



HONEYTOP CELEBRATE LONG-LIFE IN BREAD DEVELOPMENT

Leading innovator in the manufacture of ethnic breads, Honeytop Speciality Foods, continues to go from strength to strength with its range of authentic breads, fifteen years after it pioneered the development of long-life ethnic breads in the UK.

Honeytop broke new ground with long-life (12 weeks ambient-stable shelf life) breads in 1991, allowing the company to open up the ethnic bread market to smaller distributors and retailers, as well as introducing its products to the European market. The challenge was to recreate the same authentic attributes of its fresh, short-life breads, without compromising its reputation for high standards and top quality.

Essentially, this meant altering the recipes and process for developing the dough, without using any preservatives or additives, and developing the handling and packing technology that would enable them to produce a quality long-life product. Dr Charles Eid, a trained surgeon and joint managing director at Honeytop, explains how he used influences from his medical background to pioneer the project:

“The innovative technology used in the packaging of the breads was of the utmost importance, and ensuring our standards were maintained throughout the process was of the highest priority. We developed what we call a ‘clean room’, which provides a contamination-free environment for cooling and packing fresh breads in order to ensure optimum product quality and extended shelf-life, in the absence of preservatives.”

Taking inspiration from an operating theatre, Dr Eid employed absolute air filtration technology to generate pure air throughout the clean room and all personnel were kitted out with monofilament garments to prevent any particles or fibres carrying contamination to the bread.

The result was a resounding success – soft, bubbly naan bread that once reheated, tasted as fresh at the end of its shelf-life as it did on day it was baked. This breakthrough was a real turning point for the business and the orders for the new extended life product came flooding in. Charles Eid reflects upon their achievement:

“The high moisture content of our breads makes them particularly soft, but this creates real challenges when it comes to extending shelf-life without compromising on quality. I feel very proud that Honeytop was the first UK manufacturer to introduce these products to the industry; and that we achieved this without adversely affecting the moistness of the breads and hence their quality. It really opened doors for us as a business, boosted our reputation and brought the Honeytop name to the fore.

Over the years, the process for producing extended life bread at Honeytop has been fine-tuned, aided by developments in baking technology, and years of experience. Honeytop has continued to raise the standard of ethnic breads in the UK, and is still the market leader in quality long-life breads. With more than 15 years experience in producing long and short life breads, Honeytop is dedicated to constantly improving their baking process, to deliver a better quality product for its customers.

