

X-RAY FLEXIBILITY EXTENDS TO SMALL PACKS

Case Study
Hügli

Facts and figures

- » The two Ishida IX-GA-4075 x-ray models have been specially adapted in order to handle small size packs of around 10-15g of dried products.
- » The IX-GA-4075 features Ishida's unique Genetic Algorithm (GA) technology, which uses image data analysis over a number of inspections to achieve an extremely high level of inspection accuracy.
- » The machine can provide detailed reports of its operations, and the ability to store information for every pack that has gone through the x-ray machines provides vital traceability data.

The flexibility and versatility of Ishida x-ray inspection technology has provided the ideal solution for the quality control requirements of international food company Hügli's factory in Zàsmuky in the Czech Republic. In particular, the two Ishida IX-GA-4075 x-ray models have been specially adapted in order to handle small size packs of around 10-15g of dried products including soups, sauces, seasonings and rice meals.

Challenge

Hügli found that their light weight bags would not pass consistently through the curtains which meant it was not possible to reliably inspect or guarantee correct rejection of contaminated products.

Solution

The Ishida solution comprises an innovative design utilising lightweight metal fingers in place of traditional heavy curtains. This ensures that the packs stay flat and do not move on the conveyor as they enter and exit the x-ray machine.

For Hügli the use of x-ray technology has made a huge difference to its overall production capacity. As part of the company's quality control procedures for a leading retailer, Hügli has to carry out an hourly test to confirm its contaminant detection procedures. Since the bags are made of aluminium foil, metal detectors can only be used before the products are packed, requiring the installation of three separate throat metal detectors after each multihead weigher. This meant production had to be suspended while the contaminant tests were carried out – and the time this took resulted in a significant amount of lost production over a relatively short period.





“ X-ray technology has made a huge difference to our quality control procedures as we needed a very flexible system in order to be able to deal efficiently with our many different product varieties and pack sizes. ”

By comparison, checks on the Ishida x-ray can be carried out without disrupting production. In addition, the machine can provide detailed reports of its operations, and the ability to store information for every pack that has gone through the x-ray machines provides vital traceability data, particularly important in the event of a retailer query or a customer complaint.

The IX-GA-4075 features Ishida's unique Genetic Algorithm (GA) technology, which uses image data analysis over a number of inspections to achieve an extremely high level of inspection accuracy. With the Zášmuky factory handling around 1,000 different product lines, the machines' user-friendly colour touchscreen, which enables specifications for each product to be held in the memory and called up at the touch of a button for fast and simple changeovers, is another major benefit.

“X-ray technology has made a huge difference to our quality control procedures as we needed a very flexible system in order to be able to deal efficiently with our many different product varieties and pack sizes,” explains Hügli's production director Pavel Coufal.

“The Ishida IX-GA machines have proved to be the ideal solution and we have been delighted with the efficiency and reliability of their performance.”

Another advantage is the local support provided by Ishida's dedicated office in the Czech Republic. “We know we can rely on a very fast response in the event of a problem as well as the speedy delivery of any spare parts,” explains Mr Coufal.

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Such has been the success of the two models already installed that Hügli has now ordered a third Ishida IX-GA machine, which will be used to monitor pots of rice.

The x-ray systems are part of a wide range of Ishida equipment installed at the Zášmuky factory, which also includes six multihead weighers and 16 checkweighers in a relationship that dates back to 2004.

“Ishida technology has the performance and reliability we require and this has made the company an ideal partner to support the continuing growth and expansion of our factory,” concludes Pavel Coufal.

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