

2007

W I S C O N S I N
M A N U F A C T U R E R
O F T H E Y E A R

WISCONSIN MANUFACTURER
OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS

20th Anniversary

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GRAND AWARD WINNERS

Sargento Foods, Inc.

Plymouth

MEGA SIZE CATEGORY

Bassett Mechanical

Kaukauna

LARGE SIZE CATEGORY

Mathews, Inc.

Sparta

MEDIUM SIZE CATEGORY

Standard Imaging, Inc.

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SMALL SIZE CATEGORY

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Milwaukee

GET THE LEAD OUT

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Wendy Baumann

WISCONSIN WOMEN'S BUSINESS INITIATIVE CORPORATION

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John Emory, Jr.

EMORY & Co, LLC

Curt Haga

LADISH Co, INC.

Mike Joseph

MAGNUM PRODUCTS, LLC

Steve Levy

BELL LABORATORIES, INC.
2006 AWARD WINNER

James Mackey

WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

Mary Regel

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bert Restyanszki

GE HEALTHCARE

Rich Rovito

MILWAUKEE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Tom Still

WISCONSIN TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

Kelly Sullivan

UW-STOUT/ NORTHWEST WISCONSIN
MANUFACTURING OUTREACH CENTER

Robert Toeppe

WISCONSIN PLATING WORKS OF RACINE, INC.
2006 AWARD WINNER

S. Mark Tyler

OEM FABRICATORS, INC.
2006 AWARD WINNER

Patti Wallner

WAUKESHA COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE ANNUAL WISCONSIN
MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR AWARDS, PLEASE CONTACT
THE MOTY COORDINATOR AT 800/ 362-7301.
OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.WIMOTY.COM

2007 GRAND AWARD WINNERS

Sargento Foods, Inc.

PLYMOUTH

MEGA COMPANY GRAND AWARD

www.sargentocheese.com

Sargento is the second largest cheese brand in the United States, employing 1,237 people in its four Wisconsin facilities. Founded in 1953, the company has always been fueled by three factors: Family, Passion and Cheese. Sargento employees are like a close-knit family, passion drives their excellence and innovation, and cheese is their love.

Over the past five years, Sargento has had solid top-line performance during a period of significant volatility in raw material costs. Sargento's ability to manage its business with a long-term perspective is clearly reflected in its financial performance.

The company recently completed a renovation of its Plymouth facility, which included the addition of the Plymouth Tech Center, to better accommodate employees. In addition, the company has committed to a 60,000 square foot expansion to its Kiel facility, and is developing plans to expand the Hilbert production facility.

Sargento uses a number of proprietary, specialized manufacturing processes to produce its wide variety of products in as efficient and environmentally friendly way as possible. Equipment runs at the highest yields with optimized mean time between any production issues, minimizing their environmental and carbon footprint. This is realized with the need for less machinery, less overall production space, and less packaging scrap materials.

Sargento operates a manufacturing execution system that gives immediate feedback to production line personnel, allowing an understanding of production outputs and immediate corrections to maintain a high level of efficiency.

To maintain the satisfaction of their loyal customer base, the company employs two chefs who work with both business customers and consumers to create new, exciting food flavors and combinations. The chefs develop and test culinary concepts and products across all divisions of Sargento, resulting in many new and delectable cheese products.

Employee satisfaction is just as important to management at Sargento. When an employee has an issue or a concern, he or she is encouraged to meet with company leadership, including the CEO and COO, to discuss their concerns. In addition, Sargento makes every effort to maintain a consistently productive and satisfying work environment. It surveys its

employees bi-annually, providing them the opportunity to communicate constantly with management through suggestion boxes. Sargento is in the enviable position of having a turnover rate of less than five percent.

The company also values the health and welfare of its employees and their families, which is why it recently created the Sargento Health & Wellness Center, allowing employees and their dependents easy access to a nurse practitioner or licensed therapist for a range of services.

Finally, in support of their favorite team and to help fight hunger, Sargento became the official cheese of Lambeau Field and the Official Cheese of the Green Bay Packers. Sargento partnered with the Packers to create the "Touchdowns for Charity" program through which Sargento makes a donation for every touchdown scored. Since 2003, Sargento has contributed more than \$217,000 to help feed thousands of people in Wisconsin.

Bassett Mechanical

KAUKAUNA

LARGE COMPANY GRAND AWARD

www.bassettmechanical.com

Bassett Incorporated, doing business as Bassett Mechanical, started in 1936. This company is an atypical manufacturer, in that the company doesn't produce the same products over and over. Each product the company makes is completely different from the rest in terms of size, type, materials used, manufacturing process and ultimate end use. The majority of Bassett Mechanical's customers are, in fact, manufacturers themselves. Bassett Mechanical's products help their customers, who represent industries including the paper, printing, foundry, packaging, plastics and film, ship and yacht building, food processing, cheese and dairy, renewable and wind energy, and truck and emergency vehicles, improve their production capabilities.

