

# Debut for 'new' savoury ingredients player

Following a buyout of the former UBR-owned production facility for Marmite, Bovril and a range of savoury food ingredients, Savoury Food Industries has just been launched. FOOD REVIEW looks at a 'new' company with a distinguished heritage.

**S**AVOURY Food Industries (SFI) is an old/new kid on the local ingredients block. The Industria, Johannesburg, business and factory has been operating for over 60 years manufacturing savoury food products, but was sold off following the Unifoods/Bestfoods/Robertsons merger.

SFI manufactures yeast-based and HVP-based liquids, pastes, powders and powder blends and it handles national distribution and exports. It caters for a variety of food and agricultural customers, both locally and internationally, primarily dry food producers (soups, dry meals etc), spice and flavour houses, meat-product producers (sausages, biltong, pies etc) and sauces. SFI also provides complementary products to the agricultural chemical industry.

The new company is headed by a team of directors who each have a wealth of knowledge and experience in the food industry, with two of the four directors previously employed by UBR. These directors, in conjunction with Valbridge Trust, who are specialists in management buy-out and management buy-in opportunities, own a significant portion of the company.



**Savoury Food Industries' directors: Patrick Millerd, finance executive; Niel Moller, operations director; Harry Meyer, business development director and Peter Brierley, MD.**

MD Peter Brierley has extensive experience of operations management — spanning engineering, manufacturing, logistics and industrial engineering — and has spent a number of years working in and consulting on customer management and information systems.

Brierley sees his role as the strategic leader of the team and, once the initial acquisition has been properly bedded down, will look to grow the business organically and by acquisition. 'I have great confidence in the team and believe we can establish SFI as the savoury food ingredients house of choice,' he comments.

'Our strategic position is to be the best value proposition for our customers,' says Brierley. 'This does not mean the cheapest, but the company which provides the best combination of both uncompromising quality and cost. We are in the process of develop-

ing technological alliances which will enable us to implement new technologies from a product, process and application perspective.'

With currently under-utilised capacity, he adds that SFI is looking at new markets for existing products, both locally and internationally, as well as new products which complement its existing range without disrupting production.

'We have a programme in place to implement speedy change-overs. This will allow us to rapidly respond to demand, while maintaining inventories at an acceptable level and without compromising quality or service levels,' Brierley remarks.

SFI also aims to develop new opportunities in the industry through a BEE partnership that it's currently 'actively pursuing'.

In terms of operational standards, SFI is contracted to major multinational-

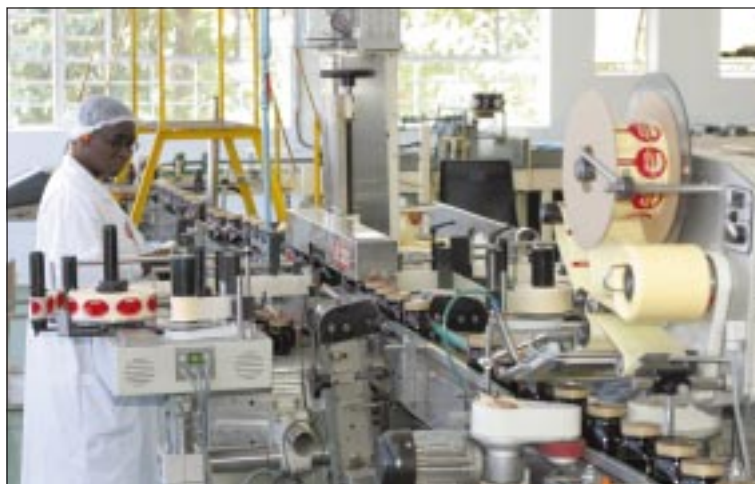


**SFI manufactures top brands for blue-chip customers.**



*Stringent QC and QA controls are in place at SFI's HACCP-certified factory.*

*Labelling line at SFI's Industria, Johannesburg, plant.*



al customers, who regularly audit the facilities to ensure that their stringent standards are being met. Manufacturing processes at SFI are HACCP, halaal and kosher certified. All products are supplied with certificates of analysis.

'We are extremely conscious that we make food products, so we have a disciplined approach to matters of quality assurance, management controls and hygiene. For this reason, we have a highly-developed sense of responsibility, underwritten by formal procedures which have been fine-tuned over many years, to address all identified risks,' says Brierley.

#### **SFI directors**

- Harry Meyer, business development director, has extensive technical experience in manufacturing and usage of pharmaceutical and food ingredients. Employed by Robertsons for more than 20 years, he has had extensive interaction with SFI's customer base and has a wealth of knowledge regarding the application of the SFI product range in the savoury foods market.

- Niel Moller, operations director, is a manufacturing man through and through. After initially working as an engineer in the chemical industry, he spent many years in specialised chemical product development and product acquisition. He has worked at the current plant for the past 12 years and is thoroughly familiar with its capabilities and limitations both from an operational and an engineering perspective.

- Finance executive, Patrick Millerd, is an economist by training, but has spent his life in manufacturing operations, both in a major corporate company as a management accountant, planning manager, information systems manager and advancing to financial director. He has also run his own businesses-manufacturing and selling products in the construction industry. ■

**Savoury Food Industries**

(011) 309-1606, Website: [www.savfood.com](http://www.savfood.com)