

Turbulent times

SINCE THE FAMILY TOOK OVER THE BISCUIT AND PIE PRODUCER HEATHER BRAE, BASS WAKIM HAS EXPERIENCED STORMY TIMES



++ figure 1

++ figure 1
Packaging is still manual work, but will be automated once the move into the new building has been completed



++ figure 2

++ figure 2
Jammed into the old production room, an Autobake oven is used for tarts and cakes

++ figure 3
Classical Heather Brae product: lemon pies sold nationwide in large supermarket chains or served as single packs by airlines, in hospitals or correction facilities

++ figure 4
The new Polin tunnel oven, which is cyclothermic in design, with 1 m width and 23.6 m length

+ Two partners left the company and sales figures dropped due to a recession, but the former star canoeist from the Australian team has overcome all of this, and is now on his way up again.

The new halls are ready, the new Polin tunnel oven is being installed, the packaging plants have been ordered and the move from the old building is already scheduled. However, the future will not bring less work for Bass Wakim, because there are movements afoot in the market.

Cafés, coffee shops, gas stations, airlines, catering companies, trade consumers and last but not least the supermarkets have discovered individually wrapped pies, slices and cookies as quick and sweet snacks. The single packs are easy to handle and have a long shelf life at ambient temperatures due to their high sugar and low water content. The products do not need any explanation and when sold directly to the final consum-

er as impulse articles, they are not price-sensitive. The situation is different with the trade consumers. They are interested in an attractive price-performance ratio. Bass Wakim: "Our market position is neither at the top nor the bottom of the price structure. We are situated in the upper medium range. This makes us interesting for both distribution channels." This trained engineer in supply technology has outsourced the distribution completely and is now taking care of the production and the new product development. The administration department is small, just three employees compared to the 22 working in product development and production. "The market demands classical products – Australia is a real pie country and not only for savory snacks – while cafés, coffee shops and airlines constantly request new ideas. Currently, the favorites are tray cake slices made from short pastry.



Competition is stiff. There are many companies of about the same size who present themselves on the market as industrial suppliers. At the same time, large corporate groups such as George Weston and Goodman Fielder have discovered the ‘small bites’ market for themselves.

Nevertheless, Bass Wakim is unhurried about the future. In the past five years, he has invested a lot into his human resources’ program and the new production will also contribute to cost savings. Bass Wakim: “We are well set to meet the market requirements.” +++

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