

Speirs Nutritionals partner - Speirs Group Limited.



Speirs Group Limited is a 100% New Zealand owned and operated investment company with a business heritage dating back over 100 years, operating nationwide through two major business divisions – Speirs Finance and Speirs Foods – and headquartered in Palmerston North.

Speirs Finance grew from a small local operation into a national multi-million dollar company, with a highly skilled team of professionals. Speirs Finance specialises in financing all forms of vehicle, plant, machinery and business equipment.

Speirs Foods are primarily recognised for their expertise in the processing of fresh produce into fresh-cut salads.

Speirs Foods serves customers nationwide from its production facility based at Marton in the Manawatu region. The site contains 2,000 square metres of production capability, where up to 200 product lines are manufactured seven days a week.

The primary outlet for Speirs Foods product range is the supermarket shelf and deli counter. Simply defined, Speirs Foods provide products in the following market segments:

- Dressed salads: purchased from the deli counter in the supermarket (e.g. coleslaw, pasta salad, potato salad, rice salad).
- Fresh-Cut vegetables: merchandised in branded packaging within the produce section of the supermarket (e.g. coleslaw, stir fry vegetables, roasted vegetables, soup mix, lettuce salads).
- Snack market: conveniently packaged salads merchandised in 'food to go' sections of the supermarket.

Speirs Foods' major brands - Country Choice, and Pacific Gourmet - are well known, and the business employs its own Foods Product Development Consultant to expand and develop its product range. The consultant's role is to analyse food trends in New Zealand and overseas, then adapt them to fit with local tastes and preferences. New products may also evolve from customer enquiries, or developments in packaging and technology.

Speirs Foods employs approximately 100 permanent staff, increasing during the summer months, when demand for salad products peak. Many of the staff have been with the business for more than 15 years.

The production team has a clear focus on quality and service. All take pride in making the best quality salad and fresh-cut products for the market, using only ingredients of the highest standard and keeping to specification for every order that goes out the door.

Freighting chilled products around New Zealand is a core feature of the business, which has been a point of expertise for the past 30 years. Products are delivered six days a week between Invercargill and Kaitia, and no matter whether a short or long haul journey, all must maintain the same consistent temperature-controlled condition.

Over the years Speirs Foods has also developed an efficient system of back-loading their vehicles, to obtain the lowest possible transport costs for their customers. Speirs Foods has succeeded with this to such an extent, that the benefits of consolidating fresh product distribution

can be made to other companies who do not have the resources to do it themselves.

In August 2000, Speirs Foods entered into a licence agreement with Scalime Food Technologies based in France, a division of Solphen Group plc. Solphen Group holds the rights to world-leading shelf extension technologies in the fresh produce industry. The company's technologies enable shelf life extension through natural processes with no artificial additives, preservatives, chemicals, genetic alterations or irradiation. The result is extended shelf life for the retailer and all natural goodness for the consumer without compromising taste and freshness.

The relationship with Scalime brings a wide range of benefits to Speirs Foods and their customers. As an exclusive licensee in New Zealand, Speirs Foods has access to:

- leading edge specialist equipment,
- worldwide network of resources – whose fresh-cut and prepared produce markets are a lot further advanced than those currently in New Zealand,
- specialist bag films with high transparency, anti-fog, and semi permeability attributes,
- on-going research and development from Solphen Group.

Speirs Foods also constantly monitor social trends and tastes within the New Zealand market, to keep abreast of possible consumer demand not replicated within markets overseas. By doing so, Speirs Foods aim to continue leading the New Zealand market well into the future.

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