



DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Ginsburg Bakery opts for even more bagel-making capacity, selecting a system that brings flexibility and automation.

BY LAURIE GORTON

Success promotes growth. Rye bread and bagel specialist Ginsburg Bakery found its niche as a “baker’s baker,” and managers thought the Atlantic City, NJ, plant had enough bagel capacity. Then, last year, Ginsburg’s VIP bagel customer wanted even more of the company’s output. This time, the customer requested authentic New York-style boiled bagels.

The only way to satisfy this need was to expand the bakery ... yet again. Soon, a third oven line was on order, and construction workers were moving the walls out to add 5,200 sq ft, increasing the building’s size to 75,000 sq ft. After breaking ground in February 2006, Ginsburg accepted delivery of the new oven over the Easter weekend and began baking in May. By late August, the bakery had the bagel cooker/boiler, the new line’s final component, in full operation.

“It really comes down to supply and demand,” said Jack Mulloy, president, c.e.o. and head of the family that has owned and operated Ginsburg for more than 25 years.

“We are looking forward to expanding our operations with these new upgrades. We will be able to handle larger orders, shorten our turnaround time and boost overall customer satisfaction.”

In choosing an automated system, the family also opted for flexibility. “Before, with just two ovens, we could produce more than we could bake,” said Dan Mulloy, Ginsburg’s c.f.o. “Now we can bake as much product as we can produce.”

A BAKER’S BAKER. Established in 1903, Ginsburg Bakery was acquired in 1979 by Jack Mulloy, then a Philadelphia deli and supermarket operator. His business partner at that time was a baker, another factor in his decision. Ginsburg operated as a totally fresh,

▲ Ginsburg Bakery depends on the skills of (from left) Dan, Mike, Jack, Chris and John Mulloy to succeed in an increasingly competitive bakery environment.

GINSBURG BAKERY

full-service bakery supplying bread, cakes and pastry to retail grocers and restaurants up and down the Jersey Coast.

Although business was good, it was becoming increasingly competitive. When Dan and his brothers John, Michael and Chris formally joined the business during the late 1980s, their father looked ahead for additional opportunities. He found co-packing. "My father decided to change the bakery's business philosophy to become a 'baker's baker,'" Dan Mulloy said. "By adding co-pack production, we could increase our product mix and run time."

The first move was to approach other bakers. Ginsburg offered its line of rye breads to add to the DSD routes operated by other bakeries. "We baked for a number of bakeries in Philadelphia, New Jersey and New York," Dan Mulloy said. "This gave us year-round business."

Success with this approach meant Ginsburg no longer relied on its own route sales. In fact, its specialist reputation as a rye bread baker has led to an interesting situation. Dan Mulloy noted that he will often see "his" rye bread made from the same formulation but packaged under different labels sitting side-by-side on supermarket store shelves. "And I've heard consumers argue about which one is best," he observed.

Jack Mulloy also noticed big changes occurring in retail baking. "He saw frozen as another key to the future," Dan Mulloy recalled. With in-store bakeries increasing and free-standing retail shops disappearing, there were big opportunities to fill resulting product gaps. The bakery bought a liquid nitrogen freezer and started working with a broker to market frozen finished rye bread and bagels to supermarkets to fill out their in-store offerings.

In 1989, Ginsburg exited cake and pastry production to concentrate on rye bread, rolls and bagels. As the business continued into the 1990s, it added co-pack and frozen products. "Today, we are approximately 50:50 fresh and frozen," Dan Mulloy observed. And frozen products took the business's products nationwide.

SEA CHANGE. Another turning point occurred in 1992, when a large bagel company approached Ginsburg, asking it to produce and package its bagels. "That company needed a co-packer," Dan Mulloy said. "They really taught us a lot: how to put in controls, how to manage quality assurance, how to audit, clean and more. It was great for us. Many procedures were put in place then that remain with us now. And we still have that customer today."

Co-pack business helped the bakery cope with the



▲ Rye bread is expertly cut before baking to assure optimum interior structure and appearance.

seasonal ebb and flow of economic activity in Atlantic City. With September and the end of tourist season, the city and its surrounding resort communities pretty much shut down. When the city introduced casino gambling in the 1980s, some of that seasonality disappeared. In the past few years, Atlantic City experienced a renaissance, constructing a new convention center and welcoming large new high-rise casinos.

"This is a 24/7 bakery, operating 365 days a year," Dan Mulloy said. "Summer is still the 'season' here, but our casino business continues through the year-end holidays and the NFL Super Bowl. It gets slower for the next three months, and then the cycle starts up again."

Today, the bakery operates with Jack Mulloy as president and his sons Dan, John, Michael and Chris. As c.f.o., Dan handles not only "the numbers" but also sales and customer services, while John, the c.o.o., functions as general manager and plant manager. Production operations are under Michael and Chris's control. The bakery's chief engineer is George Sanderlin, and its sanitarian is Jose Lugo. Dan described his father as "the big thinker" shaping the company's direction, but its daily responsi-

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bilities reside with the four brothers.

