

PROCESSING

As seen in Processing Magazine

Garden state co-packer keeps on steamin' along

If asked what motherly admonition he remembers best, Wes Seabrook might reply, "Eat your vegetables." Certainly it's advice that he's happy to follow. Affable and outgoing, Seabrook is vice president of engineering at Seabrook Brothers & Sons, a sprawling food processing plant in New Jersey's rural and southern Cumberland County.

Founded in 1978, the frozen vegetable operation is a family affair, currently managed by Seabrook's father and uncle, two brothers, two cousins and himself. Statistics support the company's success, and the recent acquisition of a 500 horsepower boiler from Clayton Industries accentuates the company's achievements.

Cut and cob corn

"The new boiler will help increase production overall," Seabrook says, "and it allows us to add a \$2.5 million line that will begin this summer to process 10 million pounds of cut and cob corn."

Large, powerful boilers are an integral part of processing, he explains, because the steam they generate blanches vegetables, a step that causes them to retain color and taste after freezing.

"The procedure subjects the vegetables to steam at 200 degrees and usually lasts about two or two and a half minutes. Blanching deactivates enzymes so the frozen product will enjoy a shelf life of three years," Seabrook continues.



The company's "raw materials"—spinach, green beans and peas grown under contract—come from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. And Seabrook estimates that the company processes 10 percent of the nation's frozen green beans and 12 percent of its frozen peas.

Packing for everybody

Seabrook Brothers & Sons "packs for everybody," Seabrook comments. Some of the company's frozen foods, sold throughout the Northeast, are sold in bulk. Most are packaged under Seabrook's own label, or as branded retail and private label retail. Customers include major supermarket chains, food service companies, soup companies, and institutional and industrial users.

How much does the company freeze each year to meet customer demands? "We produce up to 100 million pounds annually," Seabrook says. "and we repack another 75 million." Seabrook says the new 500 horsepower boiler replaces a 300 horsepower model that was installed when the plant opened, and a second new boiler will be added soon.

Pleased by performance

"We've always been very happy with the units we bought in 1978," he explains. "We like Clayton because their boilers are highly efficient, and they have a small footprint," comments Seabrook, who says his company also values Clayton boilers because of quick start-up, ease of maintenance, and ability to react promptly to load changes.

Headquartered in El Monte, Calif., Clayton Industries has been designing and manufacturing steam generators for nearly 70 years.



For more information, contact Clayton Industries at 800-423-4585.