

Advanced automation brings fresher benefits

Ishida Europe has designed and installed a complete packing line enabling just three to four operators to produce prepared salads at up to 40 trays a minute, while automating inspection and making every pack traceable to a stored x-ray image.

Gastro Star produces 30 tonnes of fresh products every day ranging from vegetables and salads to fruit, including salad mixes under the Betty Bossi and Weight Watchers brands. The company was an early adopter of automation in salad packing and the new line is part of a wider series of measures it has taken to increase capacity and efficiency to meet product demand.

The new line was designed by Ishida's Solutions division and includes tray denesting, multihead weighing, tray sealing, labelling, seal testing, a vision system, x-ray inspection, checkweighing and packing into crates. The 30-40 packs a minute achieved is double that of the former fastest line at the company with product giveaway at 1-2% by comparison with 10%



Ishida Europe has designed and installed a complete packing line enabling three to four operators to produce prepared salads

previously. Currently working on 200g and 250g packs no more than two shifts a day, Gastro Star calculates that the line will pay for itself within five years.

In operation, crates of prepared leaves which have been cut to size and washed run via an elevator above the multihead weigher where the salad is tipped into an infeed system. The tray sealer at the heart of the line is an Ishida QX-1100 and handles four trays

at a time, flushing them with an atmosphere of oxygen, nitrogen and carbon dioxide.

At the end of the line, the IPS (Ishida packing system) pick-and-place system not only automates what used to be the most labour intensive part of the line, but does it at high speed with greater flexibility by picking individual packs rather than pre-determined layers.

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Pallet ring wrapper for frozen veg

Frozen vegetable processor PinguinLutosa has installed end of line equipment from Gordian Strapping to maintain high speed and high volume processing while also meeting its quality strategy.

As part of an upgrading exercise at the Kings Lynn plant, a direct replacement for an old rotating arm stretch wrapper was required to integrate into an existing conveyor system. A Sirio ring wrapper was selected as being compatible with the

existing conveyor and safety systems as well as overcoming the costly issue of loose film tails and the subsequent potential rejection by the automated warehousing systems.

Timings were crucial, as the removal of the old, existing equipment and the installation and commissioning of the new system had to be completed over a weekend to ensure minimum disruption to production.

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A Sirio ring wrapper from Gordian

Baked bread transferred

Astec has designed and built a bespoke stainless steel conveyor system for Honeytop Speciality Foods to transfer naan breads from the oven discharge to the spiral cooler.

A wire mesh belt has been used as the transport medium as the open weave minimises product marking and allows for good airflow while also maintaining hygiene standards.

In operation, a 1600mm wide mobile '8 finger' transfer conveyor accepts product from the oven discharge and transfers it onto a narrower conveyor – 965mm - running at 90 degrees. The design of the transfer conveyor spreads the product evenly across the discharge conveyor to minimise any product build up.

It is also mobile. This allows easy access to the oven as required for maintenance and cleaning purposes.

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Rent to buy

Meech International's 'Rent to Buy' scheme is becoming increasingly popular among companies that require solid evidence that the proposed equipment will provide the solution they require across all of the materials the system is likely to be used with. One of the latest manufacturers to benefit is Neschen Coatings which purchased a double sided Tornado F5 contact web cleaning system after a three month trial at its Basildon plant.

Testing was carried out on live jobs and the company agreed to buy the equipment "with no hesitation." And as the company had already paid rental, the final purchase price was reduced.

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Kenco coffee labels highlight eco refills

Kraft Foods has installed two PAGOMat 6/2A 170 labelling units to apply media labels to the caps of its Kenco coffee jars at over 300 a minute at its Banbury site.

The machine was purchased with vertical and horizontal adjustment and mounting assembly while a media sensor is fitted for each labelling head to permit this type of label to be applied. The height is adjustable to suit various containers and a brush kit provides wipe down to smooth the label on the container.

These 40mm diameter labels were used to provide

customers with the opportunity to purchase a Kenco Eco Refill pack. The labels are three pages and offset printed in five colours to allow six sides of information on the new pack format.

