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fiscal, Parle Agro  
enjoys 40 per cent  
share: Reddy*



**R**ecently We interview one of the most modern mango processing units in the country, Rassa Foods, Excerpts of the interview with Venkataramana Reddy, Managing Director, Rassa Foods Pvt. Ltd. are as follows.

**What is Rassa Foods?**

Rasaa Foods started its operation in 2004 as a mango pulp processing and canning unit with about 2000 – 2500 tons of mango pulp in cans during the first season. In 2005, Parle Agro was looking for a quality pulp supplier and we passed their stringent quality norms to become of their leading suppliers of mango pulp in cans for the beverage manufacturing of their popular brand Frooti. After a year of profitable collaboration, Parle proposed us to set up an aseptic processing plant to pack pulp in aseptic bag in drums to cater to their high capacity plants and reduce the cost. Since then we have been successfully supplying mango pulp in aseptic drums and cans to Parle. Post the mango season in 2010 Parle asked us to install an evaporator to concentrate the mango pulp and pack it in aseptic drums and cans. We approached HRS for the evaporation plant as we were confident with their technical expertise and service support given for their previous pasteurizer order. Also HRS is globally known for its innovative technology, products and Customer commitment.

**What is the range of products Rasaa Foods is providing?**

Our product range includes single strength mango pulp, mango pulp concentrate (21 / 28 brix), guava pulp and tomato puree in cans and in Aseptic (bag in drum).

**What is your production output?**

We manufactured 10,000 tons of mango pulp in 2010 and 15,000 tons of mango pulp in 2011. About 40 per cent of the production is in cans and balance 60 per cent in Aseptic (bag in drum). Our last year's sales were over Rs. 350 million.

**Can you brief us about your manufacturing facility-peak capacity, capacity utilization etc.?**

Our facility has capacity to produce 6000 kg/hr for single strength mango pulp and/or 3000 kg / hr for mango pulp concentrate at one plant and 7000 kg/hr single strength mango pulp and/or 3500 kg/hr for mango pulp concentrate for the second plant.

Normally we have an average plant capacity utilization of about 95 per cent.

**Do you also have some expansion growth plans in future?**

Our plant capacity for pulp processing has now saturated and hence with a view to diversify and expand we plan to get in fruit based beverage processing and mineral water with a leading company. We are also looking at upgrading our existing lines with HRS technology to enhance productivity and product quality.

**What is your total market output, current & projected growth?**

The current market output is estimated to be about 500,000 tonnes of mango pulp and is growing at 30-40 per cent domestically. There is also a perceptible increase of about 10-15 per cent in international market. We produced 15,000 tons this fiscal of which Parle Agro enjoys 40 per cent share.

**Do you export your products? Who does your clientele comprise of?**

We primarily operate in domestic market since the consumption is very high and we have dedicated buyers, like Parle, Calvin Care, HI Dairy & Agro being our major customers. We have indirect exports through companies like Capricorn Foods, who are a major player in this field and have a very good international exposure.

**What have been the awards, achievements, certifications to the company so far?.**

Our company is ISO 22000 certified and we have been awarded the Best Plant award by Parle Agro.

**Please share a brief testimonial about HRS Process Systems Limited (HRS PSL).**

Sound technological knowledge and an efficient service support is what we primarily look for in a vendor. HRS is a global group with innovative technology and application engineering as its key strengths. Their innovative technology and product designed with high expertise has improved our productivity and reduced costs. HRS has provided us round-the-

clock assistance in installing, commissioning and running of the plant. Throughout, their approach has been extremely professional and amiable. We are satisfied with our decision to collaborate with them and would surely be working with them in future!

**How has been the journey with HRS Process Systems and how will this impact you're manufacturing and overall operations?**

The plant is designed to process mango pulp with a capacity of 3000kg/hr for 28 brix and 5000 kg/hr for 21 brix of mango pulp output. We are delighted that the average output is 15-20per cent more than committed. HRS has engineered the plant to enable high quality product with high throughput and enhanced CIP cycle of 6-7 days. All this has enabled us to work nonstop for 60 days which has tremendously enhanced productivity. There has been no breakdown during this period.

The plant was designed, engineered and installed in our factory in committed time. The after sales service and installation backup provided has been prompt and commendable.

We have considerably been able to reduce our packaging and logistics cost after installing this evaporator. Productivity has improved in terms of time and costs.

**How do you look at the fruit processing industry, especially in South India?**

In India major mango cultivation and processing happens in south India and some western and northern regions. In South, Krishnagiri and Chitoor districts of Tamilnadu & Andhra Pradesh respectively are prime mango processing belts and other scattered regions include Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Vellore, Theni, etc. The main varieties of mango that is processed are Totapuri & Alphonso (to a small extent Neelam & Sindura).

In Krishnagiri & Chitoor districts there are about 400 mango fruit processing units. Eighty per cent of these units fall under the category of small scale industries that have an average production capacity of 5.5 tons per day of mango pulp. The remaining of these

units comes under the medium scale industry category with an average production capacity of about 80-100 tons per day. A sizeable average of these, are professionally managed companies like Jain Irrigation, Capricorn Foods, Rasaa Foods, ABC Fruits, Mother Dairy, Anandam, Paiyur, Srinu Foods, etc. Mango pulp processed is used for beverages and other fruit pulp preparations like jams, custards, ice creams, etc as well. The medium scale mango pulp suppliers like us here are expanding their facilities to meet the global demand. Traditionally we used batch type plants (pan processing) and products packed in cans, later we shifted to the continuous tubular heat exchanger lines which is still primarily used for preheating and pasteurizing the pulp. The shift to aseptic processing and packaging started about a decade ago. Today the plant capacities have increased to 4 - 6 tons, with few plants of about 16 tons per hour capacity. Companies now are installing evaporation plants to concentrate mango pulp thereby reducing packing and transportation costs and enhancing profitability.

We are happy that our demand and requirements for quality and energy efficient fruit / pulp processing equipment are met by companies like HRS who provide commendable technical expertise and round the clock service backup.

**What kind of support from State & Union Governments you have received for this project?**

Food & Fruit processing sector has seen and unprecedented growth in the past decade and will grow in leaps in the coming decade. Government of India has been having a special budget allocation for the sector and in the past two budgets accorded infrastructure status to Cold Store building and many other post harvest facilities. We are entitled to a 50 lakh subsidy by the Indian Government. The Agriculture Ministry gives an interest free loan upto Rs 75 lakhs for joint ventures. We also receive support from institutes like Agricultural & Processed Food products Export Development Authority (APEDA) for marketing, fruit handling, and fruit ripening activities.