



Convenience Food from Flanders

Flanders: proficiently convenient

Are you one of those time-pushed consumers, eating on-the-go, trying to juggle a busy lifestyle with a commitment to a healthy diet on meals that provide maximum convenience, but do not compromise on taste... ?

Or maybe you simply cannot be bothered to spend hours in the kitchen, preparing dishes from scratch.

Then what ?

Just settle down to this report *Convenience Foods from Flanders* and you will find it positively brimming with great, hassle-free foods.

The report features 22 Flemish convenience food manufacturers, most of them member companies of **BReMA**, the Belgian Ready Meals Association, the sole representative trade body within the Belgian ready meals industry.

In keeping with shifting consumer trends and changing eating patterns, every single one of the companies listed are proven providers of innovative meal solutions:

- in a wide variety of product categories, like chilled, frozen and ambient recipe dishes, ready meals, meal components and snack meals, inspired by favourite traditional national recipes, Mediterranean or oriental cuisine. But there are also sandwich fillings, hot and cold sauces and dips, prepared salads, frozen vegetables and fruits and IQF culinary herbs.
- to varying degrees of convenience: ready-to-cook, ready-to-reheat, ready-to-eat...;
- providing healthy meal options (fresh, flavoursome, nutritionally-balanced, salt- and fat-reduced, along GDA guidelines...);
- targeted at various channels within the food distribution market (food retail, catering and foodservice, the out-of-home eating sector...).

There really is no need to feel bad about enjoying the sheer convenience of a ready meal. So, if you start feeling slightly peckish after tucking into this mouthwatering report, don't you worry - grub's up in a couple of minutes...!

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Belgian Ready Meals Association - BReMA

BReMA: Belgian convenience food at the ready...

The Belgian Ready Meals Association, **BReMA** for short, was founded in 1999.

Its 20-company membership currently features all major Belgian players in the ready meals industry, with a combined staff of over 2000 and a joint turnover in excess of €850 million, making it the sole representative trade body within the industry.

Among them, BReMA member companies manufacture a variety of convenience foods, ranging from prepacked, ready-to-eat, ready-to-reheat or ready-to-cook, main-course ready meals or meal components, multiple-component meals, soups and salads, pizzas, sandwich fillings... ambient, chilled or frozen with a (more or less extended shelf-life...

Besides representing the key interests of its member companies in their formal dealings with national and international regulatory bodies, BReMA often joins forces with other membership organisations and food-related umbrella groups the likes of FEVIA (Belgian Food Industry Federation) and ECFF (European Chilled Food Federation) in a bid to develop, promote and champion best practice among its member companies and throughout the ready meals industry as a whole.

BReMA also actively involves in a host of new – often joint – initiatives, such as contributing to ECFF Guidelines for the Hygienic Manufacture of Chilled Foods, guidelines on temperature control in the supply chain or the self-monitoring guide for the processed foods and ready meals industry.

BReMA also comments and advises on other matters relevant to the convenience food industry, like product labelling (nutritional values, Guideline Daily Amounts...) and issues like salt and fat level reduction in ready meals.

All BReMA member companies operate quality assurance systems, authoritatively audited by third-party certification bodies and have been awarded quality assurance system certification and / or product safety certification, to standards agreed by the GFSI (Global Food Safety Initiative) and / or the self-monitoring guide for the forementioned processed foods industry.



BReMA is a member of **FEVIA**, the Belgian food industry Federation.

FEVIA's membership consists of some 450 companies. Furthermore, it encompasses 26 dedicated trade associations, BReMA being one of them, each representing a specific branch of the food industry.

FEVIA Flanders operates within the national FEVIA association. Within the integrated decision-making structures of the parent organisation, FEVIA FLANDERS represents the interests of the Flanders-based food industry.

Through first-hand involvement in their core sectors, both BReMA and FEVIA have access to a wealth of information, continually kept up-to-date and shared with their member companies.

BReMA

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FIRMS A ... Z

A-MEALS

Frozen ready meals, meal components and meat preparations

COUNTRY CHEF BELGIUM

Chilled and frozen *sous-vide* ready meals and meal components

CROP'S

Frozen vegetables, fruits and ready meals

CULINOR

Ultrafresh oven-ready convenience foods

d'LIS FOOD

Frozen take-away pasta concept

FRIGILUNCH

Frozen ready meals for retail and foodservice markets

HAMAL SIGNATURE

Chilled, ready-to-eat salad spreads and sandwich fillings...

HERBAFROST

IQF culinary herbs

HOT CUISINE

Chilled ready meals and meal components

LE MÉDAILLON

Chilled ready meals

MANNA

Ready-made hot and cold sauces

McCAIN FOODS BELGIUM - FRIMA

Frozen meal solutions

MORUBEL

Value-added IQF shrimp and other seafood preparations

OVI

Chilled ready meals, meal components and frozen snacks

PINGUIN CONVENIENCE CUISINE

Value-added vegetables / vegetable-based convenience foods

RABBIT

Ready-to-eat, fresh prepared salads

SNACK FOOD POCO LOCO

Tex-Mex speciality foods

STARMEAL

Ultra fresh prepared salads

TER BEKE FRESH MEALS

Fresh, Mediterranean-style, ready meals and meal components

TOPS FOODS

Ambient and chilled ready meals, chilled snack meals

VACO

Fresh prepared ready meals, soups, sauces and dressings

VLEVY

Processed convenience meats

Pictograms used



Products / services



Brands



Export markets



Markets targeted



Prospects



Trade fair participation / visit



Strengths / Assets



Channels

A-MEALS



Frozen ready meals, meal components and meat preparations

A-Meals offers a vast range of frozen meal components and complete single-course ready meals, savoury appetizers and party food, garnishes, sauces, soups, stir-fry or BBQ-ready preparations.



Q-labelled company brand (with pasta, full meals and oriental dinner ranges, respectively bearing the sub-brands *Q pasta*, *Q dinners* and *Q world*); additional range of retailer-own label products, co-manufactured to customer specification



France, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Austria, Luxembourg



UK, France, Germany



Agents, frozen food retailers, catering and food service wholesale, in-flight catering operators...



Regular visitor to and/or exhibitor at leading international food exhibitions: Sial (Paris), Anuga (Cologne), Gastronord (Stockholm)...



A-MEALS



The *A-meals* company was founded in the 90's, when a leading European frozen meats processor decided to branch out into the ready meals market.

Its associated company, *A-meat*, is a leading meat processor with one of the largest frozen offerings of prime meat cuts, minced meat and meat preparations on the European continent.

At present, *A-meals* seems well on its way to becoming one of Europe's most innovative manufacturers of ready meals and meal components. Among its customers, the company counts all major players in the frozen food retail business, as well as a number of leading catering operators.

Quality is seen as a key theme throughout the company's (ISO 9001 and BRC-approved) operations. *A-meals* applies a set of rigorous quality standards, exceeding those required under EU law.

On the latest and most advanced processing equipment, it prepares an impressive range of healthily balanced meals for time-starved consumers, using only the very best all-natural ingredients, which are sourced from carefully vetted suppliers. All products are natural and meet clean label requirements, limiting E-number additives.

Research and new product development is also driven by improved convenience, innovation, premiumization and manufacturing flexibility, allowing small high-value runs or batches of a particular product.



Frozen food retail trade, catering and food service wholesale, in-flight catering industry...



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COUNTRY CHEF BELGIUM



Chilled and frozen vacuum cooked (*sous-vide*) ready meals and meal components

Broad range of vacuum cooked, *sous-vide* meals and meal components, including ragouts (poultry and meat stews), gourmet soups, snacks, sauces, main-course meals (regional, Mediterranean, ethnic...), festive season fare and special-occasion menus, mashed-potato preparations, grilled chicken-based products (in their innovative microwaveable pack)...



Part of the range is marketed under the company's *Country Chef* brand, but the company primarily operates in close long-term partnerships with major food retailers to co-develop and manufacture their private label offering of convenience foods.



United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Denmark



Germany, Ireland, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Finland



Importers firmly established within the retail channel and/or distributors with proven experience in handling frozen and chilled foods and a clear ability to establish a distribution network.



High-street retail channel market and foodservice operators



Country Chef Belgium was founded in 1997 and has, in just over a decade, grown into a leading manufacturer of a varied assortment of chilled and frozen ready meals and meal components, expertly prepared according to the *sous-vide* cooking method.

This food preparation process, widely acclaimed by top chefs, consists in cooking raw ingredients in a vacuum pouch for an extended period of time in a controlled water temperature below boiling point, thus locking in vitamins, minerals and other nutrients, preserving the food's optimum flavour,

texture and colour and substantially prolonging its shelf life.

