

# Glebe Farm Foods eyes Europe for gluten-free oat expansion



By [Kacey Culliney](#)+ 05-Dec-2014

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**Gluten-free oat specialist Glebe Farm Foods is investing £5-10m (\$8-15m) in a second oat mill to keep up with UK demand and assist expansion into European markets.**

The UK family-owned firm's second gluten-free oat mill will see capacity grow to five times its current production. Set for full completion within a year, Glebe Farm Foods will start operations of the flaking section of the mill within the next two months.

Philip Rayner, co-founder and technical director at the firm, said with two oat mills the company could feed into increased British demand and also commit to European expansion.

*"We see a lot of demand and growth in Britain. Britain tends to lead the EU, probably because we've got a strong supermarket standard regime in place and also a celiac society which is very active...The European market is not as developed in gluten-free as Britain is, but there are various countries with promise – Italy is quite interesting, as well as Germany, Spain and France,"* he told BakeryandSnacks.com. Expansion into Europe would be done via additional distributors, he said. Glebe Farm Foods already worked with one ingredients distributor in Europe – a deal struck last year.

**UK, Europe and beyond** Beyond Europe, Rayner said the company wanted to expand into other global markets. *"There are manufacturers out there. In the Middle East and Asia, for example, there are companies - it's a buoyant market with interest,"* he said.

In Asia, China held plenty of promise for expansion, he said, because of the *"large population and lack of wheat in the food chain"*, as well as a continued desire for high-quality western products.

Working closely with local distributors to enter into these markets would be vital, he said. *"The local knowledge and relationships with manufacturers is very important."*

**Farm to flour** Glebe Farm Foods started out as a family farm back in 1955 and still worked with its family-owned farms as well as other growers for a steady British gluten-free oat supply.

*"Our agricultural background makes all the difference,"* he said, enabling the firm to secure stringent quality controls from farm level through to the end oatmeal or oat flake product.

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