



Background, Wasabröd

– From Sweden to the world. Wasabröd, a Swedish historic journey.

The company

Wasabröd is the world's largest producer of crispbread. Every year the company sells 60,000 tonnes of crispbread in some 40 countries. Swedes are the world's biggest consumers of crispbread, with an annual consumption of almost 4 kg per person.

Wasa's largest markets besides Sweden are Norway, Denmark, Poland, France, The Netherlands and Germany. Today, the United States has also become one of Wasa's most promising markets.

Wasabröd has approximately 950 employees, and has since 1999 been owned by the Barilla Group, the world's leading pasta producer and the third biggest bakery company in Europe. Wasabröd maintains its headquarters in Stockholm and has bread baking plants in Filipstad, Sweden, Celle, Germany and Hamar, Norway. Wasa has a total turnover of approximately €200 million.

Crispbread has been exported by Wasa to various parts of the world since the 1940s, and Wasa's products are currently sold in some 40 countries. Today, Wasabröd is an international trademark with 75 percent of its sales outside Sweden. In Sweden, like at most markets, the trend for crispbread is upgoing. The development in Germany, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands and the United States is strong.

History

In 1919, Karl Edvard Lundström founded a crispbread factory called Skellefteå Spisbrödsfabrik AB. During the initial years, K. E. Lundström built up what would later become the world's largest bread factory of its kind. K. E. Lundström quickly realised the need for strong product development and introduced several innovations to the market, including a knock-out machine that eliminated time-consuming manual tasks such as sprinkling, rolling, denting and punching. K. E. Lundström's crispbread received a very positive response, and the Filipstad plant supplied 2.3 million kilos of crispbread in 1933.

In 1933, K. E. Lundström applied for permission to change the company's name to Spisbrödsfabriken Rex AB. This name was already taken, so the company was renamed AB Wasa Spisbrödsfabrik, after a product with a picture of King Gustav Vasa on the package. The name Wasa in the Wasabröd trademark derives from the ancient Swedish word vase, meaning a sheaf of grain. This is the reason for the sheaf depicted above the second "s" in Wasa.



Key years

1919 – The company is founded in Skellefteå, Sweden by Karl Edvard Lundström.

1931 – K. E. Lundström acquires Filipstads Bageri AB.

1933 – The first crispbread is baked on conveyor belts. The new line is named Husman.

1950 – Wasa starts exporting crispbread to the USA and Great Britain.

1982 – Wasabröd is sold to the Sandoz Group of Switzerland.

1996 – Wasabröd becomes part of the Novartis Nutrition Group.

1999 – Wasabröd is acquired by the Barilla Group of Italy.

2003 – Wasa launches new products and enters new markets.

2004 – Wasa starts a cooperation with the “Preserve the Vasa” Charitable Foundation and the Vasa Museum to save the Warship Vasa