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The Kenco promotional label has been very successful for Kraft

FFS for marg

Unilever has installed a second StickPack form, fill and seal machine from Oyster Hassia at its African manufacturing plant in Ghana.

The vertical, intermittently working SVL 20/30 produces 36,000 StickPacks of margarine an hour with a fill capacity of 20g. The machine features a 10-lane design and finishes the StickPacks with a three-sided seal and tear off edge. Packs are 34mm wide and about 150mm long and can be manufactured as both individual packs as well as in chain form.

An SLR-S 10/34 CIP type rotary valve dosing device with an intermittent servo pendulum drive was installed to ensure accurate dosing. The company says this dosing device guarantees meticulous filling accuracy.



Unilever uses StickPacks in Africa

A filling tube device with a servo drive ensures accurate adjustment of the space between the filling nozzle and the product filling level during operation to ensure optimum product distribution is achieved in the StickPack.

T: 00 49 6041 810
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For more information, please contact:

Kawasaki Robotics UK Ltd. Easter Court, Europa Boulevard, Warrington WA5 7ZB

Tel: 01925 713000 Fax: 01925 713001 Email: sales@kawasakirobotuk.com Website: www.kawasakirobot.co.uk

Robotics guarantee hygienic handling

Robotic technology has been combined with Tekpak's expertise in flow wrapping and automatic product distribution in an installation that required the ultimate in hygiene standards.

Tekpak's latest version fully servo controlled flow wrapper complete with its newly developed 4-axis robotic feeding unit feeds products directly from the production process to the flow wrapper infeed without the need for human intervention. This met the needs of the multi national pharmaceutical and baby



Infant nutrition scoops are flow wrapped within seconds of being made to reduce risk of contamination to a minimum

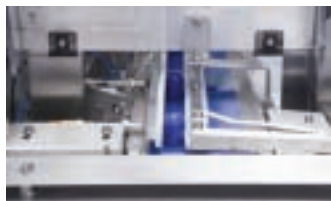
scoops included in the packs of milk powder are flow wrapped by Tekpak's system. They are robotically transferred from the injection moulding machine to the flow wrapper within seconds of being produced to ensure the highest standards of hygiene and efficiency.

The complete system is controlled by an integrated logic and motion controller which controls the operation of the eight servo motors (four in the flow wrapper and four into the robot feeding system). The control philosophy is based on the latest Sercos III high speed

networking standard and there is an intuitive colour touch screen to report any errors.

"The robotic feeding unit has been developed as a standard module which can be easily and quickly adapted for use in feeding a wide variety of products to either our own flow wrappers or to existing machines," explains John Kehoe, managing director of Tekpak. "The unit can also feed products in the bakery, confectionery, cakes and biscuits sectors too."

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Hygiene standards are crucial

nutrition company that wanted to ensure that all components of its infant nutritional foods are produced in the most hygienic and efficient way possible.

In operation, measuring

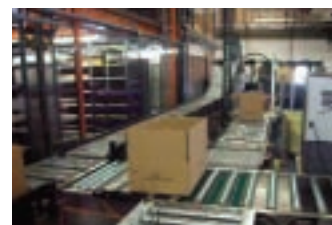
Learning logistics at speed

Educational publisher and distribution services provider Cengage Learning has made its facility more efficient by installing a LogisticsPRO warehouse management system to operate with a new belt/roller conveyor system from UPM Conveyors.

UPM was responsible for the total turn key project at Cengage's distribution facility in Andover which supports clients in education, academic reference and legal businesses around the world. In operation,

LogisticsPRO downloads order data to the UPM PC and this information is then transferred to the UPM PLC barcode readers. This diverts boxes to the appropriate picking, packing and shipping areas while keeping the status of each order continuously updated.

Distribution director at Cengage Learning Carrie Willicome says immediate improvements in speed and efficiency has been achieved by this installation. She was also impressed by the on site



The belt/roller conveyor system from UPM Conveyors is making educational publisher efficient

engineers who performed the installation with very minimal disruption to the business.

