

High pressure food processing an advancing industry

Hydrofresh HPP invests \$10M in high pressure processing facility in North Delphos

As consumer demand for organic, cleaner labels, more nutrient rich ingredients, and fewer artificial ingredients increases, food manufacturers are looking for ways to meet market demand while maintaining and improving product quality and taste. One way to accomplish this, according to Meredith Mickey, marketing and sales coordinator for Defiance-based Keller Logistics Group, is to remove the preservatives from the recipe, which can drastically shorten the product shelf life.

That's where High Pressure Processing (HPP) comes in. HPP uses ultra high-pressured water to keep packaged foods and beverages free from unsafe bacteria. It is an all-natural technique that preserves the vitamins, taste, and texture of the foods. HPP also extends the shelf life of foods, which reduces waste – or the amount of food thrown away.

Many of the foods purchased at the grocery store are already processed using HPP, noted Mickey, such as juices, guacamole, salsas, dips, dressing, raw ground meats, deli salads, and ready-to-eat meats and meals.

Introducing HPP to current or new products presents the food manufacturers with a few obstacles. To overcome these challenges, according to Mickey, working with an HPP toll service provider offers all the benefits of using HPP without the capital or long-term investment.

According to Mickey, companies of all sizes will benefit from the HPP toll service provider's knowledge of the technology and their processing expertise. Additionally, project volumes may not justify the capital investment required for their own HPP machine. They can avoid the capital investments and use these funds in other areas of their food operations.



Hydrofresh HPP's facility in North Delphos

Operating an HPP machine comes with a significant capital investment along with the costs of overhead and maintenance. Mickey explained that HPP machines are labor intensive to operate and can be expensive to

maintain. Using an HPP toll service provider can eliminate the unknown costs and establish a fixed cost per pound for products.

Mickey also noted that food safety is of utmost priority for food manufacturers and consumers. High pressure processing's post packaging processes reduce harmful bacteria and the sealed package does not allow for re-contamination.

flavor, and the food can be preservative free, while maintaining the fresh appearance and product quality consumers desire, noted Mickey. HPP toll service providers have established quality programs and certifications to ensure product safety.

HPP toll service providers that offer a complete HPP solution, according to Mickey, can also provide value-added packaging services such as secondary packaging and variety packs of a product post HPP processing. Cold storage and third party logistics providers (3PL) can provide transportation and warehousing for all HPP and logistics needs.

\$10 million investment

Earlier this year, an affiliate of Keller Logistics Group, Hydrofresh HPP, constructed a \$10 million 36,000 square foot pasteurization plant at 1571 Gressel Drive, Delphos, Ohio, that uses this HPP technology. Hydrofresh is both FDA and USDA certified, as well.

In a previous interview with Lake Erie West Manufacturing & Construction News, Hydrofresh president Don Klausing said, "This is exciting, state-of-the-art technology that will aid in the growth of locally-produced natural and organic products. HPP is a value-added service that ensures food safety, extends shelf life, preserves the food's nutritional value, reduces the amount

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HPP industry

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of preservatives needed, and reduces waste. This is the only HPP tolling facility in this part of the country and we are already experiencing tremendous demand for our services.”

HPP equipment was installed in the refrigerated warehouse for storage and production. Primarily serving the needs of two prominent food processors, the plant initially ran one shift with one machine and approximately 12 employees. According to Hydrofresh, it plans to expand to meet the growing demand, and to become the Midwest’s HPP source for all food manufacturers. As business increases, the company will add



Hydrofresh HPP’s high pressure processing chamber

additional machines and shifts to employ up to 55 workers. The plant is able to process 60 million pounds of product per year.

The Center for Innovative Food Technology (CIFT) was involved with showcasing HPP technology to food processors, and

laying the groundwork from which to build this offering.

Keller Logistics Group, a member of CIFT, understood the positive impacts associated with HPP and the lack of a facility to process for companies. It was recognized

that working with CIFT could elevate the potential for Ohio food processors.

