

# Turkish bakery builds success by anticipating market trends

**AMEFT recently met with Fevzi Magden, co-founder and general manager of Özma Bakery in Turkey, and toured Özma's facility in Kayabasi, a neighbourhood in western Istanbul.**

When Magden started Özma in 1984, he had no experience in the bakery business, but listened to his customers, who were bakers. They told him about a new trend hitting Turkey. He listened... and today the company operates at two different locations in the Istanbul region, 365 days a year, using 30 tonnes of flour every day.

Özma Bakery specializes in burger and hot dog buns, and loaves for sandwiches and toasted bread products. The bread maker targets fast-food chains, food kiosks, hospitals, schools and hotels, but also do private label manufacturing for one large and several smaller accounts in Turkey.

The company focuses on the Istanbul market. The city is a metropolis and, despite Özma's already large customer base, still offers significant potential for continued sales development.

Özma's success is built on its ability to identify trends early on. In 1984, there were very few manufacturers of European-style breads in Turkey and those who existed delivered poor quality. Özma caught the trend at the right time. More importantly, says Magden, "we introduced standardization and quality."

The company invested in machines from Italy and Germany in order to guarantee standard shapes and sizes and consistent taste in their buns and breads. Then, Özma further differentiated itself from competitors by developing recipes adapted to Turkish



Hot dog buns on their way to the spiral cooler.

tastes. In burger buns or similar breads, the average sugar content is 10-12%; Özma's has 2%.

#### The wet burger

A very popular product in Turkey right now is an Özma formulation: the 'wet burger', named so because the bun looks like it is coated with water. The bread works like a sponge, soaking up the special sauce, giving the burger a wet look. Each hamburger recipe, making each hamburger unique.

### Özma has reduced the use of additives to a minimum

The wet burger is a meat-focused product. The bread itself weighs only 60g, as opposed to over 100g for a standard hamburger bun. It is made with long-fermented culture. The recipe was difficult to perfect but is key to the product's success: the bread must act like a sponge yet remain easy to bite with a melting mouth-feel, neither too chewy nor too tough. Özma supplies 90% of this market.

#### Short shelf life, but good bread

Catering to the trend toward healthy eating, Özma Bakery has also launched a round whole wheat bread. Magdenreports this product has a promising future thanks to its low calorie count, high fibre content and good taste, citing current trends toward increasing the use of whole wheat flours and switching to sour-dough technologies in order to avoid bakery yeast.

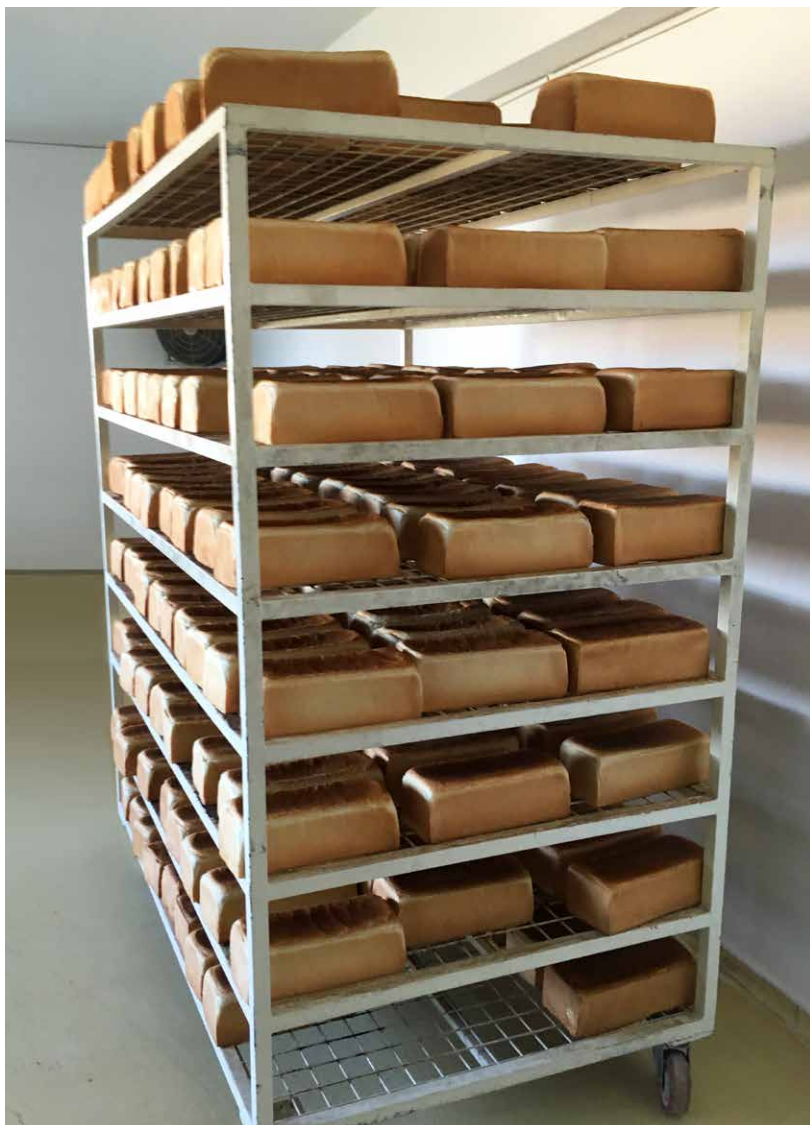
In the past five years, obesity rates have given rise to much discussion, with bread often receiving the blame. As mentioned earlier in this article, Özma Bakery has long formulated its breads with lower amounts of sugar than other European-style bread manufacturers. Besides eliminating preservatives, Özma has reduced the use of additives to a minimum,



