



Seneca Foods and Ruan Have a “Can” Do Partnership



Aaron Girard,
Senior Vice
President of
Logistics at
Seneca Foods

Kelli Jacobs,
Dedicated
Transportation
Manager at Ruan

Seneca Foods is a shelf-to-table business, predominantly producing canned and frozen vegetables, for grocery chains, private labels, food service companies, and industrial baking and food production organizations.

Operating multiple interdependent facilities each processing different commodities, Seneca Foods needed a dedicated logistics partner that could be the physical link between and an extension of their plants in order to ensure production stays on track.

Aaron Girard, Senior Vice President of Logistics at Seneca Foods, oversees and reviews customer orders and balances them with both warehouse and transportation capacity—and he knows that transportation capacity is critical in a commodity market. Seneca Foods chose to partner with Ruan for Dedicated Contract Transportation to ensure adequate capacity while achieving cost savings.

“The cost savings comes on two levels,” Girard said. “One, Ruan gives us a competitive advantage with our day-to-day trucking operations. Two, by signing a long-term agreement, we were able to get consistency in both service and cost over a multi-year period. And in the commodity market, that’s a really important factor.”

While cost savings alone is a significant achievement for an organization, Ruan offers additional value to our customers. Seneca Foods values this dedicated partnership because Ruan effectively operates every day, seeks to understand their business, is an extension of their team, and has the expertise to help Seneca improve.

THE ABILITY TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY EVERY DAY IN A COMMODITY MARKET

In a continuous manufacturing business model, reliability is key. “Ruan allows the consistency of day in and day out material flow to our facilities, and that consistency allows for efficient production,” Girard said.

Ruan takes the empty cans manufactured at the can plant in Baraboo, WI, and hauls them to other Seneca locations. After delivering the empty cans, Ruan’s dedicated drivers pick up the canned goods that are manufactured at those locations and brings them to the Seneca Foods plant in Janesville, WI, where they are labeled and shipped out to the end customer. With Ruan’s commitment to delivering safely, on time, and in full, food production continues as usual. Ultimately, Seneca Foods relies on Ruan’s transportation and logistics expertise so Seneca can focus on its core competencies.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND BECOMING BETTER

At Ruan, continuous improvement is more than a goal; it is one of our Guiding Principles. Across the country, teams are constantly evaluating our operational processes and procedures to deliver our customers’ products safely, efficiently, and on time. This hands-on approach to process improvement empowers all team members to ask questions about how to add value to the operation and, in turn, our customers’ business.

As a result, we forge long-term, enduring partnerships with valued customers like Seneca Foods.



BECOMING AN EXTENSION OF THE BUSINESS

As Seneca Foods’ dedicated logistics provider, Ruan is a trusted representative of Seneca’s brand.

“Seneca Foods and Ruan are kindred spirits. Both are very strong, family-oriented organizations and share the same moral and ethical values,” Girard said. These values are evident in a partnership like this, where Ruan seamlessly became an extension of Seneca Foods.

“Ruan drivers are very interactive with the warehouse personnel at Seneca Foods, so it feels like an intertwined family. Drivers feel like they are a part of something bigger,” said Kelli Jacobs, Ruan’s Dedicated Transportation Manager based in Baraboo who oversees a team of 15 drivers supporting Seneca Foods operations. “From the office side, we have a sense of teamwork and there’s true partnership with Seneca’s team.”

