

The God Father's Field Trip

Submitted by Terry White

As you know, one of our chapter members has worked at Reser's Fine Foods since his high school days, and still puts a few hours in each day of the week. Darrell Vandehey is the Special Project Manager at Reser's Fine Foods.

At our regular 5:30 am Saturday morning gathering, Darrell asked if we wanted to tour the plant and see how they make the potato salad. Because the peak picnic season is upon us, the plant works on Saturday, producing their fine items. Once the summer push is over, they go back to a five-day operation. So the time for a Saturday field trip is quickly coming to a close. After our breakfast gathering at the Washington Square Denny's we all followed Darrell to Jenkins Road in Beaverton, home of Reser's Fine Foods.



L to R: John Bloodworth, Dick Vigal, Bob Morris, Jeff Major, Al Pohlpetter, and Darrell V



Because of the process of manufacturing food products, we all needed to wear a lab coat and hair net. Then the tour began.

For a two-shift operation, 200,000 pounds of potatoes are washed, a quick exposure to a steam bath to assist in the removal of the skins, and then cubed. Once diced, they go through an optical sorter that ejects pieces with dark spots, an amazing piece of equipment. The potatoes are then cooked.

40 degrees all through the operation. The items are placed in a large mixer and processed then placed into another cart heading to the carton fill station. The above photograph shows one of the carts being emptied into a hopper at a dispense station. A multitude of carton sizes are used, mostly clear plastic, although large milk like cartons are also used.

Large picnic tubs are filled, lids and seal band applied, and placed onto a rectangular piece of cardboard. Another cardboard piece is sat on top, and all six tubs are wrapped shrunk tight and moved along where they are placed on pallets for shipping. Most tubs carry the Reser's name, although some private labeling is done for large stores and distributors.

Thank you Darrell, it was indeed a treat. Please join us at God Fathers breakfast. All are welcome.

