

Hunter[®] Foods

MARKET

Hunter Foods Limited is the Arabian Gulf region's first specialty gourmet snacks manufacturing company. It was established in JAFZA in 1985. At that time there were only a very few food manufacturers in the UAE and even less in the snacks sector. Being a duty free port, it was easier and cheaper to import food products than to produce locally. This is why much of the snacks available in Dubai at that time were imported from various countries.



ACHIEVEMENTS

Hunter Foods has been at the forefront of developing and manufacturing innovative products in the region for the past two decades. In the early 90s Hunter Foods pioneered the launch of a bite sized Lentil Poppadum, which was an instant success. Hunter Foods launched Hunter Ice Lollies which turned out to be an ideal product to beat the heat during summer months and then pioneered making ready-to-use Fried Onions, which was again a



It was difficult to compete with these well known brands from US, Europe and the Far East but Hunter Foods decided to take the challenge of the hegemony of these global brands with its locally produced but highly innovative products. The only way to succeed was to not only produce a superior product but also to package it in an equally attractive way. This is how Hunter paved its way and established itself in Dubai and later in developed economies as well.

During the boom in Dubai the retail space and the customer needs transformed dramatically. The costs of operating in Dubai grew by leaps and bounds. There was a need to reinvent Hunter Foods. The company did market research and found that it needed to develop a new range of products for the growing Hypermarkets, which competed in taste and packaging with the highest quality from any part of the world. Hunter Foods decided to reorganise and start a new brand – Hunter's Gourmet.

The objective of this brand was to move to the next level of quality and international competitiveness which the UAE market now called for. Over the last thirty six months Hunter Foods

has recently introduced its premium range of Hand Cooked Potato Chips as well as Vegetable chips under the Hunter's Gourmet brand which are unique and has helped propel the company to the next level. These products were the outcome of thoughtful research, innovation and commitment to quality, which eventually became the three pillars of Hunter Foods remarkable success over the years. Hunter Foods took on distribution of Lizi's, a high end Granola from Wales, as its first agency product and has made it a market leader within two years. For Lizi's the Middle East is now the number one market outside of the UK, ahead of the US and Europe. Hunter Foods has an aggressive goal to more than double its revenue over the next three years. It plans to do this by extending the Hunter's Gourmet range, take on several agency products from various parts of the world and build its reputation in the fast growing HORECA segment. Hunter Foods already supplies Private Label products to companies like Dean and DeLuca, Emirates Airlines, Eppco/Enoc, HyperPanda Saudi Caffe Nero, Caribou Coffee, Jumeirah Hotels, Address Hotels, Hyatt Hotels, Kempinski Hotels, etc.

new concept in the retail stores. All of this would not have been possible without the company's commitment to quality – Hunter Foods was the first factory in Europe, Middle East and Africa to be HACCP and SQF certified, both in the first quarter of 2000.

Hunter Foods was the first company to focus on innovative packaging in the region - namely composite cans. The new packaging not only gave the product a contemporary look but also helped in enhancing the products' shelf life and conserving its freshness. The products, with their new look, are a huge success in the GCC markets. Excellent product quality and world class packaging helped it to successfully penetrate western markets as well and Hunter Foods became the first UAE Snack company to export its products to countries like the UK, France, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. In 2012 Hunter Foods introduced Hand Cooked Potato Crisps into the market and has been the first company to do this in Asia, Middle East and Africa. In 2013 Hunter Foods has become the first company to introduce vegetable snacks into the Middle East market. These snacks are vacuum fried at low temperatures in order to keep



the valuable nutrients intact in the frying process. That keeps them healthy yet delicious. The company has many more "first's" planned to come over the years to come.