Since the late 1940s, Bassett Mechanical has been designing, fabricating, installing and servicing HVAC, refrigeration, industrial ventilation, and plumbing systems to help businesses achieve their goals for both high performance facilities and social responsibility. Around 1990, the company led the way in promoting the use of ammonia refrigeration to replace CFC and HCFC refrigerants. Today, the company builds ammonia refrigeration systems for many of the nation's food processing companies. This is important because ammonia is the only common refrigerant that does not contribute to ozone depletion and global warming. As a result

of their extensive work with ammonia, Bassett Mechanical created its Ammonia Response Team. The company has 20 people who are trained and certified to assist emergency personnel whenever there is an ammonia leak. They are the only outside contractor in Wisconsin trained for this purpose, and their fully-equipped ammonia response trailer is maintained and ready at all times.

During the last three years, the company has experienced a low turnover rate, and a dramatic growth in sales, attributing this growth to the maturation of its ISO 9001-2000 Quality Management System coupled with its Lean Manufacturing initiatives. According to employees, "Bassett was green long before green was cool."

Bassett Mechanical has an interesting motto: We Answer to You. The company backs this up with quick, thorough responses to customer needs, and fair treatment of its suppliers and vendors. The company is generous to its employees, with annual health screenings and hearing tests, reimbursement of health club fees and eye care expenses, onsite Weight Watchers meetings, and up to four percent matching in employee 401k accounts. Each year, the company inducts employees into the WATY (We Answer to You) Hall of Fame, honoring Bassett Mechanical employees who go above and beyond in customer care.

The company is giving back to Northeast Wisconsin in a variety of ways, from offering free in-home checks of furnace systems for seniors, to the fabrication of decorative stainless steel signs, marquees and memorials throughout the community.

Mathews, Inc.

SPARTA

MEDIUM COMPANY GRAND AWARD

www.mathewsync.com

Founded in 1992, Mathews, Inc. employs 240 people within three facilities. It is the largest grossing archery manufacturer in the world, manufacturing equipment including premiere bows, traditional bows, bow accessories, bow strings, and apparel. Mathews has put approximately 800,000 bows in the hands of archery enthusiasts, and as the official bow of the National Archery in the Schools Program, 2.3 million youth have shot a Mathews bow, and over \$4 million in tournament prizes have been won using Mathews bow strings.

The company's founder and CEO, Matt McPherson, was making bows at age 10, and started his first manufacturing company at the age of 28 with the development of revolutionary bow technology. The company has impressive

annual sales, showing consistent, steady growth. The company is highly-committed to its network of hand-selected, highly-trained retail partners: 1,025 domestic retailers and 20 foreign distributors. The company has repeatedly rejected marketplace pressures to provide product to large retail chain stores.

At its inception, Mathews relied on a wide range of suppliers from around the United States to provide key components, which used to travel 2,000 miles over the course of six weeks for film dipping and silk screening. As sales volumes grew, all component manufacturing was brought in-house in order to meet three objectives: cost savings, direct quality control and improved customer responsiveness. In-house processing reduced the component lead-time to three days standard, and as little as four hours if customer needs dictate. Today, a Mathews bow has all of its key components manufactured in Sparta, Wisconsin.

With all of Mathews' machining in-house, and three shifts working 24 hours-per-day, the company was faced with a challenge: increase capacity without expanding space. Instead of investing in new facilities, the company invested in new machines, decreasing its per-part cycle time by 62 percent and increasing overall productivity by 240 percent. Using a continuous improvement process, employees have reduced or eliminated unnecessary steps, improving average machine uptime to 85 percent.

In 2007, Mathews merged its bow-building and pre-assembly departments, adopting a cellular manufacturing process. As a result, the company has reduced errors, improved its inventory accuracy, and increased productivity; the company manufactures 30 percent more bows than it did three years ago.

Employees have formally adopted Mathews' three core values: Integrity, Innovation and Impact. In addition to generous benefits, Mathews emphasizes employee training and education, hosts frequent employee informational meetings and meals, offers a wellness program, and encourages involvement in sports- especially archery. As a result, last year the company boasted a minimal 4.8 percent turnover rate.

Standard Imaging, Inc.

MIDDLETON

SMALL COMPANY GRAND AWARD

www.standardimaging.com

Standard Imaging was founded in 1990, and employs 42 employees. The company is committed to designing, manufacturing and commercially distributing a variety of instruments aimed at radiation calibration and quality assurance for the health care market. The majority of the company's products support the radiation treatment of cancer, cardiovascular disease, radiosurgery, diagnostic radiology, medical imaging, and biomedical equipment calibration. The company has products in use in 98 out of the top 100 cancer treatment centers in the United States, and in 17 years, Standard imaging has never had a product-related patient or user injury.