Country Chef Belgium only uses prime ingredients that are fully traceable, with particular attention to the health aspect: all dishes are low-fat, low salt, without flavour enhancers, preservatives or colouring agents. The company also co-founded the Belgian awareness campaign and label *Ik kies bewust* - (A conscious choice), promoting healthy eating and a nutritionally-balanced diet.

The company's main strength lies in its broad product capability, which enables it to (co-) develop and supply all players on the highly competitive ready meals market with restaurant-quality convenience foods. These are prepared to the tried and tested *sous-vide* cooking preparation method and come in pack formats, customized to the requirements of the specific distribution channels (retail, foodservice and catering...).

Its top-notch processing plant allows flexible runs, ideally suited for manufacturing large batches, as well as small trial runs. The company also has an outstanding reputation for excellent logistics, with just-in-time deliveries enabling customers to adequately react to shifts in demand from the market.



Tavola (Courtrai - BE), PLMA (Amsterdam)

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Frozen vegetables, fruits and ready meals

Crop's comprehensive frozen line-up covers 3 main product categories:

- **vegetables:** mono or mixed vegetables for microwave steam-cooking, pan, wok and stir-fry cooking, oven-ready, gratins, meal components and accompaniments
- **fruits:** single-fruit products, mixed fruit products, purées and coulis... for a variety of fruit-based preparations
- **ready meals and steam-cooked meal solutions:** traditional all-time favourite dishes, Mediterranean, oriental and other ethnic speciality cuisine, seafood dishes, IQF stir fries and soups, health-packed main-course meals, pasta and rice-based dishes, to be microwaved and ready-to eat in only minutes from frozen.



Own range of branded products (*Crop's*), along with extensive private label contracts (some 90% of total production)

Benelux, Germany, Austria, Scandinavia, France, Spain, Portugal, UK, US, Japan, Australia

Worldwide marketing and business development effort ongoing

Multiple retailers, food service operators and catering professionals, frozen food (fruit, veg...) importers, food manufacturing industries

Anuga (Cologne), Sial, Europain, European Sandwich and Snack Show (Paris), PLMA (Amsterdam), CFIA (Rennes), Food & Drink Expo (Birmingham), Gulfood (Dubai), Foodasia (Singapore)



With over 30 years of experience in growing, harvesting and processing fruit and vegetables, the *Crop's* company has developed into one of the flagship companies within the buoyant Belgian frozen foods industry.

The company offers an extensive frozen range of vegetables and fruits, sourced from one of its fully owned-and-operated processing plants (in Belgium and Portugal) or globally sourced from a number of reliable suppliers, ensuring continuity of supply and all-year round availability.



Crop's is a genuine vertical integrator *from field to fork* and operates a fully integrated crop management system, with rigorously monitored traceability.

Its state-of-the-art, all-purpose ready meal plant turns out 100 million ready meals a year, to the highest specification by some of the most demanding customers.

Over the years, Crop's has grown into a trusted and preferential supplier of a broad portfolio of retailer-own label frozen veg, fruit and ready meals. Private label products - approved to BRC standards by EFSIS and co-developed with major retailers - currently account for some 90% of Crop's production.

Dynamic pro-active innovation and product development by a dedicated and inspired in-house NPD team, in a close working relationship with key customers from the retail, catering and manufacturing industries (e.g. its range of frozen fruit mixes, specially developed for the smoothies market).

A real frozen solutions provider, *Crop's* provides comprehensive category management assistance to professional customers (market surveys, training courses for store managers, frozen aisle supervisors), in order to optimize performance of individual product categories in key growth areas of the convenience retail market.

Reinforcing the health message, *Crop's* has consistently advocated "frozen" as a tasty, wholesome and convenient dinner option for time-pressured consumers, combining the health aspect (low-fat, low-calorie, counting towards the recommended daily fruit and vegetable intake...), with maximum convenience (bowl, tray or pan cook meals, in microwaveable steam packs, one-shot family packs, *bag-in-a-bag* packaging, delicately seasoned or dressed...).



About 80% of all vegetables processed, are grown in crop areas within a 20-mile radius of the processing plant, where they are quick-frozen at minus 40 C at the peak of freshness and optimum maturity, thus preserving taste, texture, nutrients (vitamins, fibres, minerals...) and locking in all the goodness of freshly-harvested and readily prepared vegetables.

A case in point are the top-quality "150-minute peas", sourced from a 3200 ha crop area nearby and quick-frozen at the processing plant in a matter of hours, preserving as much as 90% of its vitamin C content for a year.

The convenience range of frozen fruit, vegetables and ready meals by *Crop's* are prepared to balanced recipes, with only the finest fruit and vegetable varieties used, all-natural (free from added preservatives, artificial flavours and colouring agents).

The company has picked up a number of highly-prized awards in the frozen food industry (BFFF, Saveur de l'Année...) for some of its innovations in the retail and catering ready meals market.



Retail trade, food service, catering and food manufacturing industries (B2B)

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Ultrafresh oven-ready convenience foods

The Culinor company's broad range of balanced meal solutions, ranging from Belgian culinary classics to widely acclaimed Mediterranean dishes, consists of the following sub-ranges:



Ultrafresh, single-portion dishes

(7-day shelf-life, pasta-, rice- or potato-based)

Sous-vide ready meals

Meat and poultry stew-type preparations and other fresh multi-component recipes, vacuum steam-cooked to retain all natural flavours, vitamins and minerals. These dishes have a 21-day shelf-life and are available in both 400g single-portion, 1kg multiple-serving or 4kg catering-sized packs.



Oven-ready meals and meal components

Fish gratin, moussaka, lasagna, macaroni and other iconic oven-cooked dishes..., packed in oven proof alu or cpet trays, instantly ovenable or microwave oven-ready, with a minimum 18-day shelf-life.

Apart from main-course meals, this particular range also includes potato meal centres and vegetable meal components.

Fine cooking sauces (archiduc, pepper and cream, mousseline and many other culinary sauces...), freshly prepared with carefully selected, natural ingredients.



They come packed in appealing sealed sauce boats for home-cooking applications or in catering-sized packs for the foodservice industry.



"Cook for two"

Hassle-free, ready-to-prepare meal concept, allowing time-strapped foodies to enjoy slow food gastronomic delights and to savour the pleasures of home cooking, with the added benefit of convenience cooking.

Basically, *Cook for two* is a single-pack cookery kit, packed in a trendy aluminium tray, containing all fresh ingredients and meal components (meat, fish or poultry, vegetables... down even to seasonings and cooking instructions...), required to easily put together a complete pan-cooked or oven-simmered dinner.



Primarily private label offerings, tailor-made to the specific needs of leading European retailers



Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, Switzerland



UK



Retailers (for its main-course ready meals range)
Foodbrokers, food service operators and caterers (for its meal components range)



Tavola (Courtrai - Belgium)

CULINOR



The Culinor company supplies its customers, featuring some of Europe's leading own-label retailers, with comprehensive convenience meal concepts and allows them to keep abreast of shifting eating patterns and developments in the marketplace.

The company is passionately committed to preparing quality convenience foods, inspired by Belgian and international cuisine, for time-starved, yet discerning customers.

Aided by state-of-the-art processing plant, advanced packaging and preserving technologies, Culinor has most of its recipes created and developed by top chefs of national and international renown. They use the very best cookery methods and imaginatively turn high-quality fresh produce and ingredients into flavourful, healthy and balanced ready meals. These come in various pack options and sizes, tailored to the individual customer's specific requirements (individual-portion sizes, family packs, catering-sized packaging...)

All meals are formulated to work towards the 5-portion-a-day GDA target of (fruit or) veg intake, without using artificial flavours or flavour enhancers, colouring agents or preservatives. Fully compliant with HACCP standards, Culinor is also IFS certified (version 5, higher level), holds BRC General Food Standard accreditation (version 4, level A) and has obtained ACS (Auto Control System) accreditation.

Taking innovation one step further, Culinor closely co-operates with the Department of Food Microbiology and Preservation at Ghent University. It is also involved in the *Flanders Food* programme for joint innovative R&D projects within the food industry.



culinor convenience cuisine

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Frozen take-away pasta concept

Ready-made concept of *reheat-and-serve* pasta- and rice-based dishes, presented as an instant cooking kit, combining the following ingredients and accessories:

- parcooked, pasteurized and **IQF frozen pasta** (12 varieties), heated to order in less than a minute (*au bain marie*, combi steamer, microwave oven, pasta cooker or stir-fried from frozen...). Packaged in catering-sized 2.5kg bags and equally suited for cold pasta salad preparations;
- **sauce toppings** (ambient, 1-year shelf-life, 6 varieties: bolognese, neapolitan, cheese, carbonara, scampi cream sauce) in doy pack pouches, ready to reheat in microwave oven, combi steamer, *au bain marie*;
- **convenient-to-carry, lidded food containers**, 460ml and 750ml, microwave-oven proof, wooden forks and in-store display and promotional materials.

