

FRESH IDEAS FOR INDUSTRY LEADERS

# food & drink

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## Treat Yourself

RW GARCIA HAS SPECIALIZED IN BETTER-FOR-YOU SNACKS FOR 35 YEARS AND IS EXPANDING ITS PRODUCTION FACILITY TO MEET INCREASED DEMAND. [Page 20](#)



**TA RESTAURANT GROUP** continues to expand its food concepts and brands. [page 46](#)



**HOUSTON AIRPORT SYSTEM** brought the best in global and local brands to George Bush Intercontinental Airport. [page 72](#)



**THE HANSEN GROUP** keeps in tune with millennial trends and tech innovations. [page 87](#)

**PLUS,** EXPLORING FORT COLLINS, COLO., BY BIKE LEADS TO SOME AWESOME FOOD AND DRINK DISCOVERIES.

# Reducing Risk

CHS Sunflower invests in the most state-of-the-art pasteurization technology to improve food safety for its customers. **By Janice Hoppe-Spiers**



PHOTO BY CHS INC.

>> CHS Sunflower is dedicated to preventing contamination in the food safety system by vastly reducing pathogens in sunflower kernels, without changing the texture, taste or characteristics.

**W**hen the U.S. Food & Drug Administration Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was signed into law six years ago, CHS Sunflower recognized its operations and the industry as a whole had some work to do to comply. FSMA was enacted to strengthen the food safety system and protect public health by proactively preventing contamination.

## company profile

**CHS Sunflower**  
[www.chssunflower.com](http://www.chssunflower.com)  
**Headquarters:** Grandin, N.D.  
**Employees:** 150  
**Robert Deraas, president and general manager:** "Customers continue to seek improvements to food safety in the products they consume."

"The vast majority of sunflower seed shipped into the domestic market is shipped in raw state without any log [pathogen] reduction being taken on pathogens whatsoever," Sales Manager Wes Dick says. "We made a decision that this was an area we could provide service to the food industry and started looking at equipment we could use to provide that service."

A "5-log reduction" means lowering the number of

microorganisms by 100,000-fold. If a surface has 100,000 pathogenic microbes on it, a 5-log reduction would reduce the number of microorganisms to one. After years of equipment research, CHS Sunflower discovered Log5, an industry-leading pasteurization technology company located in the Netherlands. Log5 technology is attractive in that it does not alter the texture, taste and characteristics of sunflower kernels.

"We spent about two-and-a-half years researching equipment and

found only one manufacturer that would give 5-log reduction or more without drastically changing the sunflower itself,” Dick says. “Log5 gave us log reduction and its equipment holds the characteristics of the sunflower. We tested the equipment, ordered it and installed it in our Fargo, N.D. facility.”

Based in Grandin, N.D., CHS Sunflower opened its 35,000-square-foot facility last summer in Fargo. It includes roasting equipment and the Log5 pasteurization technology, which was installed in October. Log5’s three-step process with validated 5-log reduction is fully automated, provides for gentle handling of the product and requires no post-pasteurization drying. Pasteurization also allows for extended shelf life.

“The facility is all value-added pro-

cessing,” President and General Manager Robert Deraas says. “We receive raw seeds from growers in our Grandin and Hazel, N.D., facilities where we clean, size and manage inventory for quality

and traceability. Then based on customer demand, we send a share of that inventory to Fargo and it is oil roasted, dry-roasted or pasteurized, so it goes through the value-added process.”



Growers send raw seeds to CHS Sunflower’s facilities, where it cleans, sizes and manages inventory for quality. <<

## Innovative pasteurization systems

5

LOG

Seeds

Nuts



**COLD PRESSED OIL**



**BUTTER/ SPREAD**



**DEFATTED FLOUR/POWDER**



**ROASTED NUTS/SEEDS/....**



**GROUND NATURAL BUTTER**



**PASTEURIZED NUTS/SEEDS/....**



from cocoa to chocolate

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PHOTO BY CHS INC.

>> CHS Sunflower is the first and only confectionary sunflower processor in the industry to install Log5 pasteurization technology for its non-roasted sunflower products.

## Pasteurization Process

Pasteurization of raw food products continues to trend higher as a consumer priority as they become more discerning about food safety, the company says. “Customers continue to seek improvements to food safety in the products they consume,” Deraas says. “Our response at CHS was to thoroughly understand these needs and invest in the most modern technology to satisfy their demand.”

“Pasteurization is fairly new to the industry, and there is a dramatic difference in the appearance, texture and mouthfeel of seeds pasteurized in our facility versus what’s done in some other facilities around the country,” Dick adds.

CHS Sunflower is the first and only confectionary sunflower processor in the industry to install Log5 pasteurization technology for its non-roasted sunflower products. “Our product can’t be matched by anything else that exists in

the world,” Dick says. “We believe our primary differentiator is food safety. By designing a facility where we control the environment and the flow of goods in contained and sealed conveyors, our process and food safety controls are leading the industry.”

In the Fargo facility, the product flow is fully enclosed. Product starts off in a negative air room where product is raw and hasn’t yet been processed. Raw product moves into an enclosed room for processing where it is protected from contamination. During pasteurization, product flows through the equipment to achieve a 5-log reduction and through another enclosed system into the packaging room.”

“There is no one else utilizing the technology we have and we are also doing some custom work within the industry,” Dick notes. “The primary concern in the industry is food safety and we have addressed that. We are the ones to address that now fully in our system where we can trace our goods from the grower through the system with a log reduction, providing the pathogen control that customers are asking for.”

Moving forward, CHS Sunflower will continue to educate its customers on the FSMA requirements and pasteurization technology. As CHS Sunflower’s customers begin to understand how new FSMA rulings and compliance dates will impact their business, the company keeps its technology front of mind.

“We work hand-in-hand with our customers’ food safety specialists to make sure that our processes meet their needs,” Dick says. Deraas adds, “Our role is to not only sell the service we provide here, but as members of the industry, to educate ourselves and accept the responsibility of teaching others to make sure we raise the level of discourse and understanding through the food industry.” **FD**