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Ingredients for success

Maximum accuracy is the key to success for the weighing machinery installed at Delica as it handles top quality ingredients from around the world at its plant in Birsfelden, Switzerland.

Ease of use and reliability are as important as accuracy and the latest system from Multipond meets all these requirements, even for sticky and difficult products such as dried plums and apricots.

A second system – an MP 1601-FFC-S5 – was purchased recently to weigh product mixtures with up to eight different components but with the same mixing ration every time. An existing memory weigher was integrated into the new mixing concept to achieve this standard.

Roger Gadiet from the engineering department at Delica was delighted with the Multipond solution of combining the two multihead weighing systems with a rotary product transfer system.

A particular challenge of the project was the low ceiling height which meant both weighers, together with the rotary transfer system, were supported on a platform suspended from the ceiling. Product feed is from the floor above via Multipond BE 2000 vibratory conveyors.

A twin memory hopper system allows for the large number of possible product combinations to be achieved and is ultimately the basis for maximum accuracy and speed.

Altogether, about sixty different subcomponents from dried fruit to many types of nuts will be weighed by this system at up to 50 weighings a minute and in packs that range between 200g and 500g.

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IN BRIEF

Latest orders for **Cermex** include two BC54 tray packers/lid fitters for loading pouches of dishwasher detergent into trays; one WB45 wrap around case packer for handling capped doypacks of fruit purée, individually or in cartons of four and a SD69 robot case packer for loading shower gel refills. The company has developed a range of solutions for pouches used in the food, home and personal care industries.

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Tanfield Foods has ordered a second mixing solution from **Advanced Engineering** to cope with increased demand for its soups and sauces. Both mixers have been supplied with two rotor/stator mixing head combinations to allow for different textures to be created such as smooth sauces and chunky pea and ham soup. Mixers are mounted on stainless steel trolleys, each with an integral control panel, to allow them to be moved between different cooking kettles and the mixer operation.

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Double skin steel partitioning supplied by **Troax UK** has been used to create a fire-rated enclosure to house a new printing press at the Cwmbrian facility of film pressure-sensitive labelling supplier Spear Europe. This fire-retardant enclosure segregates the press and the potentially explosive chemicals used in the printing process from the rest of the factory, ensuring safe working conditions for employees.

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Blooming lovely tea

Two B100FF overwrappers have been supplied to one of South Africa's largest food and beverage producers by Marden Edwards (ME) to add the final gloss to the relaunch of its Five Roses Tea brand.

Entyce 'National Brands' is a division of AVI and produces a wide range of beverage products including the Five Roses brand. This purchase adds to a range of ME equipment acquired following a visit to the interpack exhibition two years ago.

The medium speed B100FF machines feature PLC control and have the ability to handle a wide variety of pack sizes. The combined output of the two wrappers enables 70 packs a minute to be produced, 35 from each machine; a pre-printed branded tear tape is also applied.

The company worked with local ME trade partner Packmatic, based in Johannesburg, on the specifications required. "Purchasing two of the

wrappers gives us flexibility for peaks and troughs in production," explains Jeremiah Makhomu, operations executive, Entyce Beverages. "And as the machines can operate at between 30 and 50 packs a minute, this will enable us to expand production capacity in future."

The machines are currently used to overwrap hinge lid cartons of tea with dimensions of 145 x 139 x 75mm with a tuck and fold end seal. ME added a side load film spindle and splice deck for easy film reel change, plus a quick splice facility between the finished film reel and the next one to be loaded onto the machine.

Another feature of the B100FF is the ease of operation and integration into existing lines. "The wrapper was simply plugged into the line, powered up and began production immediately," says ME sales manager Tony Strutt.

"Maintenance and cleaning is simple and straightforward to undertake, which is very



The B100FF overwrappers add the final gloss to South African tea brand Five Roses

important when working in a dusty environment such as tea production," added Makhomu.

Product transport conveyors were engineered during the overwrapper installation to link the cartoning machine to the two overwrappers.

