OUR STORY

The dream began in April 1994, when a young Jim Pekar decided he wanted to bet on himself. With five years of experience in the ingredient industry, Jim wanted to put his talents to work and create a flavor company like no other. As a former Iowa Hawkeye defensive tackle, Jim was always known for his tenacity and ability to lead, so he immediately put his strengths to work and began to assemble a specialized team. From the basement of his South Milwaukee, Wisconsin home, the group’s hard work and focus on product integrity paid off as First Choice Ingredients quickly built a name for itself.

By 2002, FCI had outgrown a series of spaces and broke ground on its current Germantown, Wisconsin facility, home to all product development, manufacturing and distribution.

Today, First Choice Ingredients is known as the premier manufacturer of concentrated dairy ingredients derived through fermentation and reaction technologies. Our line of concentrates includes a wide variety of dairy pastes, powders and liquids. Our sole focus on dairy concentrates means you are tapping into expertise and experience that is literally second to none. Day in and day out, dairy is what we do. From our R&D staff’s ability to develop new products to our customer service and distribution teams’ abilities to hit tight deadlines, you will appreciate our focus.

First Choice Ingredients . . . where flavor begins.
**REVVED-UP SERVICE SINCE THE BEGINNING**

Everyone knows FCI for our legendary customer service and whatever-it-takes attitude. The legend was born back in 1995 when a potential client called at the end of the day in dire need of product. The prospect said, “If you can deliver this by tomorrow, we will be a client for life.” Since the last UPS truck had departed hours earlier, President Jim Pekar loaded his Chevy Silverado and was off to Minneapolis, MN, arriving at 5:00 am the next morning.

Saying you’ll do whatever it takes is easy. At First Choice Ingredients, it’s not simply a slogan — it’s exactly how we roll.

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**THE FCI MAGIC**

Our manufacturing process was designed to provide the richness and flavor of butter, cream and cheese in a healthy and economical form. The strong natural flavor components of cheese, butter and cream are concentrated into a paste or spray-dried to form a water-soluble powder. The result is a natural, concentrated form of milk, yogurt, butter, cream and cheese with flavor strength up to 100 times stronger than its original form.

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**TIMELINE**

1994 | Jim Pekar establishes First Choice Ingredients
1996 | FCI moves into Howell Avenue business park in Milwaukee
1997 | R&D leader and eventual partner Roger Mullins joins FCI
1998 | FCI moves into Bender Road manufacturing facility in Glendale
2002 | FCI outgrows Glendale location, moves into new Germantown facility
2005 | FCI expands production space and warehousing
2010 | Second manufacturing building is constructed on site
2013 | Five labs and tasting room are added
2014 | FCI commissions new processing room and six new processing vessels for total of 21

As we continue to grow, stay tuned...

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**“You truly have to experience First Choice to understand our difference.”**  - Jim Pekar

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First Choice Ingredients... Where flavor begins