

Serving up your ready meals

IN OUR exploration of ready meals, Iza Grek interviews Robert Rauch, founder of DinnerMates in Johannesburg, South Africa to get an inside view of manufacturing convenience foods in the meat sector. Dinner Mates serves the ready-meals and convenience foods market.

When was the company established?

Established in South Africa by German-born Robert Rauch, DinnerMates recently celebrated 30 years as a supplier of high quality products to the food and hospitality trade.

The manufacturing arm of DinnerMates was commissioned in 1985 in Louis Trichardt. Kya Sand in the province of Gauteng, is the mixing house and distribution facility complete with 2-,3-,4- and up to 20-ton trucks distributing to an extensive network of clients.

What is your key product focus?

Dinnermates is a specialized supplier of various meat and chicken products, which are mostly value added, portion controlled and easy to prepare, with menu lines that are both timesaving in preparation and cost effective. We offer specialized food products to the food and hospitality industry for multinational companies, national fast food outlets and steakhouses, etc., and provide import replacement, i.e. dried meat, for the soup industry in the local market.

We supply catering operations, company canteens and educational institutions. Our clients are in the hospitality and catering industry – some family restaurants and other food manufacturers.

For example if a frozen vegetables producer wants to add meat to their premix, that's where we come in. We do the meat preparation. The same applies to pizza toppings where prepared meat is used.

What is the secret to your success?

The DinnerMates reputation has been built on innovation and service excellence and the company is quality driven on product and service consistency.



DinnerMates meat processing factory

Specialized supplier of meat and chicken products is a ready partner in the food and hospitality sector

Our plant is regularly inspected by health inspectors, and state veterinarians, ensuring that the highest international standards of hygiene and quality are maintained.

We add and extend all the time, developing new products to suit customer requirements and applications in the most cost effective way.

For the benefit of our clients, we do our best to interpret market trends by pro-active development of new, more cost effective, safer and attractive products.

DinnerMates sets its standards by uncompromising excellence in providing quality, portion controlled products, by being flexible and innovative, providing convenience and customer service.

With portion controlled meals, we can apply stricter controls, calculate costs and therefore achieve a better bottom line.

I have been a professional member of SAAFoSt since 1976 and DinnerMates the company a SAAFoSt custodian since 2004. Custodianship is only awarded to companies and organizations willing to go the extra mile in promoting professionalism in the food industry.

Is the profile of your customer the same throughout the country?

Cape Town is a different market and we have adapted to the health demands dictated by market trends, even with regard to the salt regulations, but people still want to eat what tastes good, and that's our aim.

Nevertheless our salt, fat, and cholesterol proportions are measured in a laboratory to be in line with health regulations.

Do you have 'best sellers' that have been popular for all three decades?

Among the oldest and best selling products are the chicken schnitzel, meat patty in different flavors and sizes, kebabs for serving as the main dish or as part of a cocktail menu, samosas and spring rolls in the cocktail line.

In the past five years salami from ostrich meat has been very popular and we've also used it in burgers and kebabs.

Have there been any recent innovations in your product's packaging?

Most of our lines are packed in 2,5kg to 5kg boxes that are tailor made for the food industry. Vacuum packing is a packaging method used on most of our lines.

Which are your export markets?

All DinnerMates products have ZA113 accreditation for export to the EU and all African countries and ZA200 accreditation for cold storage. We have been exporting for four years to the Far East. Products for export are our dehydrated meats in soups and sauces that have a shelf life of up to nine months. All these products are Halal. Our exports are produced at our state-of-the-art dried meat factory in Louis Trichardt.

Do you deal directly with cattle farmers for your supply of meat?

DinnerMates gets its meat from various deboning plants where the meat is packed into boxes. The entire process is approved by a state vet. At the abattoir the state vet puts his signature to the statement 'approved unconditionally for human consumption'. A state vet is also present to sign off any product for export.

How big is your staff compliment and do you offer training?

Dinnermates factory is situated in Louis Trichardt and has a team of 70 staff members. Marketing and distribution is situated in Kya-Sand with a team of 30 employees. We are proud of the fact that most of our staff members have been with DinnerMates for many years, not only at management level, but at all levels of employment.

Training is a priority with regular staff training sessions taking place, since inception in 1985, regarding health and hygiene, food technology, firefighting, first aid, sales techniques and business administration as well as on the job training in all departments.

Are you aware of any threats to your industry?

The greatest threat to the meat industry is animal diseases, as there are areas all over the world with foot and mouth disease, new castle disease etc.

Labelling is one of the challenges facing the entire food industry that requires the listing of all ingredients drawing attention to potential allergy and intolerance.

What opportunities do you see for the future?

A big opportunity for our company is to export still a lot more than we currently do.

I am excited about the progress the company has made since its inception. Thank you to the DinnerMates team at Kaya Sand and in Louis Trichardt who contributed to make our company such a long ongoing success story, because without them this would not have been possible. Thank you to the food industry and our clients for their ongoing support. Lastly thank you to the professionals from the health authorities, press and food sector who have given DinnerMates valued input over the years. **FMJEA**

Zhongsan Multiweigh, located in Hi-tech Industrial Zone, over 50,000 m² modern workshop with annual production capacity of more than 5,000 sets of packing machines. With the development of international markets, more and more marketing and service networks are established all over the world. We won trusts and good reputations because of superior and fast services, which also helped us to establish good brand image in the field of packaging machinery. We are now selling machines to more than 80 countries in the world.



Mixing Weigher

It is suitable for integrating with high speed packaging machine or mixing purpose.

Identify Code	A28-2-1	A28-2-2
Single Weighing Range	18-1000g	18-1000g
Accuracy	±0.2%	±0.5%
Max Speed	120P/M	2X65P/M

Manual Weigher

1. Adopting 14 heads multi-combination design, ensure accuracy
2. Quantitative work reduces man power, also discharges material automatically.
3. Detachable working platform is easy to clean.



Weighing And Packaging Systems

1. Fully-automatically completes all the process from feeding, weighing, date-printing and finished products outputting;
2. High weighing precision, efficiency and crushless.



Weighing And Packaging Systems

1. It can fully automatically finish the whole procedure from material feeding, weighing, diverting, packaging, to finished-products outputting.
2. This system is compact and rigid, which will save your labor cost and enhance your productivity. It will save your room and improve your production management.



ADD: No. 34 Zhongshan Road, Shanghai District, Fudan Town, Shanghai City, Shanghai, China
Tel: 86-760-22629215 / 22773075
Fax: 86-760-22629273
Email: export@zhongwei.com.cn
Web: www.zhongwei.com.cn
www.multiweigh.com.cn

Access code
FC005

ZHONGSHAN MULTIVEIGH PACKAGING MACHINERY CO., LTD