

MC BUSINESS NEWS

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Keebler buys President

Keebler Foods has agreed to acquire President Baking, the Atlanta maker of Famous Amos and most Girl Scout cookies, for \$450 million.

Keebler is paying roughly what President's annual sales are. President Baking is being sold by President International Trading & Investment, Inc., which is 61 percent owned by Taiwan's President Enterprises Corp.

In 1997 Keebler had net income of \$57 million on sales of \$2.07 billion.

Keebler hopes its strong distribution network will increase sales of President's regional brands and pump up sales of Famous Amos. Keebler, a large maker of private-label cookies, also hopes to fill excess capacity in its manufacturing plants with President's contract manufacturing.

Haribo builds U.S. gummi plant

Haribo of America, Inc., a subsidiary of Haribo GmbH & Co. of Bonn, Germany, plans to build a candy manufacturing facility in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Construction is expected to begin late this year.

This is the first U.S. facility for Haribo and brings the number of plants worldwide to 16.

Christian Jegen, president of Haribo of America, stated recently, "Haribo's new U.S. plant will allow us to better serve the market, enabling us to meet much tighter shipping schedules and ease demand on our worldwide operations."

When complete in 1999, the facility will produce a wide range of gummies for distribution throughout the North American market. The Hazleton facility will also become the new home of Haribo's U.S. corporate offices.

Dutch CSM buys U.S. bakery ingredients division, distributor

Dutch confectionery company CSM will buy the bakery ingredients division from U.S. group Lucks for an undisclosed sum.

The division, which posted sales worth \$20 million in 1997, produces, sells and distributes a wide range of bakery ingredients.

The acquisition will be done through Westco Products, an operating company of the CSM bakery ingredients division.

CSM has recently acquired the American distributor of bakery ingredients VanderBilt Flour. The activities of this company, with sales of \$8 million, will be integrated into the CSM subsidiary, Karp's.

Van Melle gains

The Dutch confectionery manufacturer Van Melle achieved net sales of Hfl917 million in 1997 (US\$445 million), an increase of 13.5 percent. Net profits rose 15.6 percent to Hfl59 million (US\$29 million). Losses in China, Brazil and Germany were compensated by gains in the U.S., Japan, Poland and Russia. Sales also increased in Indonesia, Brazil and the Philippines. The recently opened factory in China is temporarily closed. The packaging facility in Poland has been upgraded to full scale production. Van Melle has opened a packaging unit in Russia and will also open one in India.

Van Melle's strategy is aimed at gradual international expansion with a focus on worldwide brands. They have intensified cooperations with other manufacturers, such as the Italian producer Perfetti, which holds a 38 percent stake in Van Melle, and the Spanish producer Chupa Chups.