Hydrofresh HPP received assistance from the City of Delphos and the State of Ohio in the form of a Community Development Block Grant and road improvements for this project.

According to Mickey, future demand for HPP tolling services will increase significantly due to consumers’ demand for clean labels and food manufacturers that are being proactive to meet the new consumer demands will have a competitive advantage over competitors. Using an HPP toll service provider will help provide the products customers are demanding along with the reduced capital investment and overhead, peace of mind of food safety and quality, and access to food scientists to help make the HPP product a success.

BWC program

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drug testing

- Training for managers / supervisors to help them better manage a workforce that includes individuals in recovery

- A forum / venue for “second-chance” employers to share success stories that will encourage others to hire workers in recovery.

Under the program, according to BWC, it will allot a lump sum to each ADAMH board on a quarterly basis. Employers must pay for expenses up front and apply to the boards for reimbursement.

Program details are still under development, with changes likely as the pilot progresses. The pilot’s launch is scheduled for mid-October.

Montgomery County had 521 accidental overdose deaths in 2017, giving it the State’s highest overdose death rate for the second year in a row, according to preliminary data from the Ohio Department of Health. Ross and Scioto are routinely among the hardest-hit Counties as well, though Ross fell out of the top 10 last year to 41st place.

National data shows the opioid crisis has lowered the labor force participation rate. In Ohio, opioid addiction, abuse, and overdose deaths cost the State anywhere from \$6.6 billion to \$8.8 billion annually, according to a 2017 report from the C. William Swank

Program in Rural-Urban Policy at The Ohio State University.

BWC’s latest program demonstrates the agency’s continued commitment to mitigate the opioid epidemic’s impact on Ohio’s workforce.

Since 2011, the agency has overhauled its pharmacy program to better monitor and reduce dependence on opioids and other dangerous drugs within its injured-worker population. Its Opioid Rule in 2016 created several safeguards, including holding prescribers accountable if they don’t follow best practices. As a result of these efforts, the agency has seen opioid dependence in its injured-worker population drop 59%, from 8,029 workers in 2011 to 3,315 as of July 31, 2017.

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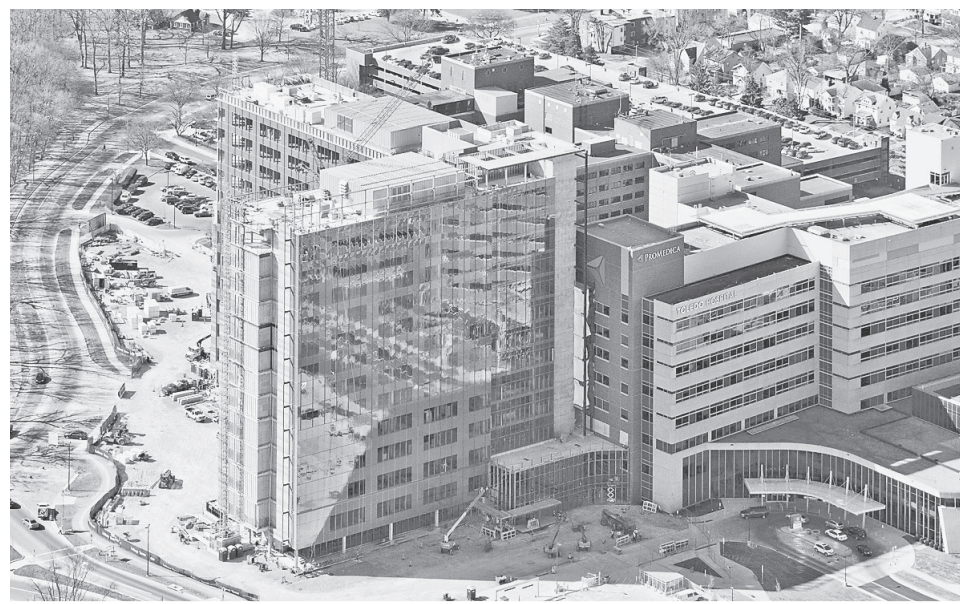


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