of new products. Snack producers face a dilemma: traditional approaches to snack production often provide high volumes at the expense of product flexibility. Yet, expansion into smaller markets demands low capital investment and high levels of flexibility. In response to these industry changes, Reading Bakery Systems, Robesonia, Pennsylvania, USA, has developed a production line that offers flexibility without sacrificing efficiency or reliability. According to Terry Groff, Presi-

dent of Reading Bakery Systems, large multi-national companies are the ones demanding small, flexible production lines. In the Flexible Production Line, the RBS model LP (Low Pressure) Extruders delivers a wide variety of product shapes to the SPECTRUM OVEN®. The patented SMART ZONE® at the beginning of the oven multiplies the product development flexibility through state of the art heat transfer modulation. At the opposite end, RBS successfully pioneered two-pass baking to efficiently manage the distinct requirements of baking versus drying.

In addition, the T.L. Green Biscuit & Cracker sheeted snack and chip equipment – including the Rotary Molder for sweet biscuit production – can be added to the line for a whole new range of healthy, sheeted, baked snacks. The RBS Flexible Snack ovens may be expanded at a later date simply by adding oven modules; there is no need to reposition handling, forming, or distribution equipment. In most cases, production may be increased with the packaging equipment maintaining its original location. The lines are available in flexible belt widths. +++

Flexible Snack Manufacturing

The processes involved in the Flexible Snack Manufacturing have been proven extensively by Reading Bakery Systems at numerous installations the world over. **Mixing & Dough Handling:** Batch mixing ① and manual dough feeding is the simplest way to start a Flexible Snack line with a minimal capital investment. Over time – and as production demands increase – labor savings and production efficiencies can be increased with highly accurate ExACT Continuous Mixing Systems, DoughBot® feed conveyors, and other automated dough handling solutions. **Dough Forming & Processing:** The Reading Model LP Extruder ② creates uniform shapes from interchangeable dies. Individual products are cut onto a Proofing Conveyor ③ or stick products are

continuously extruded and cut by the Guillotine Cutter ④. Prior to baking, products may be dipped through a solution or hot water bath in the Cooker ⑤ to alter the exterior shell color and texture. The product can be passed underneath the Omega Dispenser ⑥ for any pre-bake toppings such as salt or seeds. **Baking & Drying:** The SPECTRUM OVEN® ⑦ is a flexible baking platform available in radiant or convection baking modules. The SMART ZONE® ⑧ provides adjustable amounts of

both radiant and convective heat transfer within the same zone for true baking flexibility. The Drying Kiln ⑨ provides a controlled, low temperature convection atmosphere for even product moistures. **Product Distribution & Packaging:** The product exits the Drying Kiln ready for packaging or any post-bake seasonings. It is discharged onto a Finished Product Conveyor ⑩ and sent through a distribution system depending on the format of the packaging machines ⑪.

