

Old boilers go as Barker's grows

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Barker's of Geraldine has unveiled a new multi-fuel boiler as part of a \$4 million investment to double steam capacity and increase export markets.

The food and beverage company has partnered with Energy For Industry (EFI) to replace two old diesel boilers and give the plant multi-fuel options.

The new operation has a potential 1.2 megawatt output and can run on coal, wood pellets or wood chips.

About 200 staff and guests gathered yesterday for the official opening.

Barker's chief executive Justin Riley said the investment in new plant and infrastructure would accommodate growth for product domestically and offshore.

"We are also pushing forward

with 'best practice manufacturing' and environmentally friendly operations, hence the decision to install the new multi-fuel boiler ... its increased capacity will allow us to grow for many years to come."

EFI designed, built and owns the solid fuel steam boiler and has overall responsibility for its operation and maintenance.

Pioneer Generation trades as EFI in industrial heat supply and chief executive Fraser Jonker said Barker's approached the company to help provide it with an energy solution to match plant expansion and production demands.

The boiler "is flexibly designed to enable fuel-switching options in the future," Mr Jonker said.

Stephen Jones, Pioneer Generation industrial manager, said the

system would supply all steam for cooking, cleaning and bottle sterilisation.

Barker's director Michael Barker said yesterday's ceremony was a celebration of staff and business partners.

"It's great that we've been able to attract an investment on our site; there's not many factories still based on the corner of the family farm."

Barker's, which has about 200 staff, began exporting syrups into Australian supermarkets three months ago with four containers, comprising 20 pallets, with 768 bottles per pallet, shipped to the Coles supermarket chain.

It followed the installation of a more efficient automated line last year.



Eyeing new markets: At the opening of the new steam energy plant at Barker's yesterday are, from left, Timaru deputy mayor Richard Lyon, Barker's chief executive Justin Riley, and Pioneer Generation chief executive Fraser Jonker, and at rear Pioneer Generation chairman Stuart Heal, Barker's chairwoman Sue Suckling and Barker's director Michael Barker.

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