More... supplementing the pasta concept and the follow-on rice-based range, D'lis also has on offer 3 varieties of frozen stir-fry ready meals (paella and vegetarian Tex-Mex), also available in 750g bags for retail sale;



d'LIS Food and The Smiling Cook®



The Netherlands, Germany, France and Luxembourg



France, along with other EU countries



Frozen (snack) foods importers and wholesalers, supplying the catering, foodservice, out-of-home... channels



Exhibiting at or trade visits to: Horeca Expo (Ghent), Technik'hotel (Brussels), Horecatel (Marche-en-Famenne – Belgium), European Sandwich Show (Paris)



Drawing on a broad experience in the frozen bakery and ready meals trading business, the d'LIS Food management resolutely turned its attention to new product development in the convenience food line of business and successfully launched a unique take-away pasta snack meal concept.

The snacking concept, branded *The Smiling Cook*, must be one of the fastest food options around for people eating "on the hoof", providing them with a healthy alternative to other fast food options (nutritionally-balanced, vegetarian and organic options, stringently HACCP, ISO-9002, EFSIS monitored and fully traceable).

At the same time, the concept allows foodservice operators and snack meal outlets in high-footfall commercial locations to effortlessly broaden their convenient meal solutions array.



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FRIGILUNCH



Frozen ready meals for retail and foodservice markets

Frigilunch offers a varied range of individual or multi-portion meals and main dishes based on meat, fish or poultry preparations, with pasta- or potato-based accompaniments and sauces, to be conveniently prepared in microwaveable or conventional oven-proof trays.



Inspired by local, traditional or ethnic culinary traditions, Frigilunch has a number of **branded subranges**, each targeted at either the retail and home-service markets or at catering, foodservice and hospitality operations.



The aptly named **Bella Vita Menu**, features culinary highlights from French, Italian and Greek cooking, whereas the **Maxi-Menu** offers a choice of traditional menus from Belgian cuisine for time-poor enthusiasts of flavoursome home-made fare.

The **Magic Star Menu** range of over 40 microwaveable dishes has been especially developed for the foodservice sector. It is the ideal option for regulars or easy-to-prepare standby menus, served at pubs, hotels, take-aways, convenience stores, diners, chip shops, sandwich bars, cafeterias, canteens, cafés, bistros...

The **Frigilunch** brand is a household name for ready meals in non-commercial and institutional catering channels (schools, companies, care homes, home-delivered meal services...).

The brand also covers menu options which cater to special dietary requirements.

In addition to its branded lines, the company also runs an extensive programme of **private label** ready meal solutions for the retail, home-service and (commercial and institutional) foodservice markets.

FRIGILUNCH



France, the Netherlands, Spain



Europe as a whole



European importers and distributors, supplying the retail, foodservice and catering business



Anuga (Cologne), Horeca Expo (Ghent-Belgium), Sial (Paris), Sirha (Lyon)



Boasting over 35 years of know-how in frozen ready meals manufacturing, the Frigilunch company definitely is something of a “ready meal pioneer”. Firmly established on its home market, particularly through its presence in the retail, home service, foodservice and other catering channels, the company now has the ambition to take on other European markets.



The company operates a fully custom-built, high-capacity manufacturing plant, allowing flexible, large and small-scale production runs for its private label customers.

Its in-house research and development laboratory conducts stringent quality monitoring and develops new products and bespoke recipes for major own-label customers.

The company also has long-standing co-manufacturing agreements with some of the most widely reputed brand-owners in the foodservice, home service and retail markets.

Food safety and quality assurance are vital priorities within the company, which is BRC accredited (Global Standard for Food Safety accreditation - issue 4, grade A).

Mindful of market opportunities arising in the market, NPD efforts by Frigilunch result in regular roll-outs of new ranges of high-quality frozen ready meals.



Retail trade, home delivery service providers, catering and foodservice operations (commercial and institutional)



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HAMAL SIGNATURE



Chilled, ready-to-eat salad spreads and sandwich fillings...

Hamal Signature offers a B2B range of readily spreadable artisan salads (meat, fish, seafood and poultry-based) for the professional foodservice and catering market, along with a B2C range of prepacked salads for consumer retail sales.

Their broad product portfolio includes over 100 different salad recipes and 350 varieties of fillings, with regular launches of new salad preparations (ethnic, mediterranean, oriental, health-conscious, seasonal and themed varieties..., some of them heatable).



Apart from a strong brand positioning policy, centred around its 3 company brands: *Hamal* (B2B, some 60 varieties in 1 to 5 kg tubs), *Délio* (B2C, 200g consumer trays) and *VH Signature* (premium fish-based salads, prepared to improved recipes for the higher-end delicatessen market), Hamal Signature has also developed into an established supplier of private label salads.



France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal



UK, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Hungary, Germany, Sweden



Import companies and trade partners operating in the “sandwiches, dips and salads” market: high-street retailers, the food service, catering and hospitality industry, food wholesalers supplying butchers, delicatessens and fine food stores, sandwich bars, canteens, coffee shops, diners.....



Sial and the European Sandwich Show (Paris), Anuga (Cologne), Tavola (Courtrai - Belgium), Alimentaria (Barcelona), Alimentaria (Lisbon)

HAMAL SIGNATURE



Originally set up in 1962 as a small-scale artisan craft manufacturer of ready-made sandwich spreads selling at the local butcher's, the present-day Hamal Signature company has definitely consolidated its position as market leader on the Belgian market of chilled spreadable salads. It now boasts solid references within the commercial and retail catering business and from major multiple stores (Delhaize, Carrefour, Spar, Cora, Makro, Metro...).

Hamal Signature's range of delectable salad spreads comes in various pack options: from catering-sized, low-waste, 1kg to 5kg tubs for "fresh from the counter" sales, down to stylishly designed and branded retail packaging (appealing resealable trays with the salad ingredient type made visible to the customer by colour labelling: red for meat, blue for fish, green for vegetables and yellow for poultry / chicken-based preparations).

With 55% of the market, Hamal Signature has clear market leadership in Belgium, a position achieved by...:

- drawing on 45 years of craftsmanship and expertise in supplying "the sandwich industry";
- a strong commitment to quality and the use of carefully selected, prime-quality ingredients and raw materials for the development of...
- ... its vast product range, comprehensively certified (ISO 9001 and ISO1400, HACCP implemented throughout the quality monitoring system, BRC and IFS-approved for its private label range, Belgian quality label...);
- top-notch production facilities with a clear artisan approach.

Innovation, premiumization, flexibility and customisation: in close working partnership with its customers, Hamal Signature constantly updates its portfolio of quality fillings by (co-)developing and introducing innovative recipes, ingredients, packaging..., tailored to changing consumer preferences and eating patterns.

This creativity has resulted in such novelty products as a healthy children's salads with a high fruit and veg content or a range of *non-mayonnaise* lunchtime sandwich salads with yogurt or vegetable-based dressings. All products are designed in line with international guidelines for healthy eating, while at the same time tapping into the health and wellness trends.

Already trading briskly on its home market, Hamal Signature now increasingly ventures into foreign markets, with a keen eye for local market preferences.



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IQF culinary herbs

Wide range of high-quality individually quick-frozen (IQF) culinary herbs for the food industry, the catering and retail markets.

The HerbaFrost product portfolio consists of freezer-fresh herbs and herb mixtures, featuring some of the most popular and widely-used species: basil, chives, dill, leek, parsley (curly and flat), chervil, sage, rosemary, thyme, savory, garlic and bear's garlic, oregano, marjoram, rocket, tarragon, spring onions...

The 38-variety product offering covers the entire spectrum of flavour profiles, perfectly suited to accentuate the flavour and aromatic qualities of ready meals, soups and sauces.

Apart from conventionally-grown herbs, the company also carries a 15-variety certified organic range and has trading activities in out-of-season herb varieties, not grown locally.



Proprietary company brands (*HerbaFrost - Fresh Frozen Herbs*), as well as numerous private label products



Europe



Worldwide



Importers, distributors, food brokers and frozen foods manufacturers



As an exhibitor:

Anuga (Cologne), Frozen Convenience Foods International, (Brussels), IFE (London), Intercool (Dusseldorf), Biofach (Nuremberg), Intrafood (Courtrai)

As a trade visitor:

Alimentaria (Barcelona), Sial (Paris), Frozen (Zaragoza)



Food industry, catering, foodservice and retail markets



HERBAFROST



Set up in 2000, HerbaFrost has, over the years, effectively secured its leading position as Belgium's sole processor of free-flowing, individually quick-frozen (IQF) culinary herbs.

The company has made its mark as a listed supplier with major players in the food processing industry.

HerbaFrost now operates 2 state-of-the-art IQF herb-processing plants, each specializing in its own varieties, sourced from specialist contract farmers in prime growing areas in the vicinity of the factory.



