



# Positioned for success

by Meyer Sosland

## Ocrim CEO Alberto Antolini says company is prepared for growth in anticipation of expansion of global grain and flour milling industries

**P**ositioned for growth and anticipating expansion in the global grain and flour milling industries, Cremona, Italy-based Ocrim has prepared itself for future opportunities and challenges. In a recent interview with *World Grain*, Ocrim Chief Executive Officer Alberto Antolini discussed a wide array of topics related to the global industries his company serves.

Despite the global economy's slowdown, Antolini sees opportunity. "The whole world is highly in ferment, but there are countries undergoing development that will have great potential for years to come. We see this in South America, Middle and South Africa, India, Russia and China. These are the countries under expansion."

While some nations have higher growth potential than others, Antolini sees opportunities all around the world. He noted that everyone is continually moving to update their systems and technology. "Ocrim constantly works on the whole global market, paying attention to the movement of every single country in order to supply concrete replies."

### 'ITALIAN MADE'

In 2011, Ocrim launched its "Italian Made" public relations campaign with which the company wanted to communicate its vocation but not to forget its 70-year history in the milling industry.

Antolini said that the company is convinced that having the entire production process close to its headquarters in Cremona, Italy gives Ocrim the desired added value of customer service in terms of quality, traceability and reliability of the sold product.

(Above) Ocrim Chief Executive Officer Alberto Antolini.

"Besides exporting in more than 100 countries, Ocrim is for us a magic and unique reality," Antolini said. "The real force of Ocrim is to have always believed in all of its projects, and to manufacture and develop all of its own products in Italy."

"It's a choice that has rewarded us and today allows us to be a world leader in the production of milling plants. It's a real and true vocation, brought to the forefront through will and with transparency."

Antolini emphasized that as the global industrial manufacturing system is moving toward globalization, Ocrim is asking itself, "Which Italy does Ocrim want to represent and what does Ocrim want to become?"

"There are a lot of Italian companies that use the concept of 'Made in Italy' only for their advertising campaigns, for a graphic value. But most of the time they produce most of their products outside our national border with evident repercussions on the different quality of the finished product."

Antolini said Ocrim does not want to abandon its nation's proud industrial history. Antolini opines that the "modern in-



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dustrial revolution” within the global manufacturing system is the decentralization of its manufacturing process to non-core entities. He believes that the risk of decentralization toward countries under high industrial development will “reduce the perfect knowledge of the product, of its manufacture and its development.”

“For this reason Ocrim has undertaken a path that is almost in counter-tendency, reinforcing the Italian concept based on the total internal patrimony of competences and processes, developed

in a complete transparent manner.”

To realize ‘Italian Made,’ Ocrim has chosen suppliers who share its corporate philosophy.

“All the new investments have been addressed toward an internal production of the systems used to create a milling plant, starting with the new technologies for the manufacture of the accessories, to the design and industrial realization of the mechanical and pneumatic conveying lines, to the technology in the realization of the main machines and in the engineering for the civil works and automation.

“In this way the ‘Made in Italy’ has been transformed into ‘Italian Made,’ ” Antolini emphasized. “A subtle difference but a very big difference.”

#### MEETING CUSTOMER DEMANDS

Turning to customer requests, Antolini noted that Ocrim’s customers are demanding equipment that is advanced and efficient in a variety of ways. “Today, customers require plants that are technologically advanced but also take energy consumption and productive managerial control into consideration in the design.”

He noted that when it comes to equipment, customers always require the best of the applied technology to guarantee safety on the job, low maintenance costs and high reliability.

While food safety has grown in importance to the global industry in recent years, Antolini emphasized that it has been a part of Ocrim’s corporate philosophy for a long time. “For some time, Ocrim has had an advanced vision on this important issue. For years we have used plastic materials, paints and steel perfectly compatible for the contact with the organic product in order to protect the product from any contamination.”

Antolini noted that most of Ocrim’s

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recent investments have been concentrated on this specific issue. “Our experimentation on the use of new and different materials is targeted in this direction. Food safety is part of Ocrim’s engagement in social responsibility, and it is considered a topic of high importance.

“Furthermore, we must recall that on this specific topic Ocrim was the precursor of the new era on the use of stainless steel,” he said. “The RMX roller mill was introduced at the beginning of the era of the use of stainless steel. Today, it is used in a large range of machines guaranteeing a perfect hygiene of the worked products.”

#### AFTER MARKET SERVICE

Post-equipment sales service has become a major emphasis for suppliers, and Ocrim is no exception. Ocrim said it offers customers a variety of services after they have purchased equipment.

“The worldwide evolution of the competition has made necessary services always more efficient, as far as quality and timing are concerned,” Antolini noted. “Ocrim has technicians and consultants to solve the after-sale problems, both for the spare parts service and for the assistance on site with skilled technicians.

“The service is guaranteed by a group that operates separately from the general structure, in full autonomy for the various professional positions (plant engineering and process technicians, purchasing, production, export and administration). Ocrim’s goals are to assist its customers, improve the relationship with the customer and infuse the concept of quality and productivity without compromises to make their product highly competitive.”

#### STRONG FINANCIALS

Despite the global recession, Ocrim’s financials have been strong for the last several years. Antolini told *World Grain* that from 2009-11 the company’s revenues increased about 10% per year. “This allowed annual productive internal investments equal to the 5% of the value of the invoiced.”

Antolini explained that at the beginning of 2008, before the global downturn started, Ocrim undertook a big internal review of its financials and company structure. This enabled the company to avoid the worst effects of the downturn. Part of this process was renewing the company’s “DNA” as a provider of milling technology to the global marketplace.

“Meanwhile, the company has reinforced its employee base by investing in the next generation, and not only believing but reinforcing the relational support between old and future generations,” Antolini said. “Such renewal, now in its final phase, has protected us from what was imposed by this recession.”

Ocrim said its economic strength is reflected in its range of products. When asked about the ethanol industry, Antolini said that they are receiving requests to build projects that are being driven by economic development programs.

“Demand for feed mills is increasing, and also these are requested with advanced technologies,” Antolini said. “Ocrim is currently building a big feed mill with high technological and efficiency content in the city of Khamis Mushayt, Saudi Arabia.”

The company was contracted to build this project in 2011.

He went on to note that in the grain storage arena, Ocrim is seeing grain storage becoming fundamental, for each country/customer, due to the big fluctuations of price and availability that cereals are facing in recent years. WG

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