



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

VALLEY QUEEN CHEESE FACTORY

For more than 85 years, Valley Queen Cheese Factory has called the community of Milbank, South Dakota home. The company employs over 200 people in a small community of just over 3200. They make a wide assortment of cheese, whey, and milk products that are consumed in households across the country. Lance Johnson is the Vice President of Manufacturing at Valley Queen and has been working with the company for 22 years, and with RELCO nearly as long.

A Long History, Starting with Lactose Manufacture

The relationship between Valley Queen Cheese Factory and RELCO goes back several years as casual conversations took place at various industry events. Lance remembers, "The Valley Queen team utilized RELCO's expertise on technical questions regarding lactose manufacture. Those conversations continued over the years eventually leading to Valley Queen's purchase of a lactose refining system from RELCO." The relationships and trust developed and led to future powder handling equipment purchases too. Lance continues, "RELCO continually provided sound technical advice on lactose refinement, making our decision easy when selecting an equipment vendor."

New Equipment, Modifications, and Upgrades for Increased Production

RELCO provided Valley Queen Cheese Factory with a new lactose refinement system and a major modification to an existing dryer for the manufacture of whey protein. Valley Queen has also committed to purchasing twelve TRU-FINISH™ Curd Tables (a new product from RELCO) and an upgrade to their existing lactose dryer to maximize throughput. Lance explained, "With the new equipment from RELCO, we are planning for a 25% increase in production. The existing tables, manufactured by Stoelting, performed well but not capable of handling the increased capacity." Since RELCO acquired Stoelting, it made sense for Valley Queen to continue the relationship with RELCO. Lance also pointed out, "Even more importantly, the upgrades that RELCO made to the drain tables took what was a very good table and made it superior."

Finding the Best Solution - Equipment & Process

RELCO is focused on helping their customers be successful by collaborating and building trust. Lance remembers how the two teams worked together to create the ideal solution, "Their team spent time with us at a conference table - both Valley Queen and RELCO collaborating on layout, modifying current tables, purchasing new tables, etc. RELCO provided many different scenarios regarding price, design, system layout and capacities. In the end RELCO provided more than equipment - they provided a process solution."

RELCO's Detailed Design & Documentation

When Lance was asked, what stood out most in his mind about working with RELCO, it came down the details, literally. Lance pointed out, "Our team uses science and math daily - we don't operate well on speculation, but make decisions based on thorough deliberation, calculations and sound documentation. The purchase of twelve TRU-FINISH™ Curd Tables was a major decision. But, the picture became very clear as RELCO walked through pages of detailed design - they had done their homework and didn't leave any stones unturned."

After working with RELCO for so long and recently investing over 8 million dollars with them on curd tables, Lance is confident that RELCO is the best processing partner for Valley Cheese Factory building on trust, solutions, and team collaboration. His advice to others in the industry, "Contact RELCO - their team will provide you with a thorough, honest assessment of your processing needs."

For more information about Valley Queen Cheese Factory visit www.vqcheese.com.

TRUST, SOLUTIONS &
TEAM COLLABORATION



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