Thirsty For Change

Vitality Foods Production Manager Ryan Jennings (left) and Vitality Foods General Manager Bruce Burlington (right), start up their new Clayton SigmaFire Steam Generator SFG-125M to produce 99.5% dry steam for their beverage manufacturing processes.

If you've ever enjoyed a cup of coffee, glass of juice or a nice cool smoothie in Canada, you've probably got Vitality Foodservice to thank.

Vitality Foodservice Canada, Inc. is a subsidiary of Vitality Foodservice, an international leader in beverage products and dispensing equipment with additional companies in the United States, the Caribbean and Europe. The Canadian arm of the corporation serves, sells and distributes to the hospitality industry from coast to coast throughout that nation.

With a team of food scientists and engineers, Vitality Foods designs its own unique line of beverages, including juices, teas, coffees, smoothies and specialty drinks, as well as the dispensing and packaging systems that contain them. Vitality processes fruit juices, ready-to-serve beverages, bar supplies, soft drinks and juice based beverages, liquid chocolate for hot chocolate, health care products and wine kits. The company also processes product bases for a number of co-pack customers, in sizes from six liters to 220 liters.

Vitality's North American arm was recently purchased by the Nestle Corporation, a move that both companies believe will mean solid growth as customers' demands for convenient and quality beverages evolves even further world-wide.

Staying Ahead of Competition Through Efficiency

To stay competitive and ahead of a demanding industry curve, beverage manufacturers like Vitality Foods must always look for ways to increase efficiency, cost effectiveness and product quality. That is what plant management hoped to accomplish when it came time to upgrade the system it used for pasteurization and "clean in place" operations after production ends.

Since its earliest days, Vitality relied on two conventional gas-fired boilers—a Cleaver Brooks and a Miura Boiler. Long stretches of boiler downtime, however, was leading to a serious loss of productivity.

"We were experiencing too much down-time and in our business, every minute of productivity counts. Reliability and continuous operations are extremely important in staying ahead of our competition," said Vitality Canada's General Manager Bruce Burlington.

Trusted Contractor Offers the Perfect Upgrade

In 2007, Vitality turned to its trusted boiler supplier and servicer, Pacific Boiler Ltd., which markets in both British Columbia and Alberta. The relationship between Vitality and Pacific Boiler has been a strong one for over the years. Vitality principals knew Pacific Boiler would recommend the best system that would position the company for its growing present requirements and the long-term future.

According to Neville Smith, Sales Representative for Pacific Boiler, the best solution for Vitality Foodservice was to walk away from old-fashioned boilers and upgrade to the Clayton Industries high-efficiency SigmaFire Steam Generator.

"We have been in business for over 15 years in both sales and service of Clayton Steam Generators and steam equipment and have a wealth of experience in selling new Generators to existing customers who want to update their old inefficient steam plant," Smith said. "Recommending this system to our longtime client, Vitality Foodservice, was a natural."

"After many years of exceptional service, we eagerly accepted the recommendation and made our move away from a traditional boiler, and after two-and-a-half years, I

can confidently say we have absolutely no regrets, Bruce Burlington continued.

Reaping the Benefits

Burlington says the switch from a traditional boiler to the versatile Clayton Steam Generator has yielded wonderful results.

The Clayton steam generator guarantees high fuel-to-steam efficiency, and because of its compact size meets the minimal space requirements of the company's Boiler Room.

These units heat up faster, provide rapid response to load changes and can be turned on and off when needed without the risk of damage to the system. The generator's design creates less heat loss and chemical loss. What's more, Clayton Industries steam generators are explosion-proof, providing the highest levels of safety in the boiler industry.

After the first year in service, Vitality plant personnel noted a significant drop in natural gas costs relating to running this unit.

"We also have enough steam power to run anticipated future needs for some time. We have idled our back-up boiler, rarely using it," Burlington said.

The makeover also means Vitality Foodservice can grow the part of its business that requires heat treatments. The steam generator has also increased the capacity of the plant's Clean-in-Place (CIP) system.

"The down-time we were experiencing with the old-fashioned boilers has been eliminated. We are enjoying an adequate supply and reduced energy costs," Burlington said. "We've also seen a 50 percent reduction in the chemicals we used to treat the facilities. Add to that, the cooler, quieter operation and increased space in the boiler room and we've found a complete success story that will take us into the future."

Neville of Pacific Boilers says it is now commonplace to recommend the Clayton Steam Generator to clients wishing to upgrade their boiler systems. The advantages, he says, are many including PLC Controls, fully modulating burners and variable-speed drives. The units contain less water volume, which results in reduced blowdown requirements compared to traditional boiler designs. Clayton also offers low Nox options to meet strict air quality requirements, and can offer low Nox options that typically produced as low as 9 ppm.

"I'm not a person of many words, but great is great," Burlington said. "I would highly recommend these new edition boilers by Clayton."

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