



“The BOI staff are experts. They have staff to guide, not only for applying for investment promotion, but also to provide general business consulting.”

- Mr. Somjate Panjawattanangkul
Managing Director, Four Foods Co., Ltd.

Creating Unique Seasonings and Flavors for the Food Industry

Four Foods Co., Ltd is a privately owned company that specializes in creating unique seasonings, flavors and other high quality food additives for both consumers and the commercial food industry. Founded in 2002 by Mr. Somjate Panjawattanangkul, the company's managing director, it began as a small shop in Bangkok that bought and sold dried agricultural products, which quickly grew and expanded as the company began to develop custom seasoning powder recipes for many of their customers. Today the company operates a factory in Lam Luk Ka district of Pathum Thani province, and sells their spices and seasoning mixes to consumers in addition to continuing to provide custom products for their larger commercial customers.



A critical aspect of their business success is the high quality of the ingredients they use in their factory, as well as the numerous standards certifications they have obtained to ensure the final quality of their products such as FDA, ISO, GMP, HACCP, FSSC 22000 and SEDEX.

Four Foods Co., Ltd.'s commercial customers can be divided into five main groups: snacks, instant noodles, sausages, meatballs or meat, frozen products, and general products. For each group, the company has a team of experts to respond to those customer's needs. For the consumer market, the company sells their products under the “ThyChef” brand, selling both individual packets containing 100 to 200 grams of product, as well as larger bulk packages of .5 to 1 kg in size. These larger packages are often purchased by small producers to add to their products, a market which Four Foods believes is under-served. Said Mr. Somjate, “*Our machines are 250 kg, 500 kg and 1-ton production capacity. The client can buy, for example, 0.5 - 1 kg. to mix with ten kilograms of chicken. We think that these clients are forgotten by the market. We produce a medium*

level taste, such as barbecue seasonings that are medium spicy, salty and sweet. The customer may add additional salt on his own, or if the Tom Yum powder is not spicy enough, he can add additional chili to be spicier as per his recipe. He can thereby create his own unique identity." After launching with "ThyChef" products for a number years, small producers often expand to become SMEs, and their orders grow from a few kilograms each time to thousands of kilograms.



In addition to selling their products domestically, the company is also focused on exporting to the nearby overseas markets. In the past two years, the company has entered markets in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Vision for the Future

The standard of raw material is the key for the company's seasoning powders. Mr. Somjate explained that "Since we opened the company, we aimed and focused on the raw material quality. If the

ingredients are good, the product's outcome will be good."

The selection of raw materials must be done meticulously. Mr. Somjate gave as an example the purchasing of bird chili pepper. The company does random checking of color, spiciness, size, and grade as per the company's standards. Every year, the company assigns procurement officers to visit suppliers and check that their goods meet the required standards.

Mr. Somjate emphasized that food is a sensitive matter, so it is critically important to maintain high standards. For this reason, customers remain loyal buyers of products from Four Foods Co., Ltd., and recommend new clients to the company as well.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been fairly limited, as the company has a wide diversity of customers. The customers most affected have been those who sell their products in department stores. Additionally, they have been unable to import certain raw materials, which the company's purchasing department has therefore had to buy from other sources with comparable or higher quality at a somewhat higher cost to replace them in the manufacturing process.

"During this time, I tell my staff to use these materials economically. Though the cost of production has

been higher, we continue to sell them at the same price. If we raised the price, it would aggravate the situation for our customers. Everyone has already suffered enough. We cannot survive alone. We always tell our salespeople to look after our customer's needs. If any customer has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 situation, we will develop products for them first to serve their needs in the future when they have a new product." said Mr. Somjate.

Attractive BOI Incentives

The Thailand Board of Investment (BOI) offers a wide range of tax and non-tax incentives for projects that meet national development objectives. Tax-based incentives include an exemption or reduction of import duties on machinery and raw materials, as well as corporate income tax exemptions of up to eight years. Non-tax incentives include permission to bring in expatriates, own land and take or remit foreign currency abroad. With continued support from the BOI, it is anticipated that the Food Processing Industry will continue to develop and show strong future growth.

Additional information about specific activities relating to the Food Processing Industry can be found by clicking [here](#) or contacting the BOI's Investment Promotion Bureau 1.

Source: BOI e-Journal, 3 (5), 20-25

As of September 30th, 2020