

COATING WORLD[®]

Volume X/00

SPECIAL KITCHENWARE NEWS REPORT ON NONSTICK COATINGS

Excalibur[®] Surges Ahead, Continues To Dominate High End Of Cookware Market

Whitford's Patented Coating System, Known As "The World's Toughest, Longest-Lasting, Most Durable Nonstick", Keeps Winning More And More New Customers

Excalibur stands alone at the top of nonstick coatings. It was Excalibur that made possible the use of nonsticks on stainless-steel cookware a decade ago, because of its external reinforcement (see diagrams next page) and its unmatched resistance to abrasion and wear.

Today, Excalibur is used by hundreds of manufacturers and marketers of higher-priced cookware.

How does it compare to the newer nonsticks?

Significant progress has been made in the quality of nonstick coatings, and today's are far more durable than those of only a few years ago. That's due not only to improved formulation, but also to internal reinforcement to strengthen the coatings.

Nevertheless, none has been able to equal the remarkable durability of Excalibur. That's because Excalibur is *reinforced externally*,

A matrix of molten stainless steel is sprayed onto the pan, forming a series of "peaks" and "valleys" welded to the pan. This not only anchors the tough nonsticks into place, but if a fork or knife scratches the nonstick surface, it skips over the "peaks", unable to gouge out the nonstick in the "valleys". In addition, as improvements in Whitford's *internally* reinforced coatings have been made, they have been moved to the Excalibur system for even better performance.

The result: The most durable nonstick system on the market, so superior that virtually all manufacturers guarantee it, some even for the life of the cookware itself.



Tower's "Multi-Splendide" pressure cooker comes with with Excalibur and is guaranteed for 10 years.



Innova's baking pan uses Excalibur to release the stickiest foods, and guarantees it for 55 years.



Hefeng offers a colorful, four-piece set of fry pans, all coated with Excalibur for worry-free use.



This stainless-steel industrial pan from Bima in Indonesia uses Excalibur for professional chefs.



The Joyce Chen 12-inch Peking Pan of aluminized steel comes with Excalibur and a 25-year warranty.



The Eva stainless-steel fry pan with Excalibur is providing cooks in Scandinavia with long-life cooking.



This Roaster has a lid, also with Excalibur, for use as a broiler pan. Both are guaranteed for 55 years.



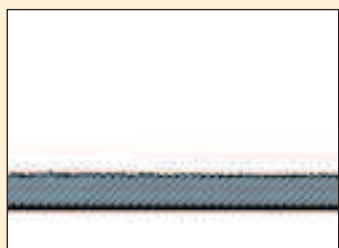
The stainless-steel pan from Vollrath uses Excalibur to stand up to metal utensils in professional kitchens.



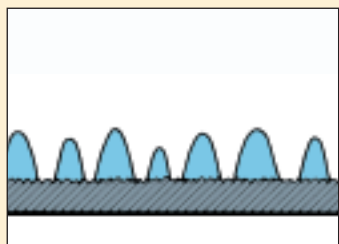
The toaster oven from Innova is the only one of its kind coated with Excalibur (guaranteed for 55 years).

Why Excalibur Outperforms All Other Nonsticks

This nonstick system is so unusual that it is patented. What makes it different from — and superior to — all other nonsticks is that it is reinforced with stainless steel.



1. First, the surface of the pan is blasted to roughen it, so that other elements in the Excalibur process will adhere to it better.

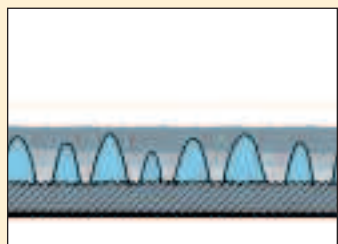


3. The particles cool and harden, welded to the pan. They form "peaks and valleys" that provide a permanent base for the nonstick coatings.

Excalibur actually becomes part of the surface to which it is applied, combining the strength of stainless steel with the low friction and release of the best nonstick. Here's the story in detail:



2. Then, molten, white-hot particles of a special, corrosion-resistant stainless steel (patented by Whitford) are sprayed onto the surface.