Quality assurance

In the course of the 7-month herb-processing season (May to October), all freshly-harvested herbs (conventional or organically-grown, GMO-free and kosher certified...) are immediately processed to the highest standards at one of the company's custom-built, highly-automated sorting, processing and IQF freezing plants.

All processed herbs retain their natural freshness, flavour and colour and thus make a low-waste, long-life, *ready-to-sprinkle*, quality food ingredient.

The BRC-accredited factories have a stringent quality control system in place, compliant with HACCP standards. Bacteriological, physico-chemical analyses and agronomic crop trials are systematically carried out throughout the production process, thus guaranteeing full traceability "from field to fork".

Customization and NPĐ

Herbs from HerbaFrost come as single-variety, mono products or as mixes and blends, (partially) de-stemmed and chopped to standard or specialty-cut sizes.

The product array is available in a number of customized pack options, ranging from industrial-sized bulk packs (for applications in industrial food processing), catering-sized 250g and 1kg pillow pack bags, down to 100g and 150g retail packs (e.g. the zip-lock resealable doy-pack pouches), along with extensive private label packaging capability.

Acting on the exact product specifications set by its key customers, HerbaFrost actively involves in innovative product development: new packaging formats, novelty range additions by sourcing new herbal varieties with expected market potential (like IQF peppermint, IQF Purple and Thai basil...).

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HOT CUISINE



Chilled ready meals and meal components

Hot Cuisine's impressive product portfolio consists of over 600 fresh and ultra-fresh ready meals and meal components, with shelf lives ranging from 7 up to 28 days, ready to reheat in any (microwave) oven, steamer or bain-marie.

Traditional basic recipes from local culinary heritage, time-honoured Mediterranean preparations or premium, restaurant-quality recipe dishes, bearing the signature of Michelin star celebrity chefs...

... they are all featured in Hot Cuisine's product offering of meat-, fish-, poultry-based or vegetarian dishes, lasagna and other pasta dishes, oven casseroles, Mediterranean vegetables, soups and part meals (mashed potatoes, par-cooked vegetables, sauces...)



Although primarily a manufacturer of private label or store brand products, Hot Cuisine also sells some of its products under its *Home Cuisine* company brand.



Hot Cuisine Belgium exports to the Netherlands, UK, Luxembourg, France, Germany and Portugal. Scandinavian countries are serviced by the company's Sweden branch and the US market by its US branch.



Further developing existing and new export markets, e.g. UK, France, Germany, Eastern Europe and the US



Long-term partnerships sought with retailers, food service operators, catering companies and food brokers



Fruit Logistica (Berlin), PLMA (Chicago)



Retail, food service and catering, specialist wholesale, food industry, out-of-home market



HOT CUISINE



Hot Cuisine, originally established in 1989 as a central kitchen for a Belgian restaurant catering chain, is now part of the *Univeg – Cycle of Freshness* group of companies, a strategic fresh produce supplier to retailers in as many as 23 countries (www.univeg.com).

With global sales of about €3 billion and 9000 staff, the Univeg group ranks among the world's largest suppliers of fresh produce and value-added, fresh and ultra fresh meal solutions to a growing customer base of retail grocery chains, mass merchandisers and food service companies.

The Univeg group consists of 4 dedicated business units: Fruit & Vegetables, Flowers and Plants, **Convenience** and Logistics.

The Convenience business unit covers fresh cut produce and meal solutions. Hot Cuisine has a 20-year pedigree as a specialist supplier of fresh prepared meals, soups and meal components and therefore plays a conspicuous role in the Univeg convenience business.

It operates 4 state-of-the-art manufacturing plants in Belgium (Ghent and Tournai), Sweden (Varberg) and the US (Swedesboro- NJ).

The company's unrivalled product capability in ready meals, of culinary competence and operational flexibility, enables it to develop ever more bespoke meal solutions, tailored to the customer's requirements and in line with the peculiarities of each particular market.

Over the years, a top-notch team of development chefs has acquired outstanding and comprehensive culinary know-how, both in existing and prospective markets with varying cookery traditions and eating patterns.

Hot Cuisine consistently approaches its new product development effort from an angle of GDA (guideline daily amount) and nutritionally balanced diet considerations. Its ultimate concern is to further develop ever healthier dishes, e.g. by reducing salt and fat levels.

In its drive for innovative product development from a nutritional point of view, the company closely co-operates with several university research departments and takes part in various R&D initiatives within the food industry (like the Flanders Food programme).

All Hot Cuisine factories boast a fully integrated quality assurance system, with HACCP standards fully complied with and holding BRC (or equivalent) certification.

The company consistently aims at entering into a long-term partnership with its customers. It does so by not just involving them in the NPD and supply effort, but by offering them value-added services, optimized category management support and supply chain management and replenishment through vendor-managed inventory schemes.



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LE MÉDAILLON



Chilled ready meals

Le Médaillon's comprehensive seasonal ranges (winter and summer offering) of post-pasteurized, microwave-oven ready meals, include:

- genuine traditional dishes, icons of local culinary heritage (*bangers and mash*-type dishes, stews, casseroles...) and multi-component meals;
- a successful selection of popular staple dishes from Mediterranean, oriental and global cuisine.



Le Médaillon company brand and retailer-own labels (co-development of new recipes and/or meal compositions, both in the premium and value parts of the market)



The Netherlands, Luxembourg



France, Germany, Italy, UK, Ireland, Denmark, Greece, Norway, Sweden, Finland



Food retail market and professional catering and food service



Tavola (Courtrai – Belgium), Anuga (Cologne), PLMA (Amsterdam), Nationale Food Week (Utrecht)



Although founded only in 2003, Le Médaillon seems determined to become a supplier to be reckoned with in the European chilled ready meals market. The company markets a comprehensive range of distinctive menus, ranging from time-honoured, local, seasonal fare to adventurous dishes from global cuisine (accounting for as much as 15% of the range), designed by experienced chefs who put all their skills and creativity into developing a top-of-the line product portfolio.

The company is part of the Belgian *Ruris* agro-food group and its affiliated company, *Potato Masters*, specializes in packaging and marketing a broad range of potato varieties. Le Médaillon operates in the "flavourful convenient health" niche, using only prime-quality fresh seasonal ingredients (meat, fish, vegetables and potatoes), delicately seasoned and masterly turned into a glorious meal for consumers who seek a no-fuss dinner, packed with healthy ingredients.

The company advocates microwave steam-cooking and promotes its innovative - and celebrity chef endorsed - *Exquisa Culinair* concept for preparing potatoes the way it is done at top restaurants.

The company heavily invests in its state-of-the-art preparation, packaging and meal conditioning plant, without, however, compromising on the artisan taste of home-cooked foods.

At Le Médaillon, nutritional balance, food safety, full traceability... are just some of the issues high on the company's agenda. It has a stringent quality monitoring scheme in place, HACCP-compliant, in accordance with BRC Global Standard Food Version 4 (A level, version 4) and IFS guidelines. Moreover it has started using a pulp-based, (largely) recyclable tray for its modified atmosphere packaged (MAP) ready meals.



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Ready-made hot and cold sauces

The Manna company's 50-variety range of hot and cold sauces, sold under the company's *Manna* brand and under various own-labels, includes both...:

- ...“classic” **hot sauces** like Bolognese sauce, Béarnaise, Provençale, Chinese curry, vegetable sauces..., along with other flavourful sauce varieties, like the delicious *Tomagrec* sauce, made with sun-ripened Greek tomatoes or the 95% fresh vegetable-packed sauce and...
- ...a large number of popular **cold sauces for topping** fries / chips and **mayonnaise-based dressings** for salads (mayonnaise, tartare sauce, cocktail sauce, ketchup, mustard, neapolitan, andalusian and curry sauces, hawaiian, garlic and pepper sauces, *Champignons à la Grecque*...



France, the Netherlands, Spain, a number of African countries...



The Netherlands, France, Germany, UK...



High-street retail operators, food brokers, wholesalers/distributors supplying the hospitality, catering and foodservice business, restaurants, snack bars, takeaways, chip shops, convenience stores, prepared foods manufacturers (salads, spreads...)



Regular visits to international food-related trade fairs (e.g. Sial - Paris)



MANNA



The Manna company's earliest origins date back to the pre-war era, when its founder started off as a door-to-door fishmonger, selling pickled herring.

Later, with the rise of the Belgian chip shop, the smart entrepreneur shifted to making mayonnaise, the basis of what was to become the company's current product array of over 50 sauce varieties.

Still 100% family-owned to this day and with the 4th generation currently at the helm, the company has grown into a modern company, professionally run and with clear international ambitions.

Its ready-made quality sauces are now selling briskly not just at home, but increasingly on foreign markets as well.

Apart from its (meat and non-meat) spaghetti sauce line Manna is particularly famed for, the company now has most of its products lined up at any Belgian frieterie and on any dinner table.

