

Idaho Milk Products: The World's Largest Dedicated MPC Production Facility

Jerome, ID—Idaho Milk Products (IMP) made its inaugural exhibition at the Institute of Food Technology's (IFT) Food Expo last month, showcasing a high-protein, ready-to-drink beverage and the ease of formulation of IdaPro MPC – a product accounting for most of the company's energies.

IMP is a recently established international milk processing operation that supplies milk protein concentrate (MPC), milk permeate, and cream derivatives to customers around the world.

Products are used in a variety of applications, from cheese, yogurt and other dairy-based foods to nutritional supplements.

Idaho Milk Products is owned by three of the largest independent dairies in Idaho – Aardema Dairies and Bettencourt Dairies, LLC, both of Wendell; and Big Sky Dairies of Jerome, along with Scott Jackson Trucking, also headquartered in Jerome.

After several years of exploring a

processing extension to generate greater return on raw milk, the ownership group created a milk processing company designed to offer value-added products to the growing global market.

After careful study, it was determined that a plant capable of producing milk protein concentrate (IdaPro MPC 80 and 85) offered the greatest added value to the North American market.

"Once we recognized the market opportunity, we made a collaborative decision to make IdaPro, the highest quality product possible," said Ron Aardema, IMP owner and board president.

"To do this, we knew we needed a state-of-the-art facility, plus talented and experienced people," Aardema continued.

Construction of the 220,000 square-foot facility, certified by NSF International and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), began in the fall of 2007, and the first

IdaPro MPC product was shipped in February 2009.

At present, IMP processes three million pounds of raw milk per day. The annual capacity of 40 million pounds of IdaPro MPC makes Idaho Milk Products the largest dedicated MPC-production facility in the world, the company said.

The direct relationship with the dairies provides a significant advantage over the competition through creation of a highly streamlined supply chain that is 100 percent farm-to-customer lot-tracked, Aardema said.

Products are made from rBST-free milk, and are USDA, Grade A, Kosher OU, HALAL and EU registered.

Idaho Milk Products is led by the management team of Gary Duncan, chief financial officer; Ben Quellhorst, plant manager; Dean Shotswell, production manager; and Tara Russell, director of sales and marketing.

"IMP's success is driven by the ability to consistently produce reliable products that meet exact customer specifications, while prioritizing customer service and satisfaction," Russell said.

The company is concentrating on capturing a dominant market position by offering customers quality and functional advantages over comparable ingredients such as international MPC products, casein and caseinate, she said.

"The strategy is paying off as IMP continues to develop strong relationships with global food and nutrition segment leaders," Russell continued.

Marketing Partnership With Jacoby

IMP markets its products through a partnership with TC Jacoby, which provides sales support of MPC, cream and permeate through its network of dairy industry contacts.

TC Jacoby also provides expert logistics and export support.

IMP focuses on three primary product offerings: IdaPro MPC 70-85, milk permeate powder and cream.

IdaPro MPC is produced using a low-heat ultrafiltration and drying process that results in an MPC with greater solubility, better mouthfeel and flavor, and higher nutritional value than other MPCs on the market, according to plant manager Ben Quellhorst.

Unlike casein, a common milk-derived protein substitute, MPCs contain casein plus whey proteins in the same proportion as they naturally occur in milk, Quellhorst explained.

This results in increased functionality and applications in a wider range of market segments, he continued. Idaho Milk Products' IdaPro MPCs are naturally low in lactose – a key benefit for nutritional applications.

IdaPro MPC accounts for more than 50 percent of the company's product line, according to chief financial officer Gary Duncan.

As a cost-effective substitute for lactose, IMP offers milk permeate powder. Milk permeate – the carbohydrate portion of skim milk – is separated from the protein-rich portion during filtration.

Carbohydrates undergo evaporation and drying to form milk permeate powder, which is also Grade A and USDA certified.

IMP milk permeate is non-hydroscopic, with a neutral pH, is non-browning and high in milk minerals, Quellhorst explained.

The company is also working closely with TC Jacoby to develop and stimulate the food market for milk permeate powder. Specific segment applications include standardization of dairy products in skim milk products, baked goods, ice cream, puddings, yogurt, tableting, and instant drink mixes.

Idaho Milk Products' cream is sold primarily for the production of butter, cheese, ice cream, and for use in baked goods, custards and sauces.

"We are finding that the combination of globalization and increased economic volatility puts pressure on the industry and on our customers," said

Rick Onaindia,
Bettencourt Dairy's

IMP 40 percent fat pasteurized sweet cream is separated from the raw milk prior to the production of MPC and permeate.

