

“Sylter Salatfrische” – the success story of a friendly North German and his two STEPHAN machines

Top hygiene, stabile emulsions, consistent product quality

It sounds like a modern fairy tale: A cook comes up with a recipe for a tasty salad dressing. He serves it in his restaurant, gives away bottles to his friends and sells it outside his establishment. He gets more and more friends. More dressing has to be produced. The kitchen in his restaurant and the hand blender become too small. The cook has staunch friends who encourage him, give him advice, help out and do the calculations. He buys the right machine at the right time, sends his friends to hold taste tests at the local supermarkets and then the fairy tale really starts to take off. Suddenly, anyone that tasted this dressing just once wanted to buy it over and over again. Everyone in Germany was amazed at how the cook and his team became a medium-sized company in such a short time. Both the cook and his dressing are now well-known: Thomas Hauschild and his “Sylter Salatfrische”.

It’s a success story that sounds almost unbelievable in such economically challenging times, but shows us more than anything else that with vision, courage, a little luck, the right machine and confidence modern fairy tales can come true even today.

Thomas Hauschild, proprietor of the “Zum Dorfkrug” restaurant located south of Hamburg in Neu Wulmstorf, worked hard for this success. Whenever the last guest had left he always stayed behind in the kitchen to work on his popular salad dressing until he was finally satisfied with the taste. He used a hand blender to create increasingly larger batches of fresh, creamy dressing with a slight onion flavour. The kitchen and hand blender soon became too small.

New premises had to be found, and, more importantly, machines to replace the trusty old hand blender. Onions have to be chopped up without becoming bitter, the emulsion should be stable and the mixture homogenous, filling the machines should work perfectly and cleaning should be easy. On top of this, the most important requirement is maintaining the highest standards of hygiene. “Sylter Salatfrische” is produced in a cold process requiring hygienic conditions.

Our STEPHAN machines were able to meet these requirements!

Now everything had to progress quickly because production was supposed to remain uninterrupted. Together with Thomas Hauschild STEPHAN technologists developed a production process and put a Universal Machine into operation in a very short time. Due to rapidly rising demand it soon became apparent that this machine alone was not enough to meet the demands of the future.

So, six months later the first STEPHAN Vacutherm® System VMC 400/15 was put into operation. This system met all of the requirements perfectly:

THEMES Edition 4. 2009

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400 litre batch sizes, excellent hygiene provided by special sealing systems, high availability and consistent product quality. The Vacutherm works under a vacuum, is robust and, more importantly, easy to clean. The integrated cleaning system means that manual labour is no longer required.

The production facility in New Wulmstorf is now home to several STEPHAN Vacutherm® 400/15 systems – one equipped with direct steam injection. Although not needed for the cold processing of “Sylter Salatfrische”, in modern fairy tales you never know what the future will bring...

The path to today’s success was long and arduous. The business decisions Thomas Hauschild took along with Rolf Hallberg (64), at his side to assist him, were very important ones. It was a policy of small steps: The motto was not to leap several steps at once, but to take things step by step on the way up. He now knows that this strategy was the right one. “Sylter Salatfrische” is now listed by all major retail chains and is available in the refrigerated section of supermarkets across Germany.

Thomas Hauschild, the friendly North German and father of three children, did many things differently from what the “experts” advise. No stylish packaging, but plain glass bottles. No colourful, futuristic designs. Just a green and white label with the name of the dressing on it and the logo depicting his Dorfkrug restaurant. No big advertising campaigns in print and on television, but taste testing in supermarkets and direct customer contact instead.

“Sylter Salatfrische” – a special dressing contains water, rapeseed oil, onions, sugar, spirit vinegar, tapioca starch (from a type of cassava root grown mainly in Asia), egg yolk, salt, carrageenan (a natural thickener extracted from red seaweed), monopotassium tartrate (cream of tartar, a stabilising agent) and spices. The ingredients are no secret, but the production steps are.

The dressing goes well with many things. With all salads, of course, and with roast beef and raclette cheese, as a sauce for herring, salmon or shrimp, or as a tasty dip for fresh-cut vegetables. It can be varied with horseradish or herbs, lends an exotic touch to curry and adds just the right taste to poultry and potato salads. And it’s important to note that it is lactose and gluten free and contains no artificial preservatives. So try some yourself – you’ll be sold on it.

Latest proof of the success story: “Sylter Salatfrische” received the “Top Brand 2009” prize, a very special distinction awarded by the food magazine “Lebensmittel Zeitung”. Winners are selected in 100 product classes. “Sylter Salatfrische” won in the “Salad dressings, liquid” category.

Thomas Hauschild is sold on the reliability of STEPHAN machines; He doesn’t want to say what the future has in store. Who knows? Perhaps soon the STEPHAN Vacutherm® 400/15 systems won’t be enough...

Modern fairy tales end like the old, familiar ones – with a future full of promise. We’re sure to be hearing and reading a lot more about Thomas Hauschild, his team and his “Sylter Salatfrische” dressing.



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