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## **BENTLEY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TOUR FISCHER & WIESER FACILITIES**

*MBA Program brings students to Texas Hill Country for field-based trip to enhance their studies*

FREDERICKSBURG, Texas –From Waltham, Massachusetts, Bentley University’s 30 MBA students made a stop at Fischer & Wieser’s Das Peach Haus® and production facility on March 8, 2017, as part of the week-long trip to the Texas Hill Country. The trip was designed as part of the 11-month program to be a deep dive into the Food Industry Value Chain and to develop a deeper understanding of the complexities, production expansion, market growth, and trends in innovation in the area. The students were asked by the faculty to think about ‘*How do companies scale/grow while maintaining a heritage/culture/“buy local” commitment?*’ Fischer & Wieser was a company chosen as part of this trip because of the wonderful example it has set as a company that started as a family orchard and grew into a thriving retail, manufacturing, and wholesale business, while focusing on family and the community.

The students were welcomed to Das Peach Haus® by Fischer & Wieser CEO, Case D. Fischer, who encouraged them to look around the store and enjoy the product samples along with the Jalapeno Cheese Corn Muffins, Amaretto Peach Pecan Muffins, and 2 Salsa Quesadillas served for breakfast. Josh Rodriguez, Retail Manager, and Priscilla Serna, Assistant Retail Manager, answered product sampling questions from the students.

The tour then moved into Fischer & Wieser’s Culinary Adventure Cooking School where Mark Wieser, Chairman of the Board & Founder, also welcomed the students to Fischer & Wieser and the Texas Hill Country.

“Fredericksburg is the most ideal town in Texas,” Wieser said, while describing the beauty of the town. He went on to explain how what his family started as a peach farm has, with the partnership of Fischer, turned into the company it is today. Fischer then gave examples of how the difference sauces came to fruition and what hurdles the company faced in the early years.

“It become evident to us that people had to try our product,” he said. ‘If we got the customer to try our product, they would buy it.’”

When describing the early marketing efforts of the company, Fischer explained how he and Deanna Fischer, his wife and Chief Experience Officer, would split the festivals around the area with Wieser. Fischer said, “We had to go to where the people were. We could not wait for them to come to us.” When asked by a student about how to stay current with food trends, Fischer said, “We have to go to where the innovation is happening and that starts with chefs in restaurants in New York City, for example.”

The discussion then shifted to the cooking school, along with the vision and purpose it serves for the company. John DeMers, Director of Culinary Hospitality, led this topic.



“My goal as the instructor was to inspire the culinary adventure of the people attending the classes, but what really caught me off guard, was how these people really inspired my own,” DeMers said, describing the different classes offered, Hill Country German Feast, New Orleans Feast, Tuscan Feast, and private classes that are also available to businesses and groups of friends.

Once the tour at Das Peach Haus® was complete, the students traveled to the Fischer & Wieser Production facility and were greeted by COO Jenny Wieser, PhD. She gave a brief history of the building. The students were then divided into two groups. Wieser took the first group through the production facility, while Ashley Seeling, Director of QA & Product Development, escorted the second group to the test kitchen to discuss trending food flavors and how an idea of a product concept comes to life in the test kitchen. The groups switched at that point, so each student had the opportunity to see production and the test kitchen. As the tour ended, each student was given a bottle of The Original Roasted Raspberry Chipotle Sauce®, as a way to say welcome to the Fischer & Wieser family.

While in Central Texas, the students also visited HEB Own Brands, Pioneer Flour Mills in San Antonio, as well as Becker Vineyards.

Fischer & Wieser is a family-owned business located in the heart of the Texas Hill Country. Their best-known product, The Original Roasted Raspberry Chipotle Sauce®, won the Outstanding New Bestseller Award at the Fancy Food Show in 1997. Case Fischer and Mark Wieser started selling jams and jellies in their store, Das Peach Haus®, made from peaches grown in their own orchard behind their store. While the company still sells these jams and jellies in Das Peach Haus® today, Fischer & Wieser now makes over 150 products and distributes throughout the United States, to Mexico and beyond. In addition, the company also manufactures the award-winning line of Mom’s pasta sauces, soups and meal starters, which has also been newly updated and expanded. Look for their brands, Fischer & Wieser and Mom’s, in specialty and grocery stores.