

Article taken from Pizza Pasta and Italian Food Magazine, August 2011

PIZZA TOPPINGS - PEPPERONI IS STILL KING

Leading pizza toppings supplier Dawn Farm Foods has seen a number of emerging trends in the market over the last couple of years, but acknowledges that pepperoni is still very much king when it comes to pizza's most popular ingredient.

Last year, the company produced more than enough pepperoni to top over 160 million pizzas at its modern cooked and fermented meat plants in Naas, Co Kildare in Ireland.

Dawn Farms specialises in the production of cooked and fermented meat ingredients for the QSR and manufacturing sectors, and is a major supplier of pizza toppings to blue chip customers throughout the UK and Europe. The company recently launched its Branded Foodservice Range.

Consisting of beef, ham, chicken and bacon products, as well as pepperoni, salami and cooked sliced meats, it is sold through distribution partners in the UK, including 3663, and throughout Europe in France, Spain, Denmark, Ireland, Sweden, the Netherlands and Italy.

Ian Ritchie, UK Sales Director, said: "Pepperoni remains the most popular pizza topping but we have seen a number of interesting trends emerging in the market, and we have been working with leading foodservice operators to develop products to meet changing tastes and new demands."

"We saw meat balls really take off as pizza toppings during the World Cup last year, and we have seen that sustained since," said Ian. "As a result, we are now producing meatballs in varying sizes – from 2-3g, 7-9g and 12-14g.

"We have also seen the recent re-emergence of Mexican as a food trend, and our new seasoned beef mince and chilli beef chunks are ideally positioned for that market, along with our chicken fajita strips. More and more people are learning about Mexican food through restaurants and trendy London eateries, and we are meeting that growing demand with some of our products, which are also suitable for wraps, salads, nachos, tortillas as well as pizza."

Ian added that bacon had also seen a resurgence in popularity, with lots of limited time offers (LTOs) this year. “Bacon had fallen off the radar a bit but came on as an LTO and our range of diced bacon pieces and diced lardons give great coverage and flavour as pizza toppings and again offer options for other uses,” he said.

All cooked and fermented meats in the Dawn Farms Foodservice range have no hydrogenated fats, artificial colours or flavours. The company is an industry leader in the production of fermented and dried meats like pepperoni, salami and chorizo, and is the only European supplier using a unique heat treatment process, which offers our customers a higher degree of robustness in terms of product safety.

The company markets a range of Halal cooked meats, a growing niche in the UK and parts of Europe, under the Habibi label. Habibi (which means 'My Friend') is a branded range of high quality Halal cooked meats, suitable for use in all foodservice operations serving the Halal market.

“The European market for Halal food products is currently estimated at over £15 billion, and some countries like UK, France and Germany are seeing an aggressive growth of 10% annually,” said Ian.

Dawn Farms’ Habibi range includes pepperoni, salami, chicken, spicy beef, meatballs and turkey ham and is produced following the Halal process in accordance with the Muslim religion, with all meats sourced from certified Halal processing facilities.

As the leading manufacturer and supplier of multi-species cooked meat ingredients in Europe, in 2008, Dawn Farms was buoyed by a major investment programme, principally in production technology and research and development, to help the company target the wider European market, as well as the UK and Ireland.

The investment helped the development of the company’s trademark stage gate new product development service, operating from a state-of-the-art Science and Innovation Centre at its home in Naas, 30km south of Dublin. Here, a 15-strong team of technologists and meat science experts work in partnership with customers to develop innovative new products.

“Typically, by working together with our customers, we are able to deliver off-the-shelf QSR and manufacturing solutions, along with bespoke products to meet particular customer needs,” said Ian. “The availability of our Branded Foodservice

Range is an extension of this expertise offering a range of on-trend menu solutions to our customers.

ends

Further information: Geoff Simms, Mob: 07779 626710, email: geoff@parabolacommunications.co.uk

Visit Dawn Farms website: www.dawnfarms.ie