

On-demand steam meets pet food production requirements

▶ The new steam generator also satisfies California's tough emission regulations.

Making healthy food choices have crossed over from man to man's best friend. More and more dog owners are selecting food that minimizes cereal and maximizes fresh, whole foods, like fine cuts of meat and fresh vegetables. Since its early days, Breeder's Choice Pet Foods has used only high-quality ingredients in its dog and cat foods.

A wholly owned division of Central Garden & Pet Company, the company began making frozen pet meals in 1947. In 1960, the line was expanded to include the company's first oven-baked kibble and biscuits, which exceeded the minimum pet food nutritional requirements in an effort to be the most nutritious products available. A bakery was eventually added to the Irwindale, CA facility in the mid-1960s and still operates today, producing all-natural

baked pet foods and treats around the clock.

Breeder's Choice's number one seller is its AvoDerm Natural line of foods, treats and grooming aids. The company's other specialized lines include: Active Care, a product that caters to dogs that often experience or are prone to painful or achy hips and joints; Pinnacle, an allergen-free dog and cat food product line combining a wholesome blend of holistic ingredients with superior pet nutrition; and Advanced Pet Diets Select Choice, a dog and cat product line that offers improved digestibility and advanced health performance.



▶ Breeder's Choice installed a new Clayton Industries steam generator, which produces 25 percent more output than its predecessor in the same footprint. Source: Clayton Industries.

A customer of Clayton Steam Generators since 1995, the processor recently had to replace an older 100bhp Clayton steam generator to meet California's latest emission rules. Other systems were available, but the manufacturer opted to stay with Clayton Industries.

Breeder's Choice principals chose a high-efficiency Clayton model SSFG125M-1-FMB steam generator to replace its older one. The newer design is rated at 125bhp and incorporates an ultra-low NOx fiber metal burner system that reduces the NOx emissions to less than 9 ppm. The unit is approximately the same compact size, so there was no need to change the facility's footprint.

The Breeder's Choice plant operates 24 hours a day with multiple product changes, so the boiler's rapid response to changes in steam demand is an advantage. Constant temperature and pressure are important for a top-quality product. The 99.5 percent dry steam enables perfect conditions for perfect pet foods. "Our Clayton steam generator provides us with consistent steam distributed throughout our plant and is a perfect partner in our top-quality pet food processing," says Clint Hammond, Breeder's Choice operations manager.

The Clayton steam generator offers many advantages over conventional boiler designs, including its compact size; low-weight, high-thermal efficiency throughout its operating range; rapid startup and load response; greatly reduced blowdown losses; high-quality, consistent steam output; and inherently safe, non-explosive operation. Because of these many advantages, Breeder's Choice can process varying quantities and types of pet products quickly, easily and economically.

"Over the years, the boilers have been extremely reliable, considering the hours and varying steam loads we operate at. Based on our experience, we wouldn't go with any other system," says Hammond. ❖

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