

Blending Old and New Traditions with Automated Batter Breeding Equipment

A Visit with Chris Rogers of Rogman Corporation



Like many KFC franchisees, Rogman Corporation (Bowling Green, KY) is a family-owned enterprise. Founded in 1972 by Terry Rogers' father-in-law, Hubert Mays, today the company owns and operates nine KFC restaurants in Kentucky and Tennessee.

After installing an Optimax® Automated Breeding Machine from Bettcher Industries in one store three years ago, the company has since added machines in two of its other locations.

Recently, we spoke with Chris Rogers, Rogman's vice president of operations, about how the Optimax® Automated Breeding Machines are working out for his business.

Q. What do you like about the Optimax® Automated Breeding Machine?

C.R. Clearly, we like the cost savings. We also like the simplicity of the machine. And the product is extremely consistent. It doesn't matter who is preparing the chicken, it's consistently breaded every time – all day, every day.

"It's so much easier to train using this machine than the hand-breading method. The cooks really like it."

– Chris Rogers

Q. What amount of ingredient savings are you achieving compared to when you did hand-breading?

C.R. Our numbers show that we've saving about \$200 per store each week in flour, seasonings and oil. The shortening savings are about \$75 of that.

Q. How easy is it for cooks to use the machine?

C.R. The machine is very simple and easy to use. The cooks aren't bent over a breading table all day long, breading chicken with their hands.

And it takes half the time, so there's a lot less labor spent in the back. There's also a lot less cleaning needed throughout the day because there isn't as much flour stirred into the air.

Q. Tell us more about how the Optimax® Machines compare against hand-breading.

C.R. With hand-breading, we've found that even though the proper procedures are followed, there's a variance in the way people handle the product. It could be in the way it's placed in the water or flour, or how it's shaken. The machine eliminates those variations to give us a very consistent product that our customers really love.

Q. What do your cooks think of the Optimax® Breeding Machines?

C.R. They really like them. Even the cooks that have been around

for years and are set in their ways have come around. If you gave them the choice, they wouldn't go back to the old way!

Q. Overall, have the Optimax® Breeding Machines lived up to your expectations?

C.R. Absolutely. Our P&L numbers show it: We've been saving money on flour, seasonings and oil. We also have a consistent product that's great for our customers. We're saving money on training and labor. The machines have been very reliable, too.

Based on our experience, we will likely add more units in the future.



Q. What would you like to tell your colleagues in the KFC franchise community about Optimax® Machines?

C.R. Beyond the machine's quality, the cost savings and product consistency, I'd tell them that Bettcher's customer service is impressive. There are very few companies I've ever dealt with that provide the level of service Bettcher does. That's a huge part of the appeal.

When they come in and set up a machine, they take all the time needed to train the cooks and get them completely comfortable using it. That's a lot less stressful for managers like me – and a big burden off our shoulders!

"The customer service at Bettcher is one of the things that really impresses me. You couldn't ask for better attention and follow-through."

– Chris Rogers

To learn how the Optimax® Breeding Machine will benefit your store's quality, productivity and bottom-line profits, call Jim Wallace at 440-965-4422 or visit www.bettcher.com/KFCsupport.



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Improving KFC Chicken Quality and Profits with Automated Batter Breeding Equipment

A Visit with Raymond Cavazos of Sac 'n Pac Stores



KFC franchisee Sac 'n Pac Stores, Inc. (San Marcos, TX) owns four stores in the state of Texas. Sac 'n Pac is now using Optimax® Automated Breeding Machines from Bettcher Industries instead of hand-breading when preparing KFC chicken.

The switch began in November 2009 with an Optimax® test unit placed in one Sac 'n Pac KFC store for Original Recipe™ chicken. Two more machines for OR were placed in two other outlets in January 2010. And when Sac 'n Pac opened a fourth store location in August 2010, an Optimax™ machine for breading Extra Crispy™ was put in the kitchen in addition to a machine for breading OR.

Recently, we spoke with Raymond Cavazos, Sac 'n Pac's Food Service Director, about how the Optimax™ Automated Breeding Machines are working for him and his company.

Q. What do you like about the Optimax® Automated Breeding Machine?

R.C. I like the consistent product it produces, and the appearance of the chicken. You can look at a whole tray of chicken, and it's just gorgeous. The coating is even. You don't have over-breading in certain spots, while on other places on the chicken, the breading is missing.

Q. How else are Optimax® Machines producing better-quality chicken for you?

R.C. Having more even breading makes for better-tasting chicken, because the flavor is in the breading. We're getting a more consistent, beautiful look while the taste is definitely improved.

Q. What amount of ingredient savings are you achieving compared to when you did hand-breading?

R.C. We're getting savings of about 15% on Original Recipe™, and about 20% on the Extra Crispy™. We found that we went through a substantial amount of additional breading when we didn't use the machine. For instance, I couldn't believe how much breading we were going through when we were hand-breading Extra Crispy™ chicken.

Q. How much shortening savings are you getting compared to hand-breading?

R.C. Our shortening life has been extended, too. When cooks hand-bread, they use more of the breading. Then when the chicken goes into the fryer, part of that extra breading settles to the bottom. After we started using the breading machines, we noticed there wasn't nearly as much sediment in the bottom of the fryer. What that means is that instead of having to change the shortening every 10-14 days, we're now able to go 18-20 days before changing it.

Q. How easy is it for cooks to use the Optimax® Machine?

R.C. It's important that we train cooks properly. We find that it's easier to teach brand new employees than those who are more used to the old hand-breading. But using the breading machine is a very smooth process. Within two weeks, people like it and most of them don't want to go back to the old, messy ways of hand-breading.



Q. Overall, have the Optimax® Breeding Machines lived up to your expectations?

R.C. They're working better than we thought they would! Before, we were having problems with cooks wanting to skip some of the steps in the 7-7-7 hand-breading process – especially shaking the chicken which, if it isn't done right, causes more water to stay on the product and absorb more of the breading. All of these issues are completely gone now.

"I give these machines an A+. They're well-worth the investment; you can't go wrong with them!"

– Raymond Cavazos

I like to say that people eat twice: with their eyes and with their mouth. To see the trays of beautiful chicken that come out now, I'm really excited about that!

Q. What would you like to tell your colleagues in the KFC franchise community about Optimax® Machines?

R.C. I'd tell them to go ahead and invest in machines for breading Original Recipe™ and also Extra Crispy™. Some might be reluctant to spend the money, which was my attitude at the beginning. But we've been extremely pleased using them for both.

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