Trays pass through a sprayer and then into a Sarmasik tunnel oven.



Fevza Magden, co-founder and general of Özma Bakery, is passionate about good bread.



Long-moulded loaves ready for slicing and packaging.

foreseeing another trend, the clean label movement. Özma uses only flour without additives from the mill, so that it can control the exact dosage of these ingredients, using them only when there is a technical need to do so.

There is, of course, a consequence to this. Where breads made by other companies can have a 14 – 15 day shelf life, Özma breads last for four days. Says Magden, “short shelf life, but good bread.”

Özma Bakery’s Kayabasi facility has two set-ups, one for long-moulded, higher-weight breads (loaves for toast products and sandwiches), the other for smaller breads (hamburger and hot dog buns, rolls). Eighty per cent of the equipment comes from the

Turkish supplier Sarmasik, a long-term partner of Özma Bakery.

The first line in the Kayabasi facility is in place but not currently used. The second line, fully automated, includes two flour silos, loaded directly from the lorries, along with an area for dry storage: salt, sugar, sesame seeds, plus other flours. Nur Geçim, plant manager for Özma’s Kayabasi bakery, keeps a one-to-two-weeks’ advance supply of the raw ingredients in order to accommodate last-minute orders from their customers. “In the normal routine, today you get ready for tomorrow”, explains Magden. “But my phone is always on and we always try to respond to our customers’ needs.”

The silos feed into two mixers

which can be controlled for the time and speed of mixing. From there, the dough is sent to the cutting machine and automatically loaded in trays. The day AMEFT visited, the line was producing hot dog buns and workers corrected the shape manually, since the buns “tend to get a little chubby in the middle” and Özma’s trademark is perfect, standardized shapes.

The trays feed into an automatic proofer from Sarmasik, a step-up, step-down installation featuring a time-controlled system. Communication between the Sarmasik equipment and the divider helps determine the time in the proofer, 62 minutes on the day of AMEFT’s visit.

## Sarmasik supplied 80% of the equipment at the facility

After proofing, the trays pass through a sprayer and then into a Sarmasik caramel over tunnel oven. After baking, the baked products are cooled in a direct drive spiral cooling system from Intralox and then fed into one of two different packaging machines. The entire process, from mixing to packaging, takes two hours.

Sarmasik has long been a partner for Özma Bakery. Currently, Özma Bakery has three technicians handling maintenance of the production line, all trained by Sarmasik. Magden has been especially pleased with the high level of communication with his supplier. He says, “communication is easy, so we discuss and co-develop projects. Sarmasik is a good company for brainstorming with.”

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