

# H. J. BAKER & BRO.

INCORPORATED

**IMPORTERS - EXPORTERS**

ORGANIC AND CHEMICAL FERTILIZER MATERIALS  
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OILS, FATS AND MEALS

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## PRESS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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### H.J. BAKER & BRO. SIGNS DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

**Continuing its strategic growth, H.J. Baker & Bro., Inc. has hired Richard Valagene to serve in the new position of Director of Operations.**

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WESTPORT, CT (March 27, 2007) – H.J. Baker & Bro., Inc. recently announced that Richard “Ric” Valagene will serve as Director of Operations, a newly created position at the family held company.

The creation of this position and hiring of Mr. Valagene is testimony to the company’s commitment to outstanding service and ongoing pursuit of operational excellence. Throughout his career, Valagene has consistently led organizations in achieving operational excellence.

As Director of Operations, Mr. Valagene will guide the manufacturing operations of H. J. Baker & Bro. Inc.’s Feed, Sulphur, and Tiger-Sul business units. In this role Mr. Valagene will be accountable for operational efficiency, product quality and capital project management. He will also be responsible for meeting government regulations including safety, health and environmental compliance. He will report directly to Christopher Smith, CEO.

Mr. Valagene is the former Director of Operations of NuPetra, LLC and has extensive experience in manufacturing, quality and engineering management. He began his career with Alpo Pet Foods, Inc. in quality control and progressed over the next 28 years to Director of International Operations. Valagene is a long-time proponent of S.Q.A.R.C., which stands for Safety, Quality, Appearance, Reliability and Cost – considered a key benchmark in quality control today.

Prior to NuPetra, Mr. Valagene held several senior management positions with the two largest Pet Food Industry leaders, Alpo and Ralston Purina, in both union and non-union facilities. It was during this time that he honed his skills, which included P&L responsibility, successful plant consolidations, implementing continuous operations, and international manufacturing. Under his leadership service levels improved significantly, lead-times were lowered, quality complaints reduced and new sales increased.

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Mr. Valagene received his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Lock Haven University. He will be based in Missouri and will travel extensively to H. J. Baker's manufacturing facilities.

According to Christopher Smith, “The H.J. Baker name has been synonymous with dependability and service for over 150 years. We are very pleased that Ric will be joining the H. J. Baker family. His expertise and commitment to excellence are exactly the characteristics we were looking for to fill this newly created position. Ric will fit seamlessly into H.J. Baker’s long-standing focus on ensuring our customers get the value and service they’ve come to expect even as he works to integrate new ways to serve them better.”

H.J. Baker & Bro., Inc. serves as the holding company for: H.J. Baker Fertilizer Group, H.J. Baker Sulphur Group and H.J. Baker Feed Products Group.

As an international manufacturer, importer, exporter and sales agent, H.J. Baker & Bro., Inc. mobilizes resources throughout the world. The company's strategically located processing plants, offices and warehouses create a super-efficient pipeline for the vital commodities and products which it sources, manufactures, and markets.

H.J. Baker is highly qualified in materials handling, storage, and transportation. H.J. Baker & Bro., Inc. pays personal attention to every aspect of the operation. Each phase of its organization is operated with maximum efficiency to ensure customer satisfaction.

For more information on H.J. Baker & Bro., Inc. visit their website at [www.bakerbro.com](http://www.bakerbro.com).

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