Due to the high quality of raw milk used and the plant's proximity to the source dairies, this cream is generally fresher and whiter than most other cream on the market, according to Quellhorst.

The primary market region for Idaho Milk Products is the North American food industry, said Ron Aardema, Aardema Dairy.

"We also have begun to sell to Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Currently, approximately 75 percent of our business is domestic," he said.

"Specific target market segments include dairy – dairy blends, yogurt and cheese; protein beverages for weight management, adult nutrition and sports nutrition; bakery, soups, sauces and confection," Aardema continued.

IFT Exhibit, Competitive Review

For the first time, Idaho Milk Products exhibited at the Institute of Food Technology's (IFT) annual meeting and Food Expo last month at Chicago's McCormick Place.

It provided an excellent opportunity to showcase a high-protein, ready-to-drink beverage and the chance to demonstrate the ease of formulation with IdaPro MPC –

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Sam's Club Adding Imported Cheese From Several Countries

Bentonville, AR—More than a dozen new varieties of imported cheese from England, Italy, Ireland, France and Spain will begin to arrive in select Sam's Club locations next month.

By late fall, the company expects to offer the new imported cheeses in more than 150 stores nationwide.

The new cheeses will include both regular and special seasonal items to complement Sam's domestic cheese selection, which includes sliced deli cheese as well as hard and soft cheese.

In an effort to source the best products for its members, Sam's Club buyers visit supplier facilities to inspect the production process. Also, Sam's Club uses a test kitchen and sensory lab at its home office to sample products, and give suppliers feedback about how to improve them.

"Consumers are hungry for new food products because they are experimenting more with food at home and see it as a form of entertainment," said Shawn Baldwin, vice president, fresh and deli, Sam's Club.

For more information on the new imported varieties, visit www.samsclub.com. r

Chicago Sweeteners Changes Corporate Name To Batory Foods

Des Plaines, IL—Chicago Sweeteners, Inc., a national distributor of food ingredients, has announced its official corporate name change to Batory Foods, Inc.

The company formerly operated under several different regional names across the US, including Quality Ingredients, Industrial Ingredients, Chicago Sweeteners, Sugar Incentives, Total Sweeteners, LSI/Ingredients International, and LSI Texas. The company established the new name to facilitate consolidation under one identity.

There are no changes in control, ownership or service, and all agreements previously in effect with each of the divisions continue to be in effect with Batory Foods, the company stated.

"The name change reflects our long term mission to provide a broad suite of ingredients that will empower our customers by having the top brand name products available locally," said Ron Friedman, vice president of Batory Foods.

The company's new name is taken from the name of the ship on which the company's founder, Abel Friedman, and his family fled Poland in 1938.

Batory Foods, founded in 1979, operates 22 distribution facilities in the US with a portfolio of dairy and other ingredients.

For more information, visit www.batoryfoods.com. r

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even in the most extreme formulations, Russell said.

While at Institute of Food Technologists, Idaho Milk Products revealed results of a recent independent competitive review against the top international Milk Protein Concentrate products.

Research was conducted by scientists with Cal Poly's Dairy Products Technology Center and North Carolina State University's Southeast Dairy Foods Research Center.

Researchers tested a total of nine competitive MPC powders (MPC-80 and MPC-85) in a series of comparison analyses of key physical and functional properties and sensory attributes.

IdaPro MPC powder was determined to have the cleanest and freshest flavor and aroma profile of any of the powders tested.

It also met or exceeded the field of competitive products in all functional attributes tested, Russell explained.

Idaho Milk Products scored high compared to competitive MPCs in nitrogen solubility, suspension stability, viscosity and emulsion stability.

IMP Sees Economic Volatility & Globalization

One of the greatest challenges currently facing Idaho Milk Products is globalization combined with an unsteady economic climate.

"We are finding that the combination of globalization and increased economic volatility puts pressure on

the industry and on our customers," said Bettencourt Dairy's Rick Onaindia.

"For example, volatile or changing energy and other input costs narrow customer margins, making it difficult to effectively manage their product portfolios," he said.

"It is our goal to be as efficient as we can, while staying flexible to help insulate our customers from these issues," Onaindia continued.

"It is Idaho Milk Products' goal to be a leading MPC supplier to the food and nutrition industry and to be a valuable supplier partner to the national and multinational brands," Big Sky Dairy's Mike Bosma commented.

For more information on Idaho Milk Products, call (208) 404-2623 or visit www.idahomilk.us. r



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