Every year since 1993, the company has experienced an increase in revenue and employment. The company's success is based on the belief of the owners that steady, rather than explosive growth, is the key to longevity.

Standard Imaging is competing around the globe, attributing nearly 35 percent of its annual sales to overseas customers. To its credit, the company has remained independent and prides itself on selling to an enviable group of competing world-class radiation treatment firms.

Standard Imaging uses mainly local suppliers. Nearly 71 percent of the company's key strategic suppliers are based in Wisconsin. In addition, the products that Standard Imaging manufactures require periodic calibration. Further solidifying its commitment to Wisconsin, Standard Imaging uses only the University of Wisconsin Accredited Dosimetry Calibration Laboratory for these calibrations.

Standard Imaging has a professional, collegial work culture with frequent, informal communication. A conscious choice was made by the company to place decision making authority as close to the point-of-need as possible. Only two layers of management exist in the company, and all employees are encouraged to share their concerns and suggestions.

In addition to generous employee benefits, the company offers some very unique perks such as monthly profit sharing, abbreviated Fridays, and solstice-based bratwurst parties. Since its inception, only nine permanent-position employees have ever left the company, and one of those returned in 2005.

The company is community-focused within the areas of radiation therapy, oncology, and healthcare. The company and its employees are active in the American Cancer Society and over 30 other local charitable organizations. The company also supports graduate students and programs in the UW Department of Medical Physics and its Foundation Scholarship Fund.

Briggs & Stratton Corporation

MILWAUKEE

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

www.briggsandstratton.com

Briggs & Stratton has been operating in Wisconsin for nearly a century. It is the world's largest producer of gasoline engines for outdoor power equipment, and the nation's largest manufacturer of portable generators and pressure washers. The company's products are designed, marketed and serviced through 32,000 authorized facilities in 102 countries around the world.

Briggs & Stratton has a strong presence throughout the state, with operations in Brookfield, Jefferson, Menomonee Falls, Port Washington, Watertown, and Wauwatosa. This long-standing connection between the company and its home state has led to many community initiatives designed to make Wisconsin a better place to work, live and play.

Some of their most noteworthy community contributions include:

- Serving as title sponsor of Briggs & Al's Run & Walk for Children's Hospital for 11 years. This run/walk has raised \$8.6 million over the years to help support Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's pediatric research efforts and to provide medical care to children in need. Hundreds of Briggs & Stratton employees participate in the race, and even more contribute to the cause through pledges.
- Supporting the United Performing Arts Fund, one of the nation's largest united arts funds, which helps to support 37 Milwaukee-area performing arts groups.
- Creating an alliance with Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin to provide education, training, mentoring, internships, scholarships, and career services to people with disadvantages or disabilities.

In addition, Briggs & Stratton proudly supports numerous other education-based charities, benefiting kindergarten through high school students, and college-level students. Examples include sponsoring and providing judges for the Rube Goldberg Machine Building Contest, which helps high school students learn more about engineering, technology and science. The contest is hosted in Milwaukee, and designed to pull students away from common methods of problem solving and draw them into the use of creative engineering.

Another example of their pledge to give back to the community is the company's support of many collegiate-level engineering and business programs through its trade organization and affiliations, student internship and co-op programs. The company partners with the Society of Automotive Engineers and the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers, among others.

2007 SPECIAL AWARD WINNERS

The following Manufacturer of the Year special awards recognize Wisconsin companies making considerable contributions in specific areas of manufacturing.

Centrisys Corporation

KENOSHA

“OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN A
CAPITAL-INTENSIVE INDUSTRY”

www.centrifuge-systems.com

In 1987, Centrisys Corporation, a privately held company, entered into the centrifuge industry, an arena traditionally dominated by large, European manufacturers. Although the principles of centrifugation have been known for hundreds of years, it wasn't until the late 1980s that high-speed, efficient decanter units were readily available. Popular with professional engineers for their dewatering capabilities, these decanters, manufactured by major original equipment manufacturers, needed repair and service solutions, which served as the foundation for the company.

By 1989, through its successful servicing of other manufacturer's products, Centrisys discovered it possessed the know-how to manufacture units superior to the ones it serviced. The company's current line of centrifuges are capable of handling flows from five to 600 gallons per minute, in addition to the many custom models it manufactures for specialty applications. The company occupies a 65,000 square foot facility in Kenosha, having expanded domestic and global capabilities to meet the demands of an increasingly popular product line.

In order to compete with mega-sized industry leaders, Centrisys focuses on managing steady growth through discipline and the use of extensive forecasts derived from state-of-the-art financial control systems.