A flexible approach towards its customers and their specific product requirements has earned it trusted private label supplier status with various high-street retail multiples.



The company's keen innovative effort is evidenced by its fully restyled brand identity and regular new product launches like the vegetable-packed *Manna Vegetable Sauce*, simply delicious when served warm on pasta and rice dishes.

Quality is key, with only the finest ingredients on the market used, no added colours or preservatives and no compromises made on taste integrity.

Most sauces from the Manna range are available in a host of pack options: from squeeze bottles, jars, tubes, tubs... up to catering-sized 10 kg buckets or the proprietary no-spoilage *slotts* dispensers.

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Frozen meal solutions

McCain Foods Belgium manufactures and markets a broad array of **frozen** (potato-, pasta and rice-based) **ready meals**, **meal components** and **gratins**, sold under the company's own *Frima* brand and a number of retailer-own labels.



France, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, United Kingdom



The company is continuously involved in an international marketing and business development effort



PLMA (Amsterdam), Anuga (Cologne), Sial (Paris)



Distributors operating in the frozen food retail trade



Since 1986, McCain Foods Belgium has been part of the McCain Foods multinational manufacturer of frozen foods and the world's largest producer of french fries, frozen potato specialities and other oven-ready frozen convenience foods.



McCain Foods Belgium - Frima

Drawing on many decades of know-how in the frozen food industry and acting on expert advice from both in-house food technologists and market analysts, McCain Foods Belgium - Frima offers its customers comprehensive new product development services.

Its original recipes, novel concepts, formats and products in the frozen ready meals category are tailored to each customer's requirements as to the specific private label identity, local market dictates and end-user preferences (convenience level, novelty content, pricing and value, healthy eating options...).

Joint product development partnerships with customers invariably result in high-quality products, ready to roll out to mainstream retail or other food distribution channels. Ready meals by McCain Foods Belgium are available in a host of packaging options, like ovenable and microwaveable trays, single- or multi-compartment steam-cooking trays, boil-in-the-bag pouches...

The company is firmly committed to delivering a varied product offering that fits in with a balanced diet without compromising on taste. Therefore, it only uses premium-quality ingredients, rigorously screened, sustainably sourced... in compliance with international quality monitoring guidelines (IFS, BRC, HACCP, MSC-Marine Stewardship Council...).



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Value-added IQF frozen shrimp and other seafood preparations

Morubel's extensive line of IQF frozen seafoods primarily consists of various species of wild-caught or cultured warmwater shrimps or prawns, scallops, clams, crab meat, mussel meat, squid... and other shellfish varieties in numerous count-sizes and to various degrees of processing and preparation (whole, peeled, tail-on, shell-on, raw, blanched, cooked, glazed to customer specification...)



Its (ready-to-eat or ready-to-heat) convenience range of seafood preparations includes seafood tapas, sauce-coated or marinated in seasoned oils, seafood-based dishes and meal components (e.g. the company's seafood bouillabaisse, its scallops in a Champagne sauce, its Deluxe mixed seafood cocktail, casseroles and stews, flavoured prawn preparations...), along with a range of chilled, ready-to-serve shrimp speciality products, appetizers and starters, croquettes, snack-sized seafood bites, seafood barbecue grill mixes...



More...

As Morubel has full accreditation to import, process, pack and sell certified organic cultured shrimp, the company also offers a fully organic range of seafood (preparations).



Both proprietary brands (*Morubel*, *Seafood Delicatess* and *Seafood Delight*) and private label offerings.

Packing own-label seafood lines for most European retailers, accounts for the lion's share of Morubel's business activities, yet the company also produces a great deal for Europe's leading frozen food brands. Given the vast scope of its product portfolio, the company often anonymously inspires the development and expansion of seafood ranges, available to customers from retail outlets and the eating-out-of-home market.

Under the company's proprietary *Seafood Delicatess* brand, retailers are given easy access to a single-branded comprehensive range of seafood speciality products. The company-branded range also covers novelty product lines, trialled on the market, prior to being rolled out nationwide or internationally.



Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, UK, Denmark, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Czech Republic, Hungary, Russia



Norway, Finland, Malta, Turkey, Slovenia, Croatia, USA, Canada, Australia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia



Foodservice / catering, home delivery and retail accounts sought



European Seafood Exhibition (Brussels), Sial (Paris), World Food (Moscow), Anuga (Cologne), Biofach (Nuremberg)... and most other international (frozen) food related trade events





Having steadily moved on from its earliest origins as a 1954 fish-drying and salting factory in the Flemish fishing port of Ostend, half a century down the line, Morubel currently holds Europe's No.1 position as a specialist processor of warmwater shrimp.

Innovation and NPD: the company's passionate new product development team regularly comes up with innovative ideas for seafood cuisine, catering to festive and year-round appetites alike.

A number of packaging formats and configurations are offered, from retail packaging, ready for display along the frozen food aisle to industrial/catering-sized units for use at foodservice kitchen facilities: poly-bags and stand-up pouches, easy-open bags, boxes, bulk cartons, sleeved thermoformed microwaveable (steam) trays, pillow pouches, tubs and buckets... .. through to biodegradable trays, cutting packaging waste on Morubel's organics range.

Morubel's Ostend-based high-capacity plant typically handles a daily throughput of 40 tonnes of raw material. Its annual processing capacity amounts to 17,000 tonnes of prawns and related speciality items. Processing and packaging lines are continually upgraded, keeping up with customer preferences, market trends and the latest technological developments in value-added seafood processing.

Throughout the processing stages, the facility totally controls the quality assurance and value-adding process. The factory is comprehensively certified (ISO 9001/2000, IFS and BRC, en BIO Integra organic certification).



Sustainability and traceability are issues the company also sets great store by. With its business primarily based on wild-caught tropical shrimp, harvested from the sea, Morubel implements an environmentally-friendly procurement policy and is a staunch supporter of the Ocean Trust Foundation.

Furthermore, the company also aims to sustainably source the farm-raised raw material it processes from cultured shrimp suppliers, who are certified by the Aquaculture Certification Council, along guidelines governing best aquaculture practices.



The retail, foodservice/catering sectors and other processed foods industries

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Chilled ready meals, meal components and frozen snacks

Besides its vast portfolio of processed meat products, including frozen snacks and appetizers, croquettes, fine cured and cooked meats (charcuterie), sauces and ketchups, tinned meat products, instant noodle snacks..., the OVI company has over the years increasingly explored outside its traditional offering and innovatively developed a range of chilled ready meals and meal components in a contemporary and convenient format.

The Ovi's product portfolio also includes halal certified products.

Its *Easy Menu* convenience range includes meal components in 300 g single-serving portions or in foodservice-sized packs of 1, 1.5 2.25 kg, ready to serve after just 3 minutes' reheating in a microwave oven.

Featured in the range are culinary evergreens like pork or horsemeat stew, goulash, meatballs in a tomato sauce, vol-au-vent, diced turkey chunks in a gipsy sauce...

Also available in this convenience range is a selection of single-helping, portion-sized packs of starch components (mashed potato, gratin dauphinois, rice or pasta), allowing a varied and easily combined main-course meal with the meat preparations from the *Easy Menu* concept.



Sial (Paris), Anuga (Cologne), PLMA (Amsterdam), Tavola (Courtrai), Horecatel (Marche-en-Famenne), Horeca Expo (Ghent), Horeca Life (Brussels)



Foodservice, hospitality, catering and the out-of-home markets, grocery multiples and retailers



Private label lines as well as company branded offerings:
OVI, China Chicken, Veka, Savico, Fontein, Castel d'Oro, Léon's, Easi, Ottimo. Kiko



Western Europe as a whole



Food distributors, food manufacturing companies, food service and catering operators, food brokers, food retailers





Set up back in 1968, the OVI company is one of Belgium's longest-standing industrial meat-processing companies.

Once a traditional manufacturer of artisan-cured and cooked hams, saveloy sausages, hamburgers and *frikandellen* (deep-fried meat sticks, a snack often accompanying fries), the company now has secured a firm market position as a Belgian independent manufacturer of meat-based products and snacks.

Following a continuous product development effort, the OVI company regularly launches new products or introduces surprising product updates, some of which have been shortlisted by a jury of catering professionals at major food events for their innovative food solution potential.

OVI was the first meat-processing company to be granted full validation of its self-monitoring system in 2008 as a testimony to its comprehensive quality assurance scheme, monitoring all stages of the manufacturing process at its state-of-the art manufacturing plant, fully custom-built in 2006. Moreover, the company has also been awarded BRC Higher Level certification for 9 consecutive years now.



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Penguin



Value-added vegetables and vegetable-based convenience foods

The Penguin group of companies is one of Europe's internationally best-respected frozen vegetable and potato product specialists.

