

Avena Foods

Expanding Capacity With a Reliable,
Scalable Grain Handling System



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Avena Foods is a leading specialty miller supplying purity protocol gluten-free oat and pulse ingredients to food, beverage, pet food, and nutraceutical manufacturers. As demand increased, Avena needed to expand its internal cleaning and handling capabilities to maintain product purity, improve efficiency, and support long-term growth.

Avena partnered with Norstar Industries on two major projects: the development of their grain cleaning plant (2018–2019) and a significant oat mill expansion (2022), which included handling equipment, towers, and catwalks across the facility.

THE NEED

As Avena scaled, the company outgrew its reliance on third-party seed cleaners. The geography and external capacity limitations created operational bottlenecks that slowed production and restricted growth.

Avena needed to build an internal cleaning system capable of moving product efficiently from receiving to storage, through the cleaning process, and into outbound load-out. The system required dependable, appropriately sized equipment – not over-engineered for their operation – and a partner who could support them across multiple phases.

“As we grew, we outgrew the cleaning capacity of our seed growers — and the geography just didn’t work anymore. Building our own cleaning plant became essential.”

— James Del Frari, VP of Operations, Avena Foods

THE NORSTAR SOLUTION

Norstar supplied a full grain handling system for Avena’s cleaning plant and later provided conveying equipment, towers, catwalks, and structures for the oat mill expansion. The equipment was designed to match Avena’s operational scale, providing efficiency without unnecessary complexity.

SEVERAL FACTORS MADE NORSTAR THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR BOTH PHASES OF THE PROJECT:

- » **Strong value for quality and confidence in long-term performance**
- » **Right-sized equipment for Avena’s operation**
- » **Consistent equipment across the site for easier maintenance and service**
- » **Reduced complexity by working with one manufacturer for handling, structures, and spare parts**
- » **Faster delivery timelines compared to other manufacturers**

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RESULTS & IMPACT

The new systems have performed with consistency and reliability, reducing maintenance requirements and keeping Avena's operations running smoothly. Avena reports minimal downtime, fast issue resolution when needed, and confidence in the long-term performance of their equipment.

When one conveyor needed attention, Norstar responded immediately – coordinating with Avena's team to diagnose the issue and implement a solution quickly.

THE COMPLETED PROJECTS DELIVERED MEANINGFUL OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS:

- » Eliminated bottlenecks in their cleaning and milling processes
- » Expanded sales potential with greater capacity and efficiency
- » Improved dependability across both plant and mill operations



“The biggest thing is the value — and knowing that if you have an issue, they'll stand behind it.”

THE EXPERIENCE WITH NORSTAR

Throughout both projects, the Norstar team ensured equipment was delivered on schedule, clearly labeled, and ready for installation – reducing time spent sorting components and preventing the shipping issues Avena had experienced with other suppliers.

Avena continues to recommend Norstar because of the value, responsiveness, and trust built through these projects.

By partnering with Norstar, Avena strengthened its operational capacity, eliminated growth barriers, and implemented a reliable handling system built for long-term success. The combination of equipment performance, responsive service, and streamlined support has made Norstar a trusted partner in Avena's continued expansion.