One of Centrisys' key differentiators is its ability to provide custom manufactured solutions. In order to protect its profit margins on these types of projects, the company has developed extensive processes and systems to estimate bids, manage quality control, production time, delivery windows, and customer satisfaction.

The company pays close attention to employee morale, and has been successful in maintaining a low turnover rate, which company management believes lends itself to high productivity and complete customer satisfaction.

J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc.

NEENAH

“STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES”

www.jjkeller.com

J.J. Keller & Associates is a publishing, printing and service organization that has grown to nearly 1,200 associates, serving more than 300,000 customers around the world. The company provides safety and compliance solutions to the transportation, manufacturing, distribution, chemical processing, construction, food safety, environmental, and human resource industries.

The J.J. Keller Foundation, founded in 1991, serves as a vehicle to provide charitable funding to many worthwhile groups within the Fox River Valley. The company owners also established the John J. and Ethel D. Keller Fund through the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region. Together, these funds support more than 400 nonprofit organizations.

The associates at J.J. Keller also play a major role in community support, being involved in Junior Achievement, Boy & Girl Scouts, Children's Service Society of Wisconsin, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, and Toys for Tots.

J.J. Keller also has a demonstrated commitment to education, having donated millions of dollars to local schools and libraries. The company helps fund the Fox Valley Technical College's English for Truck Driving Course, has partnered with various universities to create Safety & Compliance Study Labs, funded and helped produce a safety video for the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association, worked with its foundation to provide a sizeable grant to Chippewa Falls to grow its truck driver training program, and has created university programs with free access for students and professors to help enhance curriculum and serve as resources as students earn their degree. These programs also offer \$10,000 in scholarships to students studying in the safety or human resource management fields.

Signicast Corporation

HARTFORD

“MANUFACTURING PROCESS INNOVATION”

www.signicast.com

Signicast Corporation is the world’s leading provider of commercial investment castings, and has been providing custom metal components to original equipment manufacturers since 1959. The company employs 646 people in its Hartford, Wisconsin facility. Investment casting dates back thousands of years. Its earliest uses involved beeswax for patterns, clay for the moulds and manually operated furnaces. Today’s casting involves high-tech waxes, refractory materials and specialist alloys, producing components with accuracy, repeatability, versatility, and integrity in a variety of metals and high-performance alloys.

During a time when many companies are choosing to outsource investment casting to low-cost countries, Signicast is utilizing a state-of-the-art investment casting process that dramatically reduces the cost of domestic production, offering a viable alternative to U.S. original equipment manufacturers. A process that takes most manufacturers 12 weeks is accomplished by Signicast in five to 10 days.

Signicast revolutionized the investment casting business by becoming the first to incorporate robotic melt and pour capabilities. The robotic pour process produces higher quality components, and results in fewer people doing less strenuous work.

Vulvan Global Manufacturing Solutions, Inc.

MILWAUKEE

“GET THE LEAD OUT”

www.vulcangms.com

Vulcan, the Roman God of the Forge, is a fitting name for this 30-year old Wisconsin manufacturer of lead-based products. Lead has been commonly used for thousands of years because it is widespread, easy to extract and easy to work with. It is highly-malleable, ductile as well as easy to smelt. Because of its density, lead is good at absorbing sound, light and other properties. Along with all of its positive qualities, lead is a potent neurotoxin that can accumulate in soft tissues and bone over time. For this reason, the responsible use, and re-use of lead is important to world health, a challenge recognized by Vulcan Global Manufacturing Solutions (“VulcanGMS”).

As a recognized leader in shielding products, such as those utilized by the medical industry, VulcanGMS offers its expertise to customers who wish to remain effective stewards of the environment, and protect themselves from the potential liabilities associated with the improper recycling of lead-containing products. To this end, VulcanGMS has developed a first-in-kind Liability Protection and Lead Recycling (LPLR) program.

Almost every health care provider must eventually deal with recycling of items that contain lead. Hospitals, clinics and pharmacies require careful recycling of the heavy lead aprons patients wear during x-ray procedures, and shielding equipment for radiopharmaceuticals. Laws governing the recycling of lead are complex and rigorously enforced, and improper procedures can create legal risk for the entity that sent the products for recycling.

Through a specific and well-documented process, VulcanGMS collects and consolidates the lead products designed for recycling, storing them in covered and secure facilities, then safely transferring them to an EPA-approved smelter, where it is reclaimed from the various items, leaving reprocessed lead that can be used to make new lead products.

Because the lead handling and recycling activities of VulcanGMS meet all applicable Environmental Protection Agency requirements and relevant state standards, companies who participate in the VulcanGMS recycling program can be assured that their materials will be handled and recycled properly, making Wisconsin a safer place to work and live.

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