

# Growermetal: Offering the entire production process in-house

**Growermetal Srl specialises in the production of security, spring and flat washers, as well as pressed parts according to customers' specification.**

**F**ounded in the 1950s by Mr Virginio Cattaneo, Growermetal is a family owned business with Mr Cattaneo's three sons – Roberto Cattaneo, managing director supervision sales and administration, Ernesto Cattaneo, managing director supervision purchase, logistic and environment, and Paolo Cattaneo, managing director supervision technical management, production and quality – all involved in the day-to-day running of the business.

"The name Growermetal is formed from the commercial name of our spring lock washer – Grower – which was the product our father started the company selling," explains Paolo Cattaneo. "He even included the spring lock washer shape in the design of our logo. Since then we have added a wide variety of products as a result of customer demand, which has seen us steadily grow year-on-year."

Growermetal's products can be used in a variety of applications, which has led to it expanding into markets across Europe and the world. "Nowadays our domestic market is Europe, but we have been expanding more and more into the rest of the world," mentions Paolo.

Further proof of this was at the beginning of 2014, when Growermetal opened its own North American sales office, G & G Safety Fasteners LLC, located in the state of New Jersey and managed by Bob Bowden. The goal of G & G Safety Fasteners is to further strengthen the presence in the US, Canadian and Mexican markets. Moreover, in 2015 Growermetal do Mercosul Ltda was established in Curitiba (Brazil) – a new Growermetal owned office and warehouse that can offer a full sales service to the South American markets.

Growermetal divides its production into two main families of products – pressed parts and products made of wire. In 2015, the company produced 3.5 billion pressed pieces – approximately 8,300 tonnes – and 320 million wire pieces – approximately 2,100 tonnes. The product range includes over 1,500 standard washers according to DIN, ANSI, NFE and other international standards. Available products include toothed washers with internal and external teeth, conical washers, contact washers, Sperrkant washers, spring lock washers, spring washers for railway applications, corrugated washers, terminal washers, flat washers, flat ripped washers. All available in steel, carbon steel, stainless steel, bronze, aluminium, copper, brass, Inconel and other alloys upon customers' requests.

A key strength of Growermetal's production is its ability to manufacture special items – with the company producing more than 1,500 products according to customers' drawings or specifications.

"We are experts in the field of specials, thanks to our experience with bespoke washers," says Paolo. "Everyday we receive drawings from customers to see if we are able to produce a washer to the necessary specifications and standards. We have to study the part, check the feasibility and go back as quickly as possible to the customer with an answer. We need to be certain we will be able to offer a reliable service."

A key factor in Growermetal's ability to deliver a reliable, quick and flexible service is that it can offer the entire production process in-house. This includes tooling design and manufacturing, blanking and coining, rolling of metal wire, cleaning and surface finishing, heat treatment, mechanical zinc plating, sorting, packaging and storage, and quality control.

"Having the entire production process in-house means we can also control and guarantee the quality of the products at every stage," states Paolo.

The production process begins in the tool shop with the design of tooling. The tool shop is equipped with the most advanced machinery and latest technology such as CNC drilling milling machines, EDM machines, grinding machine and CNC lathes.

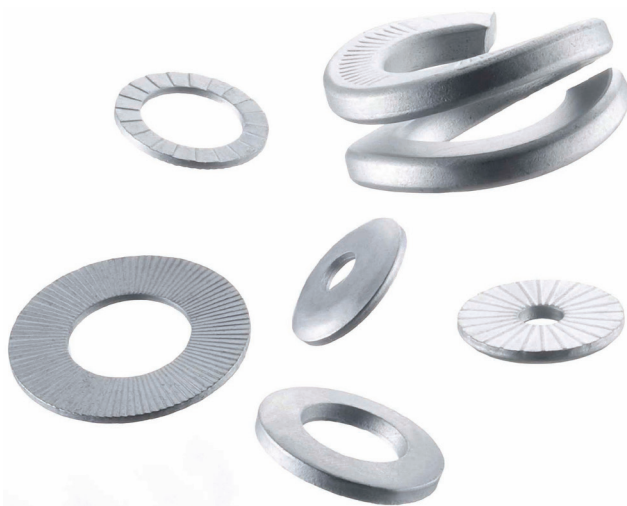
"Thanks to our tooling department expertise we are able to maximise the precision and productivity of the tooling, with all the tools made on-site and the property of Growermetal," explains Paolo. "That gives us maximum flexibility when we need to work with customers on special products."

An important stage of the internal process is that Growermetal can also offer in-house surface treatments. In fact, the mechanical zinc plating process is qualified by MacDermid® and Growermetal has been an accredited licensed plater for ZinKlad 250 M treatment since 2009, for own products as well as for third parties.

In spring 2016 the plating department was enhanced by the installation of a fully automatic zinc flake coatings line, which was specifically designed and built in order to carry out surface coatings on washers and to achieve the best results both from an aesthetical point of view and in performance. The company uses exclusively original Dörken products, which ensure high-quality and high performance coatings and will be able to provide a choice of different solutions of base coats such as DELTA-PROTEKT® and DELTA-TONE®, as well as a range of top coats including the DELTA-PROTEKT® VH range.

Thanks to this investment, Growermetal is able to offer the proper products with in-house zinc flake coatings to guarantee its customers maximum flexibility and speed of accomplishment. +

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