Listed in its impressive product portfolio, are 2 000 high-quality products, ranging from traditional and exotic frozen vegetables to frozen, vegetable-based ready meals and meal components for the food retail, foodservice and food-manufacturing industries.

Since its foundation in 1998 as a separate business unit, **Penguin Convenience Cuisine** has developed one of the broadest and most varied product offerings on the frozen vegetable-based meal solutions market.

Featured in its 700-product range are:

- **ready meals** and recipe dishes, appetizers, starters and ovenable casseroles (ready-to-heat / heat-and-serve), rice-, pasta- or potato-based, with meat, poultry, fish or vegetarian meal centres, Mediterranean, Oriental, Mexican, French, Tex-Mex...);
- **food service solutions**
finish-and-serve vegetable meal components and ingredients, al dente vegetables, par-cooked, single-variety or mixed for wok, pan, oven or microwave oven preparation, stir-fry meals and steam-in-the-bag vegetable mixes, *heat-and-serve* par-fried and grilled vegetables, seasoned vegetables, enhanced herb- or sauce-coated vegetables, fresh soups, sauces and purees, frozen into no-waste, mini-portioned 5 g. pellets or tablets, IQF culinary herbs, certified organic (mixed) vegetables, instant pasta and rice (to be reconstituted)...
- frozen, *thaw-and-serve* or ready-to-bake sweet and savoury preparations and **desserts** (smoothies, pies, quiches, custards, toppings, frozen fruits...)



Penguin and Penguin Convenience Cuisine, Lutosa (potato products range)



Exports to over 40 countries (with the UK, France, Germany and Belgium accounting for a hefty 83%, other EU countries 14%, non-EU markets 3%)



Baltic States, Russia, Canada, Mexico, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, New Zealand, China, Thailand, Singapore...



Food retailers, food brokers, frozen foods importers, foodservice and catering operators, food manufacturers and frozen vegetable processors (for sourcing activities)



Most major international (frozen) food events:
 Anuga (Cologne), Intercool (Dusseldorf), Sial (Paris), Sirha (Lyon), MIA (Rimini), Conxemar (Vigo), Horeca Expo (Ghent – Belgium), Interpom-Primeurs (Courtrai – Belgium), Horecatel (Marche-en-Famenne – Belgium)...



Food industry (22%), foodservice (30%), food retail (48%)

PINGUIN CONVENIENCE CUISINE

Penguin Convenience Cuisine is part of the leading pan-European vegetable and potato processing group, PenguinLutosa, which operates 6 processing plants in Belgium, 1 in France and 3 in the UK, along with various sales and/or sourcing offices in Europe and Asia.

The convenience cuisine branch was set up in 1999 and operates from a factory unit at Langemark-Belgium, custom-built for mixing, preparing, coating, filling, foodservice and retail repacking of added-value vegetables, vegetable-based meal components and ready meals.

International expansion and logistic excellence

The convenience cuisine plant is strategically located in the immediate vicinity of some of Penguin's largest vegetable-processing plants, its fully-automated 65,000 pallet distribution centre and vast refrigerated warehousing capacity.

Set in Europe's prime vegetable-growing grounds and potato-harvesting areas, ultimate freshness of all produce and their year-round availability is guaranteed, due also to the company's many geographically-spread operations and long-term cooperation agreements, concluded with carefully-selected, foreign growers, packers or manufacturers of (frozen) vegetables. (e.g. the company's broad Asian vegetable range for stir-fry meal components and its authentic wok recipes are both sourced and prepared in China to Penguin's rigorous quality specifications).

Innovation and new product development

The company's dedicated R&D team and its development chefs, with proven high-end restaurant experience and an expert eye on international cuisine and global flavours, continually address the challenge to create and develop great-tasting meal solutions for any meal occasion.

Using up-to-the minute food preparation methods, these restaurant-quality dishes are manufactured on an industrial scale, yet without compromising on taste, convenience, nutritional balance and other health issues like helping customers along towards their recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg intake.

Penguin Convenience Cuisine is a preferential supplier of branded and own-label frozen ready meals and meal components to top-ranking retail accounts and major customers in the foodservice and food industries, where its added-value vegetable preparations are considered real A brands.

Penguin's meal solutions come in a host of packaging options, tailored to the varying needs of each distribution channel: from industrial-sized bulk pack units, 1 or 2.5 kg foodservice-size packs or multi-pack kits, to retail-size packaging, ready for supermarket frozen aisles (e.g. 300g, 450g or 600g individual or multiple-serving ovenable trays, bowls, ovals, pouches, zip-top or pillow pouches, gusseted and stand-up pouches, bag-in-bag containers...)

All of Penguin's dedicated factories are equipped with state-of-the-art processing equipment for washing, sorting, grading, peeling, cutting, grating, blanching, steaming, cooling, grading, mixing, coating, IQF and cryogenic freezing...

At its plants, the most rigorous quality assurance schemes are firmly in place, closely monitoring quality, food safety, traceability, cold chain vigilance...) and authoritatively certified (BRC, IFS, Auto Controle Systeem - ACS)



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RABBIT



Ready-to-eat, fresh prepared salads

Rabbit's extensive and delightfully varied range of RTE salads includes: leafy salad and pasta mixes (natural or with a dressing to go), meat- fish-, cheese-, poultry-based salads, vegetarian salads, traditional local speciality salads, exotic salad recipes, Mediterranean-style salads, prepared with authentic pasta from genuine durum wheat semolina



Branded (*Rabbit*) and retailer own-label products



Belgium, the Netherlands



France



Food retailers, foodservice and catering operators, in-flight catering service providers...



Tavola (Courtrai - Belgium)



Retail and foodservice channels



The Rabbit company started off in 1995 as a local greengrocer's, selling its own freshly-prepared vegetable, pasta and fruit salads.

Since then, the company has moved on and its performance record has clearly gone from strength to strength. It currently holds the leading position in the Belgian prepared salads market, supplying own-branded products to top retailers (the likes of Albert Heyn, Delhaize...) and major foodservice and catering operations.

Rabbit's comprehensive offering fully caters to contemporary eating trends in the marketplace, and to an ever-increasing health-consciousness among customers.

The company's intake of carefully-selected, fresh produce and other prime-quality ingredients is stringently monitored throughout the manufacturing process and their traceability is fully guaranteed.

Rabbit holds BRC and IFS certification, both to higher level.

Its sophisticated supply chain and excellent logistics guarantees swift delivery of crisply fresh RTE salads to retail convenience food aisles and further onto the end consumer's plate.

To ensure optimum same-day freshness and enhanced visibility at the point of sale, the company has developed an appealing range of packaging options. These range from single-portion 200 g trays with peelable lidding for easy opening, multiple-serving or big-eat 400 g portions, through to catering-sized 1.5 to 3 kg packs.

The company's brand essence is neatly summed up by its motto: if we say "same-day fresh", we mean "same-day fresh", and deliver the goods... accordingly !

RABBIT nv

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rabbit
the taste of fresh



SNACK FOOD POCO LOCO

MENU

Tex-Mex speciality foods and meal components, including...

Tortilla chips in many shapes (triangular, round or the roll-shaped *Roc & Rolls*) in about any imaginable pack size, ranging from 30g to *big-eat* or catering-sized 1kg packs (with even bulkier 2.4 or 8kg pack formats available also) and a broad choice of flavours (salted, nacho cheese, chilli, barbecue, or the “unseasoned” cool original variety..., along with other custom-developed flavours.

Also on offer: **certified organic** tortilla chips

Flour **tortillas and wraps** (ambient or frozen), ideally suited for wrapping, rolling, folding and filling, available in various sizes (13 to 30cm across), flavour seasonings (tomato, spinach, garlic, black pepper, chilli) and flour types (plain, wholemeal, multigrain, durum or corn / maize flour).

A wide variety of **Mexican-style salsas, dips, cooking sauces, accompaniments and ingredients** to go with any of the *Poco Loco* chips or wraps: Mexicana medium or hot, guacamole, *con queso*, soured cream, in retail and foodservice-sized jars, tins and bottles. Also available: **certified organic** dips

Meal kits based on Mexican and other ethnic cuisine (Taco, Fajita, Burrito, Indian or Chinese easy-wrap dinner kits, containing snack meal-sized, ready-to-fill **taco shells, flour tortillas or wraps with a salsa accompaniment and a sachet of seasoning**. Just adding meat and vegetables will open up the pleasures of Tex-Mex cooking to convenience-seeking home cooks.



Supplying most major grocery retail chains, the company now firmly ranks first as Europe's largest supplier of own-label Tex-Mex foods. Alongside its unparalleled private label range, the company also carries its own *Poco Loco*-branded product range.



