

A success story that began 40 years ago...

Pınar: The Source of Firsts in Turkey



Imagine a time... When it took courage to be optimistic about the present, much less the future... When the economy had collapsed and every new day brought a new worry... When soaring prices, energy shortages, and black marketeering made life unbearable... When even the most basic foods were unavailable in many places and things like meat, milk, cheese, and butter were “luxuries”... When no one could be sure how they’d wake up the next day or make plans... It was a time such as this that Selçuk Yaşar, imbued with an enterprising and idealistic spirit, introduced Turkey to Pınar, a name that would give birth to a brand-new sector, launch a host of new products, and foster economic growth.

The Yaşar Group believed that it was only in such times of crisis that ventures could succeed in spite of all the risks involved. They recognized that the lack of modern agro-industry in a country whose economy was still heavily dependent on agriculture not only created bottlenecks but also led to the consumption of unwholesome foods. For an industrialist in a developing country not to recognize such a need was unacceptable.

The foundations of the Pınar name, which many years later would become identified with its slogan “Yaşam

Pınarım” (Pınar: The source of life), were laid with the establishment of Pınar Süt in 1973. Two years later the company introduced consumers to Turkey’s first long-life UHT milk packaged in aseptic containers. Located in the Pınarbaşı district of İzmir (from which it took its name), Pınar’s original plant took a major step in the creation of a modern dairy industry by accepting tons of milk produced by some 8,000 local dairy farmers. The introduction of wholesome, long-life UHT milk, the first of its kind in Turkey at the time, was followed almost immediately with the addition of yoghurt, cheese, butter, and milk powder to the product line. Today Pınar is Turkey’s biggest milk and dairy products producer, whose procurements of raw milk have expanded far beyond the Aegean into the Marmara, Central Anatolia, and Mediterranean regions and contribute to the livelihoods of Turkish farmers everywhere, while the system which it has created ensures that the same internationally recognized standards of quality apply to all aspects of its production from animal husbandry and milk procurements to the delivery of products to end-users.

Nine years after its introduction of long-life UHT milk packaged in aseptic containers to the market, Pınar authored yet another first with the launch of Turkish Standards Institution-certified



packaged water for the consumer market. At the outset this seemed a hard sell in a country where people were not in the habit of buying and consuming prepackaged water when they could get it for free from taps and public fountains. But burgeoning population, urban sprawl, inadequate infrastructure, and pollution all made access to sources of clean water vitally important. Pınar Süt's sister company Pınar Su commenced production with water harvested from the Şaşal springs in İzmir. In 1996 the company began harvesting water from the Madran springs in Bozdoğan. Today, Pınar Su has expanded its sources to include springs in Sakarya and Isparta. The water which the company harvests is packaged in fully-automated filling plant environments in which a positive interior air pressure is maintained and ambient air is constantly filtered.

The support and encouragement which Pınar Süt gave to dairy farming also led to the growth and development of livestock raising after 1973. The Meat and Fish Authority, a state-owned company, was unable to keep up with demand even in a few big cities much less throughout the whole country. The result was the perpetuation of traditional methods of livestock raising, slaughtering, butchering, and selling, all of which took place under the most unwholesome conditions

making it extremely difficult to supply consumers with safe and hygienic meat and meat products. To address these and similar problems, the Yaşar Group set up Turkey's first privately-owned integrated meat-processing plant as well as its first aquaculture facility. Pınar Et, another sister company, produces processed meat, meat products, and frozen meats and meat products in laboratory-equipped plants that conform to the highest standards. Pınar Et was the first meat processor in Turkey to be awarded both ISO 9001 and ISO 9002 certifications. Today the company has a quality assurance system that incorporates US- and EU-recognized hazard analysis and critical control point (HAACP) elements. Pınar Et remains the leader of its sector, of which it controls a 20.7% market share.

Thanks to Pınar's pioneering efforts, a host of products whose wholesomeness would once have been regarded with suspicion or which would have been either difficult to find or else regarded as luxuries have become wholesome, trusted, easily-affordable products that grace our tables. Having transformed milk, water, meat, and fish and their products into organized industries with its Pınar brand, the Yaşar Group continues to lead the way forward as it creates a brighter and healthier future for all.

