The ECONOSEAL Pegasus Cartoner provides much more than just a plain vanilla packaging line for Watkins, Incorporated.

Watkins of Winona, Minnesota has been manufacturing and selling high quality flavorings and extracts since 1868. As distribution expanded onto the retail shelves, the bottles containing extract flavors were manually placed into folding cartons as a means to inform consumers about the brand. As volume continued to grow, Watkins needed to investigate a way to automate the cartoning process to reduce both labor costs and response time for large orders.

XPEDX, Watkins’s supply chain partner, got involved to help find the right cartoning solution. Through the guidance of Howard Ormsby, the Xpedx Minneapolis Packaging Equipment Specialist, Watkins was introduced to the ECONOSEAL Pegasus continuous motion cartoner. The Pegasus automatic bottle feeding and cartoning system was ideally suited for both the task at hand as well as the budget. The system can comfortably handle the current production requirement of 50 cartons per minute and there is significant additional machine system capacity to handle further volume growth. The operation of this automated cartoning system integrated nicely with the existing bottle filling, capping, and labeling line. Vanilla extract bottles arrive upright and single file from the bottle labeler onto the Pegasus infeed table top chain conveyor. They then feed into the CSS International Corporation (Philadelphia, PA USA) timing screw, which was integrated onto the Pegasus line by ECONCORP. This operation separates and times the
bottles for horizontal placement into each conveyor bucket. Bottles are then loaded into the cartons via the barrel cam loading device. Loaded cartons are then automatically tuck closed and discharged to a shrink bundling system.

Watkins’s Vice President of Operations, Jim Yenish, states, “The ECONOSEAL Pegasus purchase provided a 50% return on investment in the very first year. Both ECONOCORP and XPEDX have been extremely supportive in helping the automation efforts get started on the right track.”