

Howard Bafford's Bio

Howard Bafford was raised on a small dairy farm in Vancouver Washington on land that was homesteaded by his mother's side of the family. Most of his growing up years were spent learning cattle and the related farm activities such as fence building, haying, and machinery repair required to operate a small farm.

Howard attended battle Ground High School playing football and wrestling, and being active in student government as student body president. Howards graduated and went to work at restaurants, then home construction and in a wood pallet factory and continued these activities through college. Howard graduated from Central Washington University in 1974 with a degree in Business Administration and became a CPA in 1977.

Howard began his career journey in 1974 with Lamb Weston as a cost accountant. In 1977 Howard joined Carnation Potato division as part of a turnaround team. The team was successful and the company reached a sustainable profit position in 1981. At this time Howard's duties were expanded to include productivity enhancement through process capability improvement, enhanced information systems, especially at the operator level, and high power work team creation. This promotion, in turn, increased profits at exceptional rates until Nestle acquired Carnation in 1985. In 1986 Howard moved to Los Angeles as director of Manufacturing to assist in the merging of Carnation, Stouffer, Nestle USA, and Nestle Beverage Food Service companies into one operating unit. This was successfully accomplished in 1992. At that time Howard returned to Moses Lake Washington to rebuild the ailing potato division which had developed a profit slump. This was successfully accomplished and in 1996 Howard became the Vice President General Manager of the Potato SBU. The unit increase quality, decreased costs, increased sales volume and profits soared. During this time, Howard was responsible for assisting in the international sales associated with the potato business. This required building knowledge and relationship building via multiple trips to Japan, Chile, the Netherlands, England, Germany, and Switzerland. Subsequently, Howard attended international business training in Lausanne, and Vevey, Switzerland. In 2000, Nestle determined the potato business to be non-strategic and decided to sell it off. Before the sale was completed, Howard left Nestle and joined Simplot as Senior Vice President and General Manager of the potato business unit. Simplot acquired the Nestle Potato Group in 2001. Howard successfully merged the operations of the two companies. In April of 2003, Howard left Simplot to pursue an ownership opportunity with Ochoa Foods. By 2008 sales had increased from \$25,000,000 to \$136,000,000, and profits had increased from a loss of \$4,500,000 to over \$5,000,000. Over this time, prestigious customers such as Wendy's, Burger King, TGI Fridays, SISCO, and Alexia, a retail natural food line, were brought on board by Howard and his team. In the fall of 2008, Ochoa Foods formed a joint venture with ConAgra Foods, which now operate Ochoa Foods under the direction of a four member management committee. Howard remains a part of that committee.

His experience includes sales, marketing, new product introduction, operations, long term planning, business turn around and business financial management. These areas are largely successful due to his ability to assemble and train extremely talented managers and workers, and provide a work environment focused on business goal attainment.