“We all grew up here,” Dan Mulloy said of himself and his brothers. “Some of us went out and did other things. But John, Michael, Chris and I made a choice to come back to the business. You have to want to be in the bakery business. And it really was a choice, not an expectation.

“Our father put us into different departments and switched us around,” he continued. “At that time, we had a plant manager from outside the family, and we reported to him. With experience, we rose in the organization.”

MORE BAGELS. During the second half of 2005, a co-pack customer asked Ginsburg to supply it with boiled bagels. “We wanted to answer their need,” Dan Mulloy said. But the bakery lacked bagel-boiling equipment, and even more significantly, it did not have room in its building to accommodate the equipment needed.

“Our 60-ft oven is from 1963, and we already had questions about capacity,” he continued. “Then I saw how big the boiler was!” That’s when the family made its decision to add to the size of the bakery to accommodate an automatic peel board unloader, the boiler and an 80-ft oven.

The Mulloys researched their equipment choices by drawing on the experience of other bakers to supplement their own. They also consulted with their current vendors and put the system out to bid.

“Everyone in the industry told us that the Heat and Control boiler was the technology of choice,” Dan Mulloy said. “We knew

we wanted another Werner & Pfleiderer oven, so we went right to Gemini Bakery Equipment Co. for that. The Capway loader was selected through a bidding process, and we went with G&F conveyors because we use its lines elsewhere in the bakery.”

Quality of machinery and service ranked at the top of Ginsburg’s criteria, according to Dan Mulloy.

“And Gemini helped us with the

► Frames assure proper shape for Ginsburg’s rye breads.



line layout,” he said.

The Ginsburg plant already occupied most of one city block, so the addition had to be made at the back corner of the bakery. The new line actually starts in the new building and finishes in the older section of the plant.

“The cooker size actually dictated oven size,” Dan Mulloy observed. “We knew we could get better efficiencies out of the longer, larger oven. We actually turned off the 60-ft oven. It’s still here, serving as backup, but the additional capacity of the new 80-ft oven is what is allowing us to grow our company.”

SHOEHORN FIT. The 5,200-sq-ft addition began in February. With the walls up, it was time to bring in the equipment. But even careful planning can sometimes miss a point or two. Bakery managers and their vendors went through dozens of drawings and layouts. It got to the point where Dan Mulloy said he went out into the bakery and paced off the length of new oven, putting a mark on the wall to show where it would end. “Even so, I was a couple feet off,” he said, smiling as he pointed to the mark.

The Ginsburg plant uses all its floor space to maximum potential. “When you bring a piece of equipment into the plant, it can affect everything else in the bakery,” Dan Mulloy said. “A couple years ago, we put in our first Werner & Pfleiderer 80-ft oven, and we had to move nearly every piece of equipment in the plant to accomplish this.”

Installing the new line meant moving a structural column to bring in the new oven. “We had a crane positioned in the middle of the street to get the drive end of the oven in here,” he recalled. “And we had to ‘notch out’ the new roll-up door to get the one-piece cooker into the bakery.”

All this work was done during operating hours, so a temporary wall was put in place to isolate construction from production.

NEW LINE. Looking at the bakery’s layout today, an observer sees the new oven set at a right angle to the other two ovens. One Gemini/ABI 4-lane rotary-knife divider



▲ Four formers shape dough pieces into bagels and deposit them on cornmeal coated peel boards.

◀ Boiling creates the taugt, shiny crusts of New York-style bagels, seen here traveling from the oven to the cooler .

cuts individual dough pieces that feed into four horizontal bagel formers. These shape the dough between mandrels and curved conveyor belts to produce the bagel’s typical toroid shape. Bagels drop onto cornmeal-dusted peel boards and are conveyed to a rack loading station.

Ginsburg retards its bagels by moving the filled racks into a temperature-and-humidity-controlled room. When ready for baking, the racks are pulled out of the retarder, and operators place the filled peels onto the Capway loader.

“We set up the new bagel line with a movable conveyor that gives us flexibility to do other products,” Dan Mulloy explained.

When peels reach the Capway loader, its long traveling table picks up the bagels from the board onto its mesh conveyor surface. Reversing direction, the table then transfers the bagels into the Heat and Control cooker. Empty peels move along another conveyor to reach the AMF automatic peel board stacker.

A quick trip through the hot water seals the bagel surfaces, giving the crust its taugt, shiny appearance after baking. A Gemini/ABI transfer conveys the bagels out of the hot water and moves them under a seeder stationed ahead of the oven that applies sesame, poppy and other

toppings as required. The Werner & Pfleiderer Ecotherm Plus Duo indirect-fired oven supplied by Gemini quickly bakes both boiled and steamed bagels. From the oven, bagels ride a conveyor upstairs to a spiral cooling system.

“Boiled bagels are new to us, so it’s been a learning experience,” Dan Mulloy said. “With this oven, we doubled capacity and achieved more control. But we needed to retrain our people to deal with different constraints.”

During the early weeks of startup, Ginsburg’s bagel customer spent a week at the bakery. “Also, Atlantic City is close to a couple of our major vendors, so we can call them in to help,” Dan Mulloy observed.

