



HARVEY A. MEIER CO.

FOUNDED 1971

Position Specification

WILLAMETTE HAZELNUT GROWERS

Chief Executive Officer



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THE INDUSTRY

Oregon produces 99 percent of the U.S. hazelnut crop. While representing just five percent of the world crop, Oregon hazelnuts have become the global benchmark for in-shell excellence, recognized for their large size and distinctive flavor.

About 800 grower families and farms nestled along the length of the Willamette Valley from Roseburg, Oregon through the State of Washington and 20 processors (**of which Willamette Hazelnut Growers ranks among the top three processors**) make up the growing community and industry. About 50% of Oregon's annual hazelnut crop is exported worldwide annually. The industry ranks among the fastest growing agriculture sectors in the Pacific Northwest. Hazelnut acreage in Oregon today is approximately 60,000 acres compared to 30,000 acres 10 years ago and is growing rapidly.

WILLAMETTE HAZELNUT GROWERS

Three family farmers founded Willamette Hazelnut Growers (**WHG**) in 1976 when they exited a local co-op to form their own processing facility and sales and marketing company. Their goal was to set the pace for the emerging hazelnut industry, and improve returns for themselves and their neighbor hazelnut farmers. Today, WHG is in its third generation of leadership with sales ranging between \$10 - \$15 million annually depending on hazelnut production. It is the longest operating hazelnut supplier in the United States and delivers hazelnuts globally throughout the world.

WHG is dedicated to strengthening the Oregon Hazelnut Industry and to setting the highest standard in product quality and grower support from planting through harvest. Over 80 hazelnut farmers depend upon WHG to process their annual hazelnut production. Its 40 years of experience and expertise in processing hazelnuts enables it to put its grower suppliers "First" as depicted in its logo.

The company employs 91 employees in its Newberg facility comprised of 16 full-time employees along with 75 seasonal part-time workers.

In view of the rapid growth taking place in the hazelnut industry, WHG's founders recognize the need to position the company to successfully serve both its grower suppliers and its own needs in effectively supplying hazelnuts in the industry's dynamic changing market place. Therefore, the company is seeking a full-time Chief Executive Officer with strengths in sales and marketing.

THE CEO POSITION

WHG is seeking a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO should be self-motivated results oriented, and possess excellent communication skills with the ability to work in a dynamically changing market place. The successful candidate must be especially adept in developing and executing sales and marketing strategies, plans, and tactics. The position reports to a 4 - member board of directors.

Essential duties and responsibilities of this "hands-on" position include performing the following personally or through the company's managers and staff.

- Plans, develops, and establishes policies and objectives of the company including supervising day-to-day operations in accordance with Board directives to encourage the growth and stability of the company and the provision of a safe working environment for employees and customers.

- Strives to optimize the working relationship between the position and the Board of Directors.

- Participates in professional development programs to enhance professional expertise in executing the duties and responsibilities of the position.

Participates in industry and association meetings as appropriate to stay abreast of trends impacting the company's business activities.

Confers with the board, management, and staff of the company to plan strategic and business objectives, to develop organizational policies, to coordinate functions and operations, and to establish responsibilities and procedures for attaining objectives.

Reviews and discusses financial statements with the Board of Directors to evaluate progress and status in attaining objectives and revises objectives and plans as needed in accordance with current and anticipated conditions.

Oversees and coordinates communications with the board, management, staff, growers, customers, and the general public.

Oversees sales and marketing functions and directs and coordinates formulation of financial programs to provide funding for new or continuing operations including establishing the annual operating and capital expenditure budget, and financial and capital allocation plan to maximize returns on operations, business investments and to increase productivity.

Oversees company fiscal activities including financial accounting and reporting and maintains the adequacy and soundness of the organization's financial structure.

Develops, negotiates, and maintains good working relationships with financial institutions.

Ensures compliance with food safety and government food production/processing industry regulations.

Employs, directs, coordinates, supervises, manages, and evaluates performance of management and staff of the company. Carries out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the company's policies and applicable laws and may delegate selected supervisory responsibilities as deemed appropriate. Responsibilities include interviewing, hiring, and training employees; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; rewarding and disciplining employees; addressing complaints and resolving problems.

Establishes and maintains a broad network of industry, legislative, regulatory, and key constituency contacts and retains professional resources including but not limited to attorneys, accountants, and business consultants to assist with performing essential duties and responsibilities.

IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate must possess a bachelor degree and have ten or more years of senior leadership experience preferably as an executive in food manufacturing, processing, sales and marketing of commodity and/or consumer packaged goods domestically and internationally. An MBA is highly desirable. The ideal candidate will have a strong background in sales and marketing and a proven track record of execution. He/she must be a strategic and creative thinker with solid analytical skills including the ability to evaluate cost analyses, pricing programs and operating margins. Solid talent management and team building skills are critical. This individual must be of impeccable character and integrity with an outstanding business reputation. Superior negotiation and people skills are a must. The ideal candidate must demonstrate the ability to pro-actively interact and communicate with farmer growers and a culturally diverse global customer base. Experience with an agricultural producer owned processing and sales and marketing organization is a plus.

Other important leadership requirements the successful candidate should possess include the following.

- Ability to balance team and individual responsibilities; Contribute to building a positive team spirit; put success of team above own interests; Support the efforts of everyone to succeed.
- Actively interact, participate, and communicate with customers in selling and marketing WHG's products and services.

- Motivate others to perform well; effectively influence actions and opinions of others in an ethical, respectful, and trustworthy manner.
- Develop workable implementation plans; build commitment and overcome resistance.
- Delegate work assignments; match the responsibility to the person; set expectations and monitor-delegated activities.
- Develop skills of subordinates and encourage personal and professional growth and advancement.
- Exhibit sound and accurate judgment and project a positive, can do attitude.
- Set and achieve visionary and challenging goals.
- Observe and enforce safety and security procedures.
- Adapt to changes in the work environment; manage competing demands; ability to quickly change directions or method to best fit the situation at hand; ability to deal with frequent change, delays, or unexpected events.

LOCATION

Newberg, Oregon (approximately 25 miles from Portland, Oregon). The successful candidate is expected to reside within reasonable proximity of Newberg if he/she elects not to reside in Newberg.

COMPENSATION

An attractive compensation package commensurate with the responsibility and significance of this position will be offered to the successful candidate.

CONTACT

Please submit a letter of interest and resume in Word or PDF format referencing **WHG CEO** to:

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