To date, the overwrappers have given trouble free operation to the company and ME anticipate a further order from Entyce for a similar machine later this year.

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Cuts make fixed weight savings

Cheesemaker Cricketer Farm has installed Alpma's first fully upgradable CUT 25 Simple machine to cut fixed weight portions at its Somerset plant. This simplified version of the original CUT 25 is said to make this cut-calculating technology affordable, even to smaller specialist producers.

Cricketer Farm produces a variety of cheese ranging from traditional farmhouse cheddar to low fat versions, much of which is moving to fixed-weight portions. The company wanted to achieve low product giveaway while maximising its product yields.

Like the CUT 25, the CUT 25

Simple produces portions of 100g to 1kg at speeds of up to 100 portions a minute. Each bar and portion is weighed individually and intelligent feedback automatically retunes the cutter which achieves stringent weight tolerances.

The modular nature of this machine makes it fully upgradable and this flexibility helps to future-proof customers against changing product



Cricketer Farm wanted to maximise yields for its cheese products

requirements, whether that is for fixed or random weight cheese portions.

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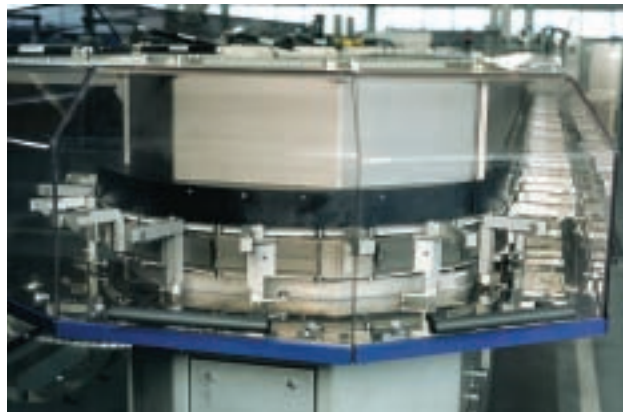
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Installation news

Pouches stand tall

Bossar Packaging has sold its largest horizontal form, fill and seal packaging machine, capable of forming and filling bags of up to 15 litres, to an fmcg company.

The GMB-46 will be producing stand-up pouches for 9 kilos of product which is claimed to be the largest volume pouch of its kind today. Key to the unit is the patented carousel system which allows such heavy bags to be controlled during the filling and closing process. It controls the pouch in the filling area, from the opening to closing, with no transfers between each of the stations.



The patented carousel system handles very heavy bags

Motorized adjustments of the vertical seal, bottom seal, film transport and cutting system allows for quick changes between sizes while the parallel

movement of the vertical seal ensures uniform pressure throughout the sealing process.

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Cracking cost savings with biscuit denesters

Jacob's Biscuits has installed tray denesters from Turbo Systems on three of its savoury biscuit lines. These pneumatic air jet type denesters were chosen for reliability of denesting and speed of size change.

The denesters have been set up to supply three sizes of trays at speeds of between 34 and 40 trays a minute. The speeds for each tray size – 200g, 300g and 500g - are pre-set and selected by rotary switch to allow precise control. In operation, trays are denested onto a plain belt conveyor and are then



Three tray denesters have been installed at Jacob's

loaded manually by operators. If there is a line stop downstream, the denester has a queue sensor on the outfeed which will automatically stop and start the denester.

For changing sizes, the 200 and 300g trays can be substituted for each other without any changes as they have the same length and width dimensions. Although these trays have different internal cavity layouts and depth, the air jet system can accommodate this without change as there are no suckers or parts needed to pick the tray.

Changeover to the 500g takes about two minutes.

The units can also be interchanged between each three of the lines.

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Twin head combination meets pie needs

Freshpack has installed a twin-headed combination metal detection system to cope with different pack formats for its pies.

The metal detection system with ferrous-in-foil inspection facility and checkweigher is from Fortress Technology.

The Phantom in-foil metal

detector can differentiate between metal contaminants and ferrous metals in foil.

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