

*Going From Good to Great:
Converting From Frozen To Fresh Hand-Cut Fries*



Evolving From Frozen to Fresh Hand-Cut Fries

Turn a highly visible and profitable item like French Fries into a Signature Item

While some might argue that any fry is a good fry, fast casual consumers are increasingly aware of the vast difference in both taste and quality of Fresh Hand-Cut Fries. Increasingly, many of these customers would not touch a frozen fry nor consider them as anything more than starchy dipping sticks for ketchup or some other sauce.

In a blind taste test between brands of frozen fries, 9 out of 10 consumers could not tell the difference between frozen brands by taste. However, 9 out of 10 consumers **can** tell the difference by taste between a frozen and a Fresh Hand-Cut Fry. Those restaurant concepts serious about quality and attracting more business to what is arguably the highest profit margin item on the menu are now looking seriously at how to offer consistent quality Fresh Hand-Cut Fries.

Most modern restaurant concepts deliberately operate in a specific segment, space or category like burgers, chicken, fast casual, casual, etc. and work very hard to differentiate their brand from others. This begs the question—if so much hard work and commitment is spent on differentiation in virtually every area of your operation (menu, decor, back and front of house operations, service style, etc.) shouldn't such a highly visible and profitable item like Fresh Hand-Cut Fries be a signature item as well? More and more concepts are realizing this and making the move to fresh

As most operators know, restaurant operating procedures are difficult to establish let alone change. This is especially true if an operator has been in business for more than 5 years. However, time and again we see that all truly great restaurant concepts push to evolve and reinvent their brands. To remain relevant and “fresh” in such a competitive market, modern concepts typically conduct physical remodels approximately every 7 years and adjust their menus and recipes even more frequently. Those that do not make this critical investment become stagnant and rarely survive to celebrate their 10th anniversary (or make it to their IPO date!).

When it comes to fries, incorrect information (and lots of it) is probably the single largest deterrent keeping operators from evolving from frozen to Great, Fresh Hand-Cut Fries. From the equipment required to specific potato and cooking procedures to utilize, it seems everyone has their opinion. While this can be confusing, it actually works in favor of those concepts committed to taking the time to understand the process and find the optimal procedure that fits their specific concept's operation, thus further differentiating their product from others.

Most operators' initial reaction is that there must be some sort of specialized equipment involved in making the move from good to great fries. While there can be equipment upgrades for those wanting to be unique or "own" their patented process, the fact is that most operators already have what is necessary to evolve from frozen to Fresh, Hand-Cut Fries. In its most basic form, the process involves cutting the potatoes into fries before then washing, storing, blanching, chilling and finally frying them. From here, one can add a few (or many) proprietary steps depending on the type of finished product desired.

Basic Equipment

Although not a complicated procedure, below is a short list of equipment to consider:

- A fry cutter, you will probably need to acquire one
- A sink, preferably 2-3 compartments
- 5 gallon sanitary buckets with lids
- A fryer, high efficiency/quick recovery is best but not necessary
- Bakers rack (wheeled) and sheet pans, volume needed will dictate how many
- Cooler space for bakers rack

Yes, it is really that simple. If one wants to increase the "crunch-time" (i.e. the time the fries hold their crunchiness), then there are a few additional techniques one will also need to learn. Each step in the process is scalable so, to increase output, add an additional fryer and increase the volume of prepped and ready product.

IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS!

For years, inconsistency in fresh potato supplies necessary for making quality, Fresh, Hand-Cut Fries has been the biggest deterrent to those wanting to evolve away from frozen fries. Food concepts fell into a rut of just dropping frozen product into a fryer and serving it up without much thought. Today, there are real solutions to those wanting to stay competitive and make the conversion away from this outdated and, frankly, mediocre method.

So there you have it, the basics for evolving from good to great" and from frozen to Fresh Hand-Cut Fries. As with any great product, you have to start with great ingredients. At Kingston Fresh, we understand the unique science behind sourcing the perfect potatoes with the correct sugars, solids, sizing, and other characteristics inherent in creating perfect Fresh Hand-Cut Fries. We have been perfecting our methods for nearly forty years and understand the optimal process behind a successful Fresh Hand-Cut Fry program. Starting with the farmer and managing throughout the entire supply chain, Kingston Fresh understands the unique techniques required to produce the all natural, non-GMO Kingston Fryer, "America's Ultimate Frying Potato." The result is unmatched in consistency, taste and customer satisfaction.

For more information about the Kingston Fryer, "America's Ultimate Frying Potato", fry cooking techniques or just a conversation about converting from frozen to Fresh Hand-Cut Fries, call us at 1-800-574-1244 or visit us at kingstonfresh.com.