VOLUME RATED. Rye bread styles include unseeded, seeded, pumpernickel and marble in bulk, rounds, split loaves and sliced for retail and food service use. Bagel varieties — plain, cinnamon raisin, onion, pumpernickel, marble, sesame, poppy, “everything,” blueberry and whole-wheat — come in 2-, 3- and 4-oz sizes and are available in bulk, fresh, frozen, sliced and bagged for retail. The company also produces rolls tailored to specific customer needs.

Making its rye breads, rolls and bagels, Ginsburg consumes 13 million lb of flour annually, using 250,000 lb a week. It stores flour in two 1990s-era 110,000-lb silos, one for roll flour, the other for bread flour. Rye flour is received in bags and dumped into internal flour silos.

The bakery’s second floor houses the dough mixing room and its Peerless Royal horizontal mixers. “We use a new-style trough to move doughs from the mixer to the floor chutes,” Dan Mulloy said. “It’s basically a motorized conveyor on wheels, designed for us by G&F.”

The mixers discharge their dough into the mobile trough, and the operator pushes it into place over one of the two dough chutes leading to the downstairs W&P bread and variety roll lines. A conveyor serves as the floor of the trough. The operator switches it on, and it moves the dough ahead to drop through the dough chute.

Three processing lines occupy the bakery’s main floor: a roll line, a bread line and the bagel line. Cooling operations involve both ambient and enclosed spiral coolers. “We recently added the ambient cooler to give us an extra hour of dwell time,” Dan Mulloy explained. This is used primarily for rye, whole-wheat and white bread supplied fresh to casino food service operations.

Packaging offers a slicing option, and all products travel through Goring Kerr metal detectors before release from the bakery.

Fresh products are made early in the day, while frozen items are done at night, going through a BOC Gases liquid nitrogen freezer before being cased for distribution. Frozen products are then palletized, stretch-wrapped and held briefly before transfer to the company’s off-site freezer warehouse.



▲ Housed on the second floor, mixing operations supply doughs to the three processing lines downstairs.

Ginsburg operates three over-the-road trucks for fresh delivery, while two reefer trucks manage transportation to the warehouse and common carriers. “Most of our business is handled through distributors,” Dan Mulloy said. “Some of our co-pack customers pick up their products directly from here. One customer, for example, leaves a trailer here on a continuing basis and picks up five days a week.”

The busy bakery employs 120 to 160 persons, depending on the season.

SUPERIOR STANDARD. Ginsburg positions itself as a custom baker, serving customers as both consultant and baker, “helping to identify, develop and produce the breads, rolls and bagels that consumers crave, with custom formulations and distinctive packaging solutions,” as noted by the company’s Web site, www.GinsburgBakery.com.

This means striving for, attaining and maintaining the highest standards. The bakery consistently earns the Superior rating from AIB International inspections.

“AIB is a tool for us to stay up to date,” Dan Mulloy said. The annual inspections help the bakery staff stay on their toes, according to him. “AIB helps us and our customers with the changing food safety rules that affect operations.”

He noted that AIB inspections often go into greater detail than those done by regulatory officials. Ginsburg takes advantage of the institute’s correspondence courses and has sent several staff members to classes held at Manhattan, KS. “Industry wise, AIB sets the standard,” Dan Mulloy said.

Products baked at the Atlantic City facility are certified K Parve, a status granted by rabbinical supervision.

FLEXIBLE TO CHANGE. With its recent expansion, Ginsburg is thoroughly committed to bagels, but the new line brings additional flexibility. For example, the new oven can load pans to bake pan bread styles in addition to the hearth-baked rolls and bagels it already makes.

“We are automated to a point but flexible to change,”

▼ An 80-ft indirect-fired oven was required to increase bagel baking capacity at Ginsburg Bakery.



is how Dan Mulloy described plant operations. “And we are constantly changing things around here to accommodate growth.”

Packaging operations have been housed in multiple rooms around the plant, moving to better fit the configuration of the building as it expanded. The city block occupied by Ginsburg once housed Bally’s slot machine repair shop. In 1999, the bakery took over that space and put up additional building sections between it and the bakery. In the continuing series of expansions, offices have also moved around. And now, the bakery must store raw ingredients and frozen finished products at an off-site location a few minutes away.

“I believe we have about three years until we fill up capacity here again,” Dan Mulloy estimated. “One customer accounts for a quarter of the new line’s capacity. We expect this and additional business to pick up over the next couple years.”

The original bakery covered 43,000 sq ft; now, it’s at 75,000 sq ft. “I think we have about 30 more linear feet on this site, but that’s it,” Dan Mulloy said.

The bakery is landlocked, and surrounding property has increased in value with the resurgence of Atlantic City. The family has looked at other locations but continues to prefer the cache of its Atlantic City address.

Ginsburg’s business is good but demanding. “In the baking industry, you have to keep growing,” Dan Mulloy said. “The number of bakeries is shrinking. You have to find your niche, compete and grow. And with operating costs — fuel, energy, health insurance, ingredients, plastics — all going up in the past 18 months, you have to get faster, get leaner and improve output.” ■

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