4. Several coats of tough nonstick fill the "valleys" and cover the "peaks." The coating is held permanently in place by the stainless steel "peaks."



Midea has just launched three of the world's most advanced electric rice cookers under the "Fuzzy Technology" brand name, all coated with Whitford's Xylan. Sleek and modern, they offer different cooking speeds, programmable cooking times, and meet all local and international regulatory requirements.

Appliance Of The New Millennium: The Rice Cooker

Rice. A commodity so common and simple that many never stop to think about its importance to and impact on the world.

Yet this edible starchy cereal grain feeds half of the population of the world, including virtually all of East and Southeast Asia. In Asia, inexpensive rice has been the dominant force driving economic, political and social stability. More than any other element, rice has helped keep the continent nourished, employed, and peaceful.

Rice is not limited to Asia. Increases in rice farming have taken place in Latin America, where production has doubled in the past 35 years, making most Latin countries self-sufficient. Rice is playing an increasingly important role in Africa as well.

World production of rice has averaged 950 billion pounds in recent years, and production is growing, due largely to new, more vigor-

ous and disease-resistant varieties.

Leading producers of rice are China, India, Japan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand and Burma, followed by Vietnam, Brazil, South Korea, the Philippines and the United States.

What's the best way to cook all that rice?

There are many ways to prepare rice, but by far the easiest and most consistent is the new electric rice cooker made by SD Midea Electric Rice Cookers MFG Company of Guang Dong Province, China, a division of the Midea Group.

These sleek, modern Midea rice cookers offer many advantages:

- Can cook rice, stews, even steam vegetables.
- Different cooking speeds for different needs.
- Programmable cooking times.
- Priced to be accessible to the Chinese market.

The Midea Group: a world force

The Midea rice cooker company, a subsidiary of Midea Group, was founded in 1994 with an initial investment of US\$20 million and today is the largest manufacturer of rice cookers in China (and the world).

The company designs and manufactures more than 150 variations of rice cookers. Their capacity is 800 million units per year.

Most of Midea's sales have been domestic, but recently the company established a global marketing network covering more than 60 countries.

All Midea products sold into the world market meet ETL, GS and UL standards (as well as Chinese standards). Midea was awarded ISO 9001 recognition two years ago.

Midea was first listed on the Shenzhen stock exchange in 1993 and today employs more than 12,000 people.

New Technical Service Laboratory Opens At Whitford Germany

The past few years have seen remarkably strong growth in sales at Whitford's office in Limburg, Germany.

To support all this growth, and to maintain high standards of technical service for customers, management recently decided to establish a technical service center.

Running the new lab is Bruno Camp, a French national by birth, but a man of the world by practice. He is a chemical engineer,



Bruno Camp, new head of the laboratory at Whitford Germany.

and has been working at Whitford's facility in Runcorn, England, for the past few years.

Bruno is not only completely fluent in Chemistry, but also in English, French



The first four retail versions of CoatingWorld. A new version is sent every six to eight weeks, along with other helpful items on subjects of importance. If you'd like to join the program, we'll send you a copy of all newsletters in a three-ring binder and add you to the mailing list. See below for details.

Whitford Launches New Program At Retail Level To Help Improve Understanding Of Cookware, Nonstick Coatings

As the cookware, bakeware and small appliances categories expand, with a proliferation of designs, features and other options, it is increasingly hard for retailers to keep up with the developments.

The same is true in the nonstick category. Nonstick coatings are appearing on more and more cookware, bakeware, kitchen electrics and gadgets.

Industry figures show that 70 percent of bakeware and 80 percent of cookware come with nonstick.

Lack of information

In the midst of this explosive growth, little has been done to provide basic and current information at the retail level, such as:

- What are the differences among metals used to make cookware?

- How do these differences affect cooking?

- How many different kinds of nonstick coatings are there?

- What are the features and benefits of each coating?

- Which is best for what type of customer (occasional cooking, daily preparation of meals, gourmet, etc.)?

- What's the best way to trade up a customer?

Help is at hand

Whitford's program answers these and other questions quickly and easily. Its objectives are to help retailers know their wares better, sell with greater knowledge, and provide a useful information source for their businesses that include nonstick coatings.

