

# Fresh and ready

FANOFINEFOOD, WITH A MARKET SHARE OF 30%, IS ONE OF THE LARGEST SUPPLIERS OF CHILLED CONVENIENCE PRODUCTS IN THE NETHERLANDS. THE SELECTION INCLUDES CHILLED SALADS, SAUCES AND QUICHES



**+** Years of experience in inventing new chilled food and the expertise to translate ideas into manufactured concepts have effectively enabled the company to innovate rapidly.

The market for chilled convenience products is booming in all industrial countries. The range of convenience products ranges from salads, pizza, pasta and potato products to ethnic food specialties. The target group used to be single males with no cooking experience who were too shy to go to a restaurant. But times have changed. The chilled cabinets at the retailers offer a broad range for customers of any income and social status and are accepted and frequented by almost any class of society.

## History

FanoFineFood originated from the joint venture of Fine Food in Emmen (founded in 1934) and Fano in Oosterwolde (founded in

1937). In the 1980s, both companies were taken over by the Royal Smilde Food Group in Heerenveen. This family enterprise has international activities in the fields of bakery, chilled food and margarine/oils/fats. FanoFine Food supplies the food industry with semi-finished products, components and final products and the food service sector with salads and sauces. The most important customer, however, is the food retail which obtains mainly private label, salads, sauces and quiches. The company produces chilled salads and sauces, although the highlight of their product range are fresh, ready-baked quiches in several taste variations.

## Flexible production of quiches

FanoFineFood started with the production of the first quiches in 2001 as a result of a customer request. At that time, the pre-produced dough foils were supplied by the sister company Pruvé and were just filled and baked ►

**++ figure 1**  
Quiches made by FanoFineFood are offered in the chilled cabinets at retailers



in artisan ovens at Fano. In the first year, the production of quiches was 1.5 m pieces. Over the years, the quiches have made their way into the flexible production structures at Fano, easily meeting seasonal demands. For example, at Easter, the production meets the enormous demand for luxury quiches with salmon stripes on top. The product segment salads, shows the same trend. Plant manager Jeroen van Dijk explains, “Our salad business is highly dependent on the weather. One day with good weather yields sales equal to that of one week with bad weather.” Today, Fano produces more than 7.5 m quiches each year.

The quiche products are made in Oosterwolde near Groningen. They reach the retail shelves as fresh and ready-to-eat products. Packed in top seal or flow packs, their minimum shelf life is 28 days. The baking foil of the smaller quiches with a diameter of 15-16 cm is sealed by a film. Larger products with a diameter of 19 cm are sold in flow pack foil which is additionally protected by a cardboard box.

#### Automated production

The quiche production is automated by a quiche production



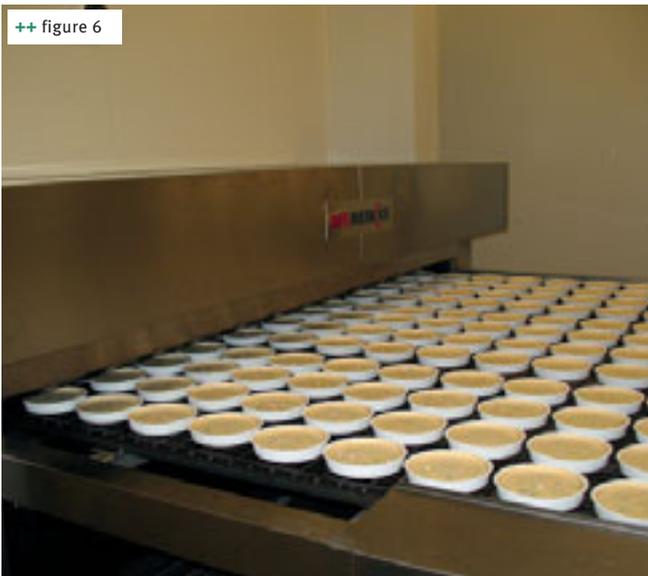
line from Rademaker. This PLC controlled line, made of stainless steel and completely wash down, produces 4,800 quiches per hour. The demand for quiches is increasing not only from within the Netherlands, but from Germany, Ireland and France as well. The expectation is that within three years, the commissioning of a second line will be needed.

#### Turnkey project

Rademaker B.V. from Dutch Culemborg has offered the line as a turnkey project. The dough kneader from Sancassiano prepares the dough for the dough chucker with a hopper capacity of 300 liters. At the bottom of the chucker, two portioning rollers rotate and with each 90° turn cut off a piece of dough. The dough pieces are transferred on this underlying belt to the strip feeder. The strip feeder forms dough strips that are cut into squares by a guillotine and placed in the foils. These dough pieces have the same weight maintained by controlling the cutting distances.

Parallel to the dough strips production, the baking foils made from aluminum or compound materials are placed automatically in cavity plates. These plates support the baking





++ figure 6

foils and move them along. The plates have different openings for different baking foil sizes and can easily be changed. In general, the baking foils move along in one cavity tray next to each other. Dough sheeting, chunking and depositing are synchronized with the inserting and the transport speed of the baking foils.

The actual shaping inside the quiche baking foil is done with water heated blocking dies. While the dies press the dough into the foil from above ensuring that it is lined uniformly with the dough, the foil is pressed with a counter die from below against the foiling die. However, before the foiling process starts, a ring is placed over the edge of the baking foil preventing the dough from overflowing. The blocking dies ensure a full rim on each product. In the past, such foiling stations were hydraulically driven. Rademaker has been installing solutions with Servo motors for several years now.

The quiche baking foil filled with dough is moved in the tray arrangement to the filling station where the spot depositor doses liquid, semi-liquid or particulate fillings into the four foils. The filling volume of the four depositors can be set from 115 to 900 cc for each filling. The discharge nozzle makes sure that vegetable or meat particles are not squeezed. After the nozzle closes, a short air burst ensures that there are no tailings and if necessary, a pressure unit gently smooths the surface of the filling in the foil. While the quiches move along on the belt to the oven, a manual decoration process is possible depending on the type of product. This often happens for special occasions. Around Easter, for example, smaller amounts of quiche are made decorated with salmon stripes on the surface.

After the filling process and the manual decoration, if required, the baking foils are pressed out of the cavity plates and placed onto a conveying belt. After that, the quiches are grouped into rows of 12 products. They then pass through the DFE-Meincke Turbo III tunnel oven where they are



++ figure 7

baked at rising temperatures from 185-200 °C. After cooling and packaging has taken place the quiches are transported to the chilled cabinets in supermarkets, where customers can buy the fresh delicious products. +++

## ++ figure 2

A square dough piece is placed into a foil. Only every second row is used because two different sets of foils are inserted in order to provide for a quick change of foils during changeovers. The cavity plates for the foils can be easily replaced manually

## ++ figure 3

From right to left: Dough chunker | Conveyor belt for transporting dough chunks | Underneath the dough chunk conveyor: foils dispenser | Strip feeder with guillotine

## ++ figure 4

From right to left: Partly: foil dispenser | Underneath: plate conveyor | Plate feeder + guillotine/dough feeder | Blocking unit | Spot depositor

## ++ figure 5

Filling station: spot depositor – the filling is a liquid egg mixture with pieces of vegetables and meat

## ++ figure 6

Oven in-feed section

## ++ figure 7

Oven discharge section

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