With 90% of its turnover destined for export, Snack Food Poco Loco now successfully sells in 80 countries across 5 continents: continental Europe, UK, Ireland, CEE countries, Brazil, the Caribbean, Far and Middle Eastern countries, Africa



Russia, China



Anuga (Cologne), ISM (Cologne), Sial (Paris), the European Sandwich and Snack Show (Paris), PLMA (Amsterdam), MDD (Paris)

SNACK FOOD POCO LOCO

B-to-B and other "industrial" prospects: food retailers, foodservice and catering operators, ready meals manufacturers and related convenience food suppliers



Since its foundation back in 1995, the Snack Food Poco Loco company, specialized in Tex-Mex food products, has made great inroads into the international

ethnic snacks market and is one of the few SME companies to have successfully taken on giant brand-owning multinationals in the crisps and snack foods business.

Meanwhile, the company has gone from strength to strength and has grown into Europe's largest manufacturer of tortilla chips and related Tex-Mex foods.

Comprehensively certified to various international food standards (highest-grade BRC and IFS accreditation), the company draws on the combined know-how of its partner companies, the outstanding performance level of its flexible processing plant and the excellent quality assurance schemes it has in place to guarantee the superior quality of its products (with only the best raw materials used, fully traceable, non-GMO and certified organic for part of its range).

Fully vertically integrated into the Maselis group of companies, leading the Belgian market of cereals processing and health foods production, all manufacturing operations at The Snack Food Poco Loco company are performed in-house: from milling maize flour down to P.O.S. retail packaging.

The company operates 3 advanced custom-built processing plants and turns out one of the most comprehensive arrays of prime-quality Tex-Mex foods in Europe.



Boasting bumper export sales in 80 countries across 5 continents - even in the Latin American heartlands of Tex-Mex cookery - the company scooped the 2001 Flemish "Leeuw van de Export" Award for its outstanding export performance.

An advanced in-house lab and a team of keenly inventive R&D staff constantly involves in the dynamic development - often to customer specification - of innovative Mexican-style convenience food concepts, readily marketable and in line with their customers' own brand identity.

Are you prepared for a spell of happy wrapping or deft dipping?
Feel free to go **slightly mad** about Mexican-style snack foods... by Poco Loco.

SNACK FOOD POCO LOCO nv

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STARMEAL



Ultra fresh prepared salads

A varied standard and seasonal offering of fully-prepared salads, including main-course salads, side salads (served as an accompaniment), cold and hot pasta dishes and pre-prepared sandwiches.

The *StarMeal* brand features 2 sub-brands: the *CoolSalads* line of cold-served fresh salads and pasta menus and the *HotMeals* line of microwaveable pasta dishes, ready to eat in 2 minutes from chilled.



Corporate brands only (*StarMeal*, along with the associated *CoolSalads* and *HotMeals* subbrands)



Belgium, The Netherlands



Market consolidation in Belgium and the Netherlands; scope for business development examined in Germany and France



Retail operators, petrol station forecourt convenience stores



Tavola (Courtrai) , Snackin'Go (Brussels), Nationale Food Week (Utrecht)



CEO of the *StarMeal* company, Mr. Vanlommel, was born and bred into a family of fresh produce importers. Some 25 years ago, his mother was the very first on the market to start selling fresh prepared salads prepacked in plastic containers.

In just 3 years' time, the company has managed to secure a leading position on the Belgian convenience food market with its branded range of fresh salads at the expense of rival retailer own-label offerings. Its quality salads, allegedly some of the freshest, healthiest, most creative and quality salads on the Benelux market, are now on sale at top food retailers like Carrefour, GB, Colruyt, Okay, Delhaize, Délictraiteur, leading petrol station forecourt stores and other out-of-home food outlets (e.g. the Belgian *Kinepolis* multi-cinema group...)

Quality, Freshness and Health

Best-quality ingredients: locally sourced, in-season vegetables, processed within 12 hours of purchase from fresh produce wholesale market, preferably bearing the *Flandria* quality label for environmentally-friendly cultivation, non-mayo, yoghurt-based, low-fat dressings, no colouring agents or preservatives.

Finished salads are instantly dispatched and delivered by the company's own logistics fleet. The cycle of freshness and other quality issues are closely monitored throughout the entire supply chain. The company's stringent quality assurance system has enabled it to achieve authoritative BRC certification.

Although taking place in a state-of-the art industrial environment, some crucial parts of vegetable processing (slicing, peeling...), are still performed manually, thus improving overall freshness, taste, aspect, texture, ingredient compatibility and prolonging a salad's shelf-life to 6 days. Zero stock levels: all salads are prepared and supplied to order.



STARMEAL



The balanced vegetable combinations of a StarMeal salad perfectly fit into a healthy diet and count towards the five-a-day target GDA of fruit and veg intake.

Various packaging options have been designed and developed in-house: 200 - 250g snack-size, 250g bowls for eating on-the-go, 350g main-course meals and multiple-portion-sized 500g bowls. All bowls are embossed with the company logo, have an easily detachable lid and come with a nifty fold-up fork, tucked away beneath the cardboard sleeve...

Innovation and creativity

5% of the company's turnover is earmarked for innovation, primarily focused on product development (NPD) and innovative merchandising concepts.

Drawing on the inventiveness of the company's dedicated NPD staff, on the CEO's personal maternal recipe development consultant (his mother, in plain English) or top celebrity chefs, StarMeal regularly launches new salad menus (e.g. seasonal or exotic product ranges, nutritionally-balanced salad bowls for sports diets, additions to the low-season winter range...).

Some of the company's innovative merchandising concepts include:

- the shop-in-shop concept, centred around its proprietary point-of-sale chiller display units in the fresh produce or chilled aisles at retail outlets, offering full frontal view of the StarMeal range. The company intends to further develop this concept and to introduce similar StarMeal-stocked displays to companies with no access to a canteen. Also on the drawing boards are plans for a StarMeal flagship store, serving healthy food on-the-go for time-pushed customers.

- The double-deck StarMeal Bus, for conducting pre-release trials of new products at food trade shows or festivals and promoting healthier food alternatives among festival revellers.

In acknowledgement of its innovation effort, StarMeal featured among 10 Flemish companies, honoured with the Flanders DC Award for Business



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TER BEKE FreshMeals



Fresh, Mediterranean-style ready meals and meal components...



... for the retail and professional foodservice channels. The core business of the Ter Beke group of companies breaks down into two product categories:

- sliced and prepacked processed meat products (*Ter Beke-Pluma* division)
- fresh Mediterranean ready meals or meal components (chilled pizza, lasagna and pasta meals) (**FreshMeals** division)

The varied product mix of the aptly named *Come a Casa* range of fresh ready meals includes fresh lasagna varieties (the company is the European market leader in the fresh lasagna segment), pasta dishes and an array of *Pronto*-branded pizzas.



Complementing the range, are other staple foods – non-Italian, but equally Mediterranean – like moussaka and the *Excellencio* full range meals...

Also central to the range is the *Equilibre* assortment of pasta-based ready meals, microwaveable and prepared to well-balanced recipes, low-salt, rich in vegetable content (40% of recommended daily intake), co-developed with specialist nutritionists.



Apart from a broad retailer-own label product portfolio for major European retail chain operators, FreshMeals also carries a line of company-branded ready meals (the *Come a Casa* end-user brand and the *Vamos* brand for wholesale and food professionals)



Key markets throughout Europe: Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, UK, Ireland, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Portugal



Europe-wide market expansion and consolidation effort ongoing



TER BEKE FreshMeals



Mainstream food retailing operators foodservice providers and catering wholesale



Tavola (Courtrai - Belgium)



Ter Beke, quoted on the Brussels Euronext stock exchange, is a leading innovative Belgian fresh food manufacturing group.

Since 1994, the company has gradually strengthened its position in the convenience market as a leading supplier of fresh ready meals in a number of key European markets. Its **FreshMeals** division now accounts for 35% of the company's turnover and is the No.1 player on the European fresh lasagna market.

The company operates 11 production plants in Belgium, the Netherlands and France, 3 of which are uniquely dedicated to the production of fresh Mediterranean-style ready meals.

All of its factories bear IFS and BRC certification and are equipped with state-of-the-art processing and packaging machinery. Also in place, is a fully-integrated quality assurance and control scheme, guaranteeing product safety, manufacturing and logistics efficiency and an outstanding service level.

The company pursues a differentiated, multi-channel marketing approach and assists stores in strengthening its fresh meals category against the frozen offering, by innovating and ever extending its range, through premiumization of its product array for branded and own-label lines (high-quality fresh ingredients, toppings, dressings, improved recipes...), by providing point-of-sale support to category managers for stockline visibility enhancement, increased stopping power for the fresh prepared meals aisle...

The company's dynamic NPD policy is thus underpinned by sound fundamental scientific findings by an early stage involvement in pioneering R&D projects in various food-related areas of expertise: e.g. food and health matters (salt and fat reduction and HACCP product safety issues for processed meats and ready meals, process and packaging technology...).