This is especially valuable for those who have private label programs or exclusive products which require additional support to remain competitive. But the program is not limited to private label, nor is it for one specific level at retail. It's geared for all levels, from corporate to sales associates. In addition, the program offers retailers a free source of product testing, not only in the development stage but also just prior to initial launch.

Each newsletter covers at least one important topic, sometimes two or three. Among those covered in the first four issues are:

- How to make sure that nonstick coatings on cook-

ware comply with FDA and other international regulations.

- The differences among nonstick coatings (and why some are far better than others).

- How to select the nonstick coating most appropriate for different price points.

- The Quality Cooperative Program: How to make sure that nonstick cookware and bakeware come with the quality retailers expect.

- How to have nonstick coatings tested to make sure they will not fail.

FAQs, too

Each newsletter comes with a section on "Frequently Asked Questions", such as:

- "What happens if I swallow some nonstick?"

- "If a nonstick doesn't stick, how does it stick to the surface of a fry pan?"

- "What's the best way to clean off food that's been burned onto a nonstick pan?"

The Program provides retailers with tools to help drive their businesses, while making the task easier and more enjoyable.

Call Fran

Fran Attilio is spearheading the new initiative to the retail trade. Fran comes



Fran B. Attilio, Whitford's new Retail Marketing Manager.

from a rich background in retail, including the Pottery Barn, Federated Merchandising Group (Macy's), and Frederick Atkins.

For more information on how the retail program can help your business, for a copy of the first four newsletters and to have your name added to the list, or to join the Quality Cooperative Program, contact Fran at Whitford Corp., Box 2347, West Chester, PA 19380-0110. Tel: (610) 296-3200 or email: fattilio@whitfordww.com.



Whitford has published and distributed the "Simplified Guide to Nonstick Cookware", a 20-page booklet that provides basic information on cookware and nonstick coatings. It also lists typical questions consumers ask and gives the answers.



An architectural rendering of Whitford's new twin-building facility at 1 Tuas Basin Close in Singapore. It will house manufacturing, research and development, quality control and administration in its 4,600 square meters of modern space.

Growth Forces Whitford To Move To Larger Facility in Singapore — The Fourth Such Move In Seven Years

Whitford is no stranger to Singapore. Whitford made its first export sale to the Far East in 1970, just one year after the company was founded in the United States.

Since then, the Far East has become the single most important source of growth for Whitford, growth that shows no signs of stopping.

Whitford Pte. was incorporated as a sales office in

Singapore in 1992. Because local sales took off, Whitford opened its first manufacturing facility in the second quarter of 1993 in the Woodlands area.

Manufacturing Whitford's fluoropolymer coatings locally proved so successful (in terms of saving time and money for customers throughout the Far East) that business expanded more rapidly than anticipated. This led to a move to a new facility almost four times as large in July of 1995.

Growth continued to accelerate to the extent that, in late 1996, it was necessary to make yet another move. This time, Whitford purchased a property at 16 Tuas Avenue 20, with 3,000 square meters, making it Whitford's



A wide-angle view of the new Singapore facility prior to the extensive renovations that Whitford is making to both buildings, which include covering the area between the two to unite them.

third-largest manufacturing facility (Whitford manufactures in seven countries). But, in the past three years, Whitford has outgrown even this facility.

Whitford's new facility is at 1 Tuas Basin Close, on the western tip of the island. There are two large buildings. The factory will have over 4,600 square meters, with 400 square meters of office space and 300 square meters dedicated to a research and development laboratory. The testing laboratory and quality control will share 200 square meters. With this larger and

more modern facility, Whitford will be able to keep up with the growth it has enjoyed while providing prompt deliveries of product as well as comprehensive

technical support to its customers.

Peter Neely, Managing Director of Whitford Singapore, says, "This exciting new facility

means faster, more efficient production, speedier deliveries, and more extensive and professional technical support for our customers. There's nothing like being on the spot to serve your customers better."



Peter Neely, head of Whitford Singapore, has a degree in Chemistry and is a Registered Nuclear Engineer. His background is in manufacturing, as well as quality standards, including ISO and QS 9000.



A view of some of the 4,600 square meters of space that will be designed to the highest, most efficient manufacturing standards.