

Ben and Lindsey Novak Purchase Converter, Distributor, Vern's Cheese

Chilton, WI—As of February 1, Ben and Lindsey Novak are the new owners of Vern's Cheese.

Vern's Cheese is a converter and distributor of hundreds of cheeses, as well as a variety of other Wisconsin food brands.

Vern's Cheese has been operated by Vern Knoespel and two generations of the Knoespel family for nearly 60 years before the transaction.

Ben Novak is a long-time cheese grader, working with many state, national, and international cheese makers.

“The company works with a lot of the same people I've worked with and respected for a long time. I've enjoyed working with these people in the past and look forward to continuing those relationships in the future.”

— Ben Novak,
Vern's Cheese

Novak said he was in discussions about purchasing Vern's Cheese since midway through 2022 before the husband and wife team finally purchased the operation in February.

In order for a successful transition, the entire family and staff at Vern's Cheese will continue working at the company.

Vern Knoespel arranged for the smooth transition to the Novaks before he passed away January 4.

“Vern's Cheese has been distributing quality cheese for nearly 60 years,” Novak said. “They have established, trusted, relationships of their own. We look forward to serving and continuing to grow along with them as their particular needs develop.”

Novak said he plans on continuing the traditions set at Vern's Cheese, while utilizing the skills and relationships he has developed over the course of 15 years in the industry; including working directly with the cheese makers, converters, brokers, and distributors of Wisconsin dairy products.

While the company offers their own private label products, it also distributes some of the major branded cheese products made throughout the state.

Vern's services, retail and grocery stores, cheese stores, restaurants and foodservice operations.

“The company works with a lot of the same people I've worked with and respected for a long time,” Novak said. “I've enjoyed working with these people in the past and look forward to continuing those relationships in the future.”

The overall business plan is the same, but we will also look to improve those areas where we feel we can be better, Novak said.

The business also consists of a cut and wrap operation, with capabilities to cut 40 pound block, 20 pound wheels, 5 pound loaves into consumer cuts.

“We do a lot of custom cutting for our own needs and for others companies who have those needs, or have unique, special requirements,” Novak said.



The Novaks: Ben and Lindsey Novak purchased Vern's Cheese earlier this month. Vern's has a long tradition of distributing and converting cheese. In the photo are Ben, Lindsey, Natalie, Nora, and Qynn Novak.

Novak said he wants to honor the legacy of Vern's Cheese.

“It's always been quality first, which is something we will continue to offer our customers,” Novak said.

Novak is a fourth-generation Novak to work in the cheese industry and has a dairy family. He started his career working with his father, Bill. Bill Novak grew up making cheese and continues his career as a cheese grader. Ben Novak's mother, Angie, comes from a multi-generational dairy farm family.

Novak's great grandfather and grandfather were both cheese makers in Northern Wisconsin.

“My bloodline is essentially milk and whey,” Ben Novak said. “Wisconsin has a deep history in agriculture and my goal is to distribute the best Wisconsin has to offer.”

“That really drew us to the business,” Novak said. “It's a family business. The Knoespels are

engrained into the cheese industry. They have a rich tradition of values and ethics that need to be celebrated and maintained. It's something that's important to us.”

“I am excited and we are going to have fun working on what we have here,” Novak said. “And we are going to build upon it.”

For more information on Vern's Cheese, visit www.vernscheese.com.

OC Flavors Acquires Canada's Novotaste

Chino, CA—OC Flavors, a manufacturer of liquid and powdered flavors for the dairy, beverage and other industries, on Tuesday announced its acquisition of Novotaste, a Canadian-based provider of natural and organic flavor solutions.

With this acquisition, OC Flavors said it is solidifying its position as a top provider of customizable flavor solutions and expanding its footprint into Canada and the northeastern United States to better serve the food and beverage industry.

Founded in 2008, Novotaste has developed a flavor library consisting of thousands of flavors. The company said it offers a wide range of flavor systems for all types of dairy applications.

“We are thrilled to welcome Novotaste as the second acquired company within our flavor platform, and we view the Novotaste team as an integral piece of our platform strategy moving forward,” said Jim Miller, CEO, OC Flavors. “This acquisition also adds a state-of-the-art customer-facing facility with a test kitchen and sensory lab, providing our combined base of blue-chip customer partners with even more resources to create great-tasting products.”

For more information, visit www.ocflavors.com and www.novotaste.com.

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