As a result, Ter Beke FreshMeals is at the cutting edge of new product development (NPD) within the processed meals category, continuously extending its portfolio across all segments of the ready meals market, especially in the premium and the "healthy" part of the product spectrum.



Food retailing and specialist wholesale and out-of-home, foodservice providers' market



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FRESHMeals



Ambient and chilled ready meals, chilled snacks



Tops Foods presents a 40-variety range of single-portion (350g, 375g or snack-sized) ready meals.

The company's overall range consists of three main categories: **ambient ready meals**, that can be stored at room temperature for up to 12 months, **chilled ready meals**, flavourful, convenient and healthy, with a 21-day shelf life and **chilled snack meals**, in their nifty, environmentally-friendly packaging, offering great value and instant fuel for those eating on the move.

All dishes within the range:

- are microwave-oven reheatable in just 3 minutes (from ambient or chilled).
- are heat-treated using the company's proprietary microwave technology for sterilising and pasteurising foods.
- are rice-, pasta-, potato- or couscous-based, with meat, non-meat, poultry or fish ingredients and a broad choice of vegetable accompaniments.
- are prepared to recipes inspired by global culinary heritage, including traditional Belgian fare, Asian, Italian-Mediterranean, Mexican...



Branded range: *Tops* (chilled ready meals) and *Tops Cuisine* (long-shelf-life ambient ready meals), as well as various international retailers' own-label ranges



France, the Netherlands, UK, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Luxembourg



Ongoing marketing effort throughout the European market, particularly in Spain and in Central and Eastern European countries



Distributors and retailers throughout Europe



Sial (Paris), Anuga (Cologne)



TOPS FOODS

Tops Foods was established in 1993, following the invention of a unique proprietary microwave heat treatment process for foods by the company's founder and current CEO, Mr Rudy Tops.

The company thus became the first ever within the food industry to implement the technique for sterilization and pasteurization of its convenience meals.

Apart from considerably extending the foods' shelf life, the process has the added benefit of sealing in all the nutritional goodness, without adding preservatives, artificial flavouring, colouring agents or any other additives.

15 years on, Tops Foods supplies a varied range of well-balanced convenience menus, featuring international dishes from world cuisine. Its outstandingly efficient and highly-automated processing plant currently turns out over 90 000 meals a day.

These come packaged in low-waste, microwaveable bowls or trays, sealed up with an easy-peel lid for maximum convenience.

Tops Foods is also involved as an SME partner in the *Acteco* EU research project aimed at developing innovative surface treatment technologies for applications in e.g. food packaging.



Fully compliant with HACCP, BRC, IFS and autocontrol guidelines, the company sets great store by quality assurance issues and maximum adherence to stringent food safety standards. Its independently audited and certified ERP system also guarantees full traceability and rigid screening of all of its internationally sourced (GMO free) ingredients.

NPD: the company's development chefs constantly endeavour to create innovative, high-quality products that appeal to the customer's palate and help to further strengthen the company's position and reputation in the marketplace.

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Fresh prepared ready meals, soups, sauces and dressings

Vaco offers customers in the retail and foodservice industries a broad portfolio of over 150 bespoke fresh RTE meal solutions. The range consists of:

- cook-chilled ready meals, from Italian-inspired pasta dishes to traditional potato-based stews, multi-component meals and local mash-type dishes like the Dutch *boerenkoolstampot met worst* (bangers and winter cabbage mash)
- fresh soups
- chilled sauces and cold-served salad dressings



Vaco's main focus is to develop products under retailers' or foodservice providers' own brands, in line with their respective brand identities



The Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic, UK



Benelux, Germany, Central Europe



Fresh food retailers, food service providers and other trading partners in the "chilled ready meals" market



Regular visitor to leading international food exhibitions: Sial (Paris), Anuga (Cologne), PLMA (Amsterdam)



Food retail and food service industries



Founded in 1987, Vaco was originally established as a caterer for the AC motorway restaurant chain. Vaco currently operates 2 purpose-built, top-level production facilities in Belgium (Olen and Herselt).



A clearly-defined manufacturing strategy and optimum production flexibility allow both large and small-scale production runs in a broad range of ready meals.

With over 20 years' experience in the convenience foods business, Vaco has developed into a preferential supplier of own-label chilled ready meals, soups, sauces, dips and dressings to food retail giants like Albert Heijn - still its number one customer - and top 4 German food retailer Real.

In 2005 Vaco became part of the Bakkavör group (www.bakkavor.com), a leading international food manufacturing company. Besides being a respected global supplier of speciality varieties of fresh produce with novelty value and market potential, the Icelandic Bakkavör group is also recognized as a major force in the global convenience food marketplace.

It boasts a 6000-product portfolio across 18 different product categories. The company operates 62 factories with over 20,000 staff in 10 countries: Belgium, UK, Iceland, France, Spain, Italy, South Africa, China, the Czech Republic and the United States, with further expansion ongoing. Its vast experience in convenience markets and differentiated, market-oriented manufacturing strategies are instrumental to Bakkavör's success.

Its convenience range can be roughly broken down into 2 main categories: hot-served foods (RTE ready meals, pizza, fresh pasta, fresh sauces, soups, stir-fry menus...) and cold-served foods (leafy salads, prepared salads, prepared fruits, desserts, dressings, wraps...)



Vaco's impressive portfolio of 150 bespoke varieties of ready meals is testimony to the company's dynamic new product development effort. Its in-house development team closely liaises with key customers and category managers to examine innovative product development ideas and briefs, in keeping with consumer preferences and the latest trends in food retailing.



By a targeted approach of optimized category management and long-standing private label licensing arrangements with its key customers, Vaco enhances the performance of individual product categories in convenience retailing.

Food safety and quality assurance are considered key priorities throughout the company's BRC and IFS certified operations. Rigorously-sourced quality ingredients and nutritionally-balanced recipes are all-important to Vaco and instrumental in achieving consistent, high-quality products.

VACO B.V.

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Processed convenience meats

Vlevy's comprehensive product range of premium meats and meat products for the convenience food and catering markets, includes:

- cooked ham (cook-in ham, shoulder, pic-nic) and cooked poultry- (turkey, chicken) or beef-based meats;
- Meat components for pizza toppings, sandwich fillings or salad ingredients (ham and beef-, pork-based salami and other dried sausage varieties like pepperoni, chorizo...);
- Cooked and roasted meat products (pork, chicken, veal, beef chunks or minced meat products) for the ready meals and convenience foods industry;

The product range is available in varying degrees of processing and in a number of practical packaging formats: cooked, roasted, sliced, diced, in chunks, strips..., IQF frozen, cook-in packaged, vacuum- or MAP/gas-packed..., in 1 kg trays, in 1 to 10 kg bags or in other industrial-sized bulk packs.



Both branded (*Vlevy*, *Salimah* certified halal range) and unbranded or private label ranges available



Benelux, Germany, UK, France, Denmark and Sweden



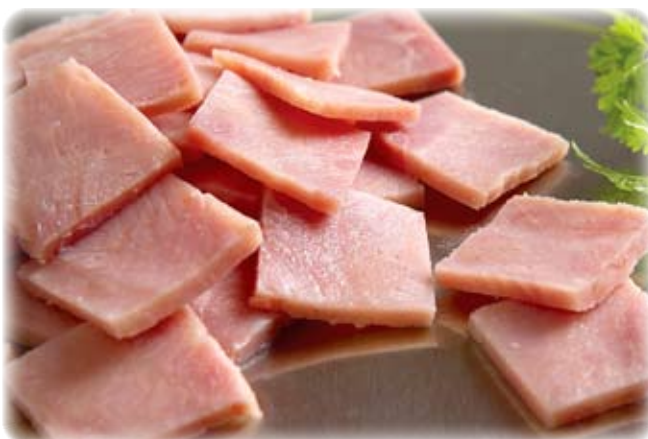
Market development effort ongoing across Europe



Manufacturers of ready meals and other convenience foods;
Food wholesalers supplying the catering industry



Anuga Meat (Cologne), Intrafood (Courtrai)





Vlevy started off as a traditional butchery as early as in 1891. With the 4th generation of the founding Ysebaert family currently in charge, the company has now grown into a leading secondary processor of a broad range of premium processed meat products for the ready meals and catering industries.

Offering a range of new products, perfectly suited to the specific product requirements of the catering and convenience food industries, Vlevy supplies ready-to-use meats and processed meat components to caterers and manufacturers of ready meals, straight from its 2007 brand-new, BRC-approved processing plant.

Product development and innovation

Apart from a broad standard product portfolio of extended shelf life products, Vlevy also flexibly manufactures custom-developed products for its major accounts.

Vlevy's sales team is constantly on the lookout for new product ideas, which it swiftly turns into readily marketable convenience products.



Food wholesale, catering and convenience markets



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