



Hawkins (HWKN)

Updated May 19th, 2024 by Prakash Kolli

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$85	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	0.9%	Market Cap:	\$1.78B
Fair Value Price:	\$58	5 Year Growth Estimate:	8.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	05/31/24
% Fair Value:	147%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	-7.4%	Dividend Payment Date:	06/14/24
Dividend Yield:	0.8%	5 Year Price Target	\$85	Years Of Dividend Growth:	19
Dividend Risk Score:	A	Retirement Suitability Score:	C	Rating:	Sell

Overview & Current Events

Hawkins is a diversified chemical company founded in 1938 and went public in 1972. It specializes in manufacturing and selling value-added and bulk ingredients, chemicals, and services to industrial, manufacturer, and municipal customers. The company operates in three segments: Industrial (~44% of revenue), Water Treatment (~40% of revenue), and Health and Nutrition (~16% of revenue). Almost all revenue is from the United States with 59 facilities in 26 states. Key brands are Stevia, Hereditium, Fermentalg, Lipfoods, Epax, Aquamin, Covico, Panmol, pomma, nippi, and the Enzymology Research Center. The CEO is Patrick Hawkins, a member of the founding family. He owns about 1.5% of the company. Total revenue was \$919.2M in fiscal year 2024.

Hawkins reported Q4 FY 2024 and full-year results on May 15th, 2024. Companywide revenue decreased 2% to \$223.0M from \$228.1M, while diluted earnings per share rose 20% to \$0.66 from \$0.55 on a year-over-year basis. The top line fell because of weakness in the Industrial and Health and Nutrition segments, despite growth in the Water Treatment segment. Industrial segment revenue fell 18% to \$97.1M from \$117.7M in comparable periods because of the sale of the consumer bleach packaging business, lower prices, and lower volumes. Water Treatment segment revenue rose 21% to \$86.7M from \$71.4M on higher sales and prices, and acquisitions. Health and Nutrition segment revenue was flat at \$39.3M from \$39.1M in the prior year.

In FY 2024, the company acquired Water Solutions Unlimited, Miami Products & Chemical Company, EcoTech, and Industrial Research Corporation adding to its water treatment business.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year ¹	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2030
EPS	\$0.91	\$0.86	\$1.06	(\$0.43)	\$1.14	\$1.33	\$1.93	\$2.44	\$2.86	\$3.59	\$3.88	\$5.70
DPS	\$0.39	\$0.41	\$0.43	\$0.45	\$0.46	\$0.47	\$0.51	\$0.56	\$0.60	\$0.62	\$0.64	\$0.82
Shares²	21.0	21.2	21.3	21.2	21.0	21.0	20.9	21.1	21.0	20.9	20.9	20.6

Hawkins' revenue has trended up in the past decade driven by organic growth and many acquisitions. The company typically acquires one to two smaller firms per year incrementally adding to revenue and earnings per share. Since 2011, Hawkins has acquired 15 companies with 12 of those in water treatment. The strategy has proven successful over time, and operating income has grown for 23 consecutive quarters. The company likely has many more years of growth ahead of it. Bulk and value-added chemicals, ingredients, and services continue to grow. In addition, many small chemical companies exist throughout the United States as acquisition targets, especially in municipal water treatment. We are expecting revenue and earnings per share to grow at ~8% annually on average, less than the past decade, because of inflationary headwinds causing rising input costs.

Hawkins has a 39-year history of paying a dividend and a 19-year streak of increasing it. The payout ratio is conservative at approximately 17%, leaving much room for future increases. It also provides confidence about the dividend safety in a cyclical industry. We anticipate a ~5% growth rate per year, near the average for the past decade.

¹ All data is in fiscal year, which ends at the end of March or early April depending on the year.

² Share count in millions.

Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.



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Valuation Analysis

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Now	2030
Avg. P/E	20.7	22.1	21.2	26.6	16.8	15.4	12.9	15.1	17.3	17.9	22.0	15.0
Avg. Yld.	2.0%	2.1%	1.9%	2.2%	1.8%	2.2%	1.9%	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	0.8%	1.7%

Hawkins' stock price is up considerably since our last report on future optimism. We set our fiscal year 2025 earnings estimate accounting for the firm's recent growth and acquisitions. Our fair value multiple is 15X, slightly below the 5-year average. Our fair value estimate is now \$58. Our 5-year price target is now \$85.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2030
Payout	43%	48%	41%	--	40%	35%	26%	23%	21%	17%	17%	14%

Hawkins' competitive advantage is its strong supplier and customer relationships. Additionally, the firm emphasizes its people and culture. The average tenure is 7 years, and the median salary is ~\$87k, seemingly on the higher end for a chemical company. Long tenure ensures Hawkins' customers and suppliers deal with the same employee over time.

