

Better baking for Butterfingers

More Butterfingers shortbread, made by The Old Colonial Cookie Company, can now be produced and exported thanks to new baking facilities installed this month.

Two new Moffat Rotary Turbo 3000 baking systems, officially commissioned by Ms Lyndel Jack, Austrade's national manager - agribusiness and food, have meant a greater volume and more consistent quality of Butterfingers and Landers Australian shortbread varieties can be produced.

First produced 22 years ago, Butterfingers shortbread follows a Scottish family recipe using the natural Australian ingredients of butter, flour and sugar with flavourings of Australian macadamias, ginger and chocolate chips.

The new baking facilities will enable The Old Colonial Cookie Company to meet an increased export demand for Butterfingers shortbread and its sister product, Lander's Australian shortbread. Adding to the company's existing export markets of Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand and Canada will soon be the mid west of the United States.

Mr Howard Dray, managing director of The Old Colonial Cookie Company, said export business accounted for 22 per cent of revenue but this was expected to increase to approximately 30 per cent over the next twelve to eighteen months. "Our Canadian market is showing signs of double-digit growth and with the US coming on line, production is ramping up

to ensure we can meet demand," Mr Dray said.

"The new ovens have provided many benefits to help us meet this growing export market. We've increased staff productivity, reduced wastage, increased production and have a more consistently baked biscuit."

Austrade played an instrumental role in the company gaining a foothold in the US market by providing pertinent business contacts and identifying suitable promotional opportunities.

"We have just shown our shortbread 'cookies' at the April Chicago Food Fair and received considerable interest. Austrade is also helping us with other markets such as China, India and South America," Mr Dray said.

The Old Colonial Cookie Company's facility at Lilydale in the Yarra Valley east of Melbourne has independent certification of its HACCP Food Safety Plan. This is well regarded overseas, particularly in Japan where they have enjoyed Butterfingers shortbread for more than ten years.

Butterfingers shortbread is available at Coles supermarkets nationally and selected independent supermarkets. ■

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www.butterfingers.com.au

L to R: Howard Dray, Managing Director of The Old Colonial Cookie Company, Lyndel Jack, Austrade's National Manager Agribusiness & Food and Councillor Alan Fincher, Mayor of the Shire of Yarra Ranges at the official commissioning of new ovens, which will enable more quality Butterfingers shortbreads to be produced.