HISTORY

Hunter Foods was started by entrepreneur Bharat Narayan, in 1985. He was looking at starting a new business venture after having built over 10,000 houses for Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum over ten years. A friend suggested him to start a snack food factory. After research into the snack market in the Middle East, and after visiting snack factories, in several countries around the world and studying the technology of the machinery, he opened the Hunter Foods in Jebel Ali Free Zone in March 1986. The first product – Potato Grills – was chosen after testing hundreds of products. The brand given was "Safari" because he loved animals and each flavour was denoted by a different animal. Chilli was denoted by a lion, Salt and Vinegar was denoted by a tiger, Salt was an elephant etc. He wanted kids to ask for the Lion, Tiger or Elephant Chips rather than the traditional way to for the "red, green or blue packet." Three months after starting the factory Mr. Bharat Narayan suffered two strokes which had him bed ridden in the hospital for months.

Despite the initial setback he ran the factory from his hospital bed chanting the mantra of quality and unique products – no "me too" products. With the help of a dedicated team Hunter Foods began building the market share. The main market for chips were kids and so Bharat Narayan started a kids' loyalty club called "Anipals – pals of the animals. He named all the animals on the packets and had them teach kids about environment and animal protection through articles and cartoons in the newsletters which he wrote and designed himself. He expanded the range of products from Potato Grills to new potato snacks in brands of Aladin and Ali Baba. He then started making real potato chips, lentil crisps

called Poppadums and eventually setting a canister making plant – the first in the UAE. During the summer the demand reduced for the snack foods so he started making ice lollies which made up for lost sales from the snacks from schools.

Today Hunter Foods holds about 10% of the market share in the UAE market and plans to grow this to over 20% in the next two years.

PRODUCT

Hunter Foods Ltd rolled out the first consignment of innovative snacks in March 1986 which was an instant success. This marked the beginning of an era of a fast paced growth for Hunter Foods. In 1991 Hunter Foods introduced indigenously developed canisters and started selling Pappadums in the innovative packaging. Hunter Foods became the first company in the Middle East to sell chips in canisters and successfully exports its innovative products to



the west. In 2000 Hunter Foods introduced Slow Cooked potato chips in canisters and it has proved to be quite successful in the market. Today Hunter Foods supplies slow cooked potato chips under private label to leading Hotels and Coffee Shops in the GCC.

Hunter Foods products enjoyed an outstanding reputation for their premium quality and high innovative canister packaging which guaranteed the products' greater shelf life and sustained freshness. In the next five years Hunter Foods expanded its facility five times to reach 25,000 square feet. By 2000 Hunter Foods manufacturing capacity increased eight fold to more than 100 tons of chips per month.

The company focuses on maintaining Quality and Safety all across the company. In March 2000,

Hunter Foods became the first company in the Middle East, Africa and Europe to achieve the coveted SQF 2000 Certification, a quality system which combines both quality and safety of food using codex HACCP (hazard analysis and critical control point) technique and elements of ISO 9000. Hunter Foods currently produces about 60 different varieties of gourmet snacks. Its products are exported to USA, Canada, UK, East Africa, West Africa, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Brunei, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the GCC countries.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Over the last eighteen months Hunter Foods introduced its premium range of Hand Cooked Potato Chips as well as Vegetable chips under the Hunter's Gourmet brand which are unique and has helped propel the company to the next level.

BRAND VALUES

Hunter Foods prides itself in being big enough to cope yet small enough to care. It also believes that the difference between being ordinary and extraordinary is that little "extra." That is why it puts in the extra in its procurement, the extra in the production, the extra in its sales efforts. However, the most important value of the company is "quality, quality, quality."

Vision

Hunter Foods aspires to be recognised as the manufacturer of the regions' finest, healthiest (in terms of nutritive value) and the most innovative gourmet snacks, as well as the distributor of an innovative niche product range of the highest standard into the market. It seeks to maintain the quality standards of the highest order. Hunter Foods strives to be the best but not necessarily the biggest.

www.hunterfoods.net



Things you didn't know about Hunter Foods

- Hunter Foods is a fully owned family business that is 100% Dubai based. It is proud to be Dubai based making fresh snacks for the local market.
- The research, innovation, and packaging are all done in-house.
- Bite sized Poppadums in a canister was pioneered because a prominent Japanese Export House challenged Hunter Foods to develop this product because they thought it would be the perfect snack to accompany Sake.