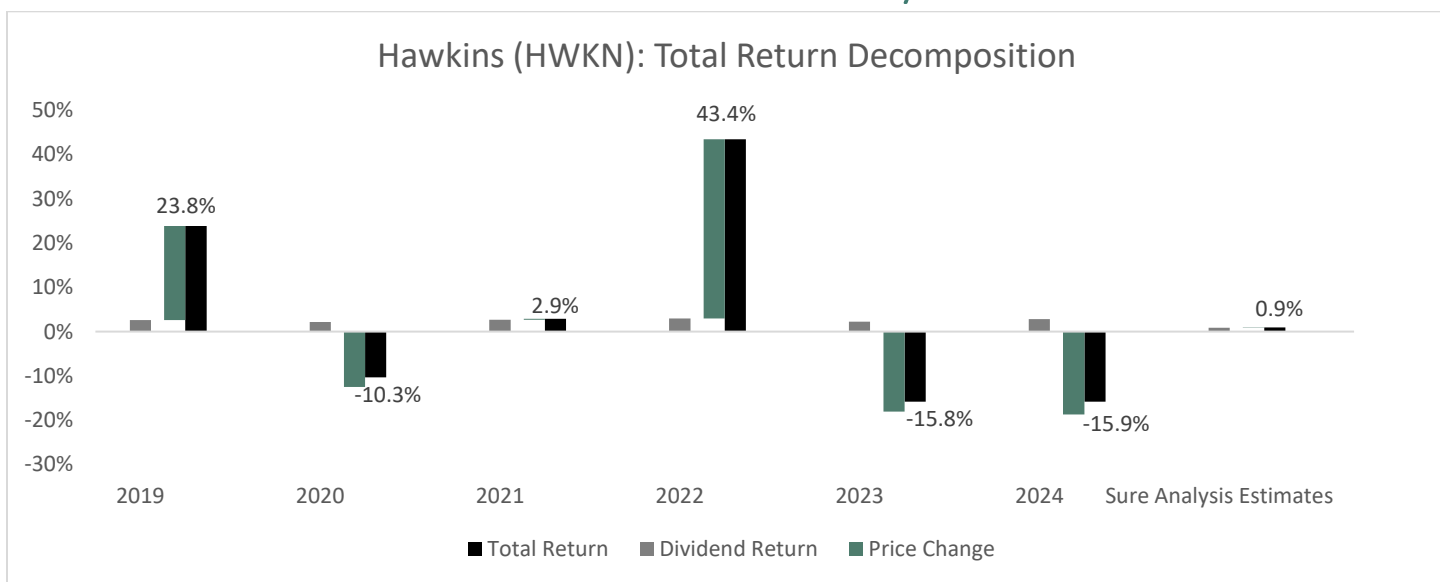
The chemical industry is not recession resistant. Hawkins Industrial and Health and Nutrition segments face challenges during recessions. The Water Treatment segment revenue and profits are less cyclical. The company's earnings have declined in the past before recovering.

The company makes conservative use of debt with only \$9.9M in current long-term debt, and \$88.8M of long-term debt that is offset by \$7.2M of cash and equivalents. Interest coverage is about 24.3X, and the leverage ratio is about 0.74X.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

At present we are forecasting 0.9% annualized total return over the next five years from a dividend yield of 0.8%, 8% EPS growth, and (-7.4%) P/E multiple contraction. Hawkins focuses on growth by investing in the businesses and tuck-in acquisitions. It is also returning cash to shareholders through consistent dividends. However, future gains seem priced into the share price. As a result, we changed our rating for this equity to sell.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	348	364	414	484	504	556	540	597	775	935
Gross Profit	62	66	80	98	87	96	101	124	147	165
Gross Margin	17.7%	18.1%	19.4%	20.3%	17.2%	17.2%	18.7%	20.7%	18.9%	17.6%
SG&A Exp.	34	35	49	59	59	59	59	68	75	77
D&A Exp.	13	13	16	21	22	22	22	23	24	27
Operating Profit	28	30	31	39	27	37	42	56	71	88
Operating Margin	8.1%	8.4%	7.5%	8.0%	5.4%	6.6%	7.7%	9.4%	9.2%	9.4%
Net Profit	18	19	18	23	(9)	24	28	41	52	60
Net Margin	5.2%	5.3%	4.4%	4.7%	-1.8%	4.4%	5.3%	6.9%	6.7%	6.4%
Free Cash Flow	22	6	12	23	8	35	34	23	14	29
Income Tax	10	11	12	13	(6)	9	11	15	18	23

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Assets	237	248	436	419	391	386	389	473	567	591
Cash & Equivalents	33	19	20	7	5	9	4	3	3	8
Accounts Receivable	38	40	59	57	64	64	67	91	123	129
Total Liabilities	26	37	48	51	60	60	54	64	95	241
Accounts Payable	16	23	181	174	130	124	119	147	158	54
Long-Term Debt	55	54	236	201	189	168	156	207	265	112
Shareholder's Equity	18	20	30	30	33	29	34	37	67	350
LTD/E Ratio	-	-	129	103	101	85	60	99	126	0.32

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Return on Assets	7.9%	7.9%	5.3%	5.3%	-2.3%	6.3%	7.3%	9.5%	9.9%	10.4%
Return on Equity	10.3%	10.2%	9.2%	10.8%	-4.4%	11.6%	12.6%	16.4%	18.2%	18.4%
ROIC	10.3%	10.2%	6.9%	6.9%	-2.9%	8.1%	9.5%	12.5%	13.0%	13.5%
Shares Out.	21.1	21.0	21.2	21.3	21.2	21.0	21.0	20.9	20.8	21.0
Revenue/Share	16.43	17.12	19.57	22.82	23.68	25.93	25.35	28.07	36.65	44.50
FCF/Share	1.05	0.29	0.57	1.10	0.36	1.65	1.61	1.08	0.68	1.38

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

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