

New factory for bun production

WBACK IS BUILDING A NEW INDUSTRIAL BAKERY IN LEIPHEIM, NEAR THE BAVARIAN TOWN OF GÜNZBURG, IN GERMANY



+ For the first time, dough is being prepared in a continuous process which is a significant improvement on the rather traditional bun production.

Each day, about one million hamburger and hot dog buns are produced on the belt in the Wback factory in Bönen, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. The capacity of this production line is exhausted.

Even though the premises would allow further expansion, the next production plant for this company that was founded only in 2005, will be built in Bavaria.

The new production facility is currently under construction in Leipheim, near Ulm. From the beginning of 2008, the customers will also be supplied from Bavaria. Peter Wendeln, one of the managing directors, explains: "Strategic considerations led to the selection of this location. The markets in Austria, Switzerland and Italy can be reached much faster and more economically from there than from Bönen, which is more than 500 km north." Another consideration may have been that two independent sites can meet the supply guarantee requested by the customers more reliably.

Since its establishment in 2005, Wback GmbH has experienced rapid growth. The company founders' are Peter Wendeln, formerly managing director of a bakery dynasty whose industrial enterprises were sold, in 2000, to Kamps, and Willy Weiler, formerly plant manager of a McDonald's bakery (FSB) who brought along his expert knowledge of bun production. Today, the entire Burger King market in Northern Germany buys its buns in Bönen. More than half of the production quantity is delivered in bulk packs to food service chains, industrial customers and the processing industry. The remaining portion is supplied in smaller packs to the food retail industry both domestic and abroad.

The factory in Leipheim is designed for an hourly capacity of 50,000 buns – just as in Bönen – but it will differ in de-

tails. The use of a continuous mixer for the entire dough preparation is a first worldwide and thus viewed with much excitement.

In Bönen, the production traditionally uses spiral mixers and liquid sponge. Sponge dough, prepared in a mixer, is pumped via heat exchanger into a holding tank awaiting further use. Dough make-up and pre-proofing cabinets in both facilities come from American AMF Bakery Systems, Richmond, Virginia. Obviously no bun line can do without their equipment, no matter where it stands.

While the final proofers and ovens in Bönen were supplied by Spooner-Vicar – a company which has been sold in the meantime – Turkington will build both units in Leipheim, as belts, conveying systems and the automatic baking tray storage are also delivered by the company from Burnley, UK. In 2005, packaging specialist Hartmann, Eschborn, Germany, delivered the first pillow pack plants to Bönen. It will also provide the packaging plants in Leipheim.

Other than in Bönen, no metal detectors will be used in the new facility. X-ray units will do the job instead. Willy Weiler reasons: "With this, we are on the safe side. X-ray detectors not only find metals but almost every other foreign matter that might occur. These units are much more expensive but they set standards."

Wback also sets standards in its human resource policy. When Bönen went into operation, 75% of the employees it recruited had been unemployed before. Together, with the employment center and the municipality, the persons were chosen, trained, developed and challenged. Weiler is pleased: "Our experiences with previously unemployed persons, even if they had been unemployed for a long time, are positive. We have almost no fluctuations amongst our staff." The constant search for young employees, their training and development is also given top priority at Wback. +++



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