

Sticky chicken can't resist Ishida's Screw Feeder Weigher

An Ishida Screw Feeder multihead weigher has been in use at Germany's top barbecue-ready chicken producer since March 2009. In this highly competitive market, the new multihead has improved both speed and accuracy in the packing of sticky marinated chicken pieces.

If ever a product needed automation...

Pre-marinated chicken for the huge German barbecue market is clearly a prime candidate for all the hygiene benefits of state-of-the-art automation.

Sold at the warmest times of year, in a country which often has hot summers, the product is however so sticky that it has long resisted attempts to pack it efficiently at high speed. Now all that has changed.

The demands of retailers

Stolle GmbH & Co. KG of Visbek, in Lower Saxony is Germany's leading producer of grill ready chicken. The company processes fresh and frozen chicken into a range of products, including marinated schnitzels and breast fillets.

With individually weighed, priced and labelled packs, giveaway is not an issue: the consumer pays for what the consumer gets. In today's high-volume barbecue market, however, large retailers specify pack weights, such as 500g, and source them from a number of competing suppliers. To remain competitive, suppliers like Stolle need to carefully control giveaway, making weighing accuracy a major issue.

This led Stolle to seek something more accurate than the semi-automated linear weighing system they had been using. The other major consideration was speed.

20 weighments per minute was simply not enough to meet demand, particularly for a seasonal product.

The Screw Feeder weigher

In 2009, Stolle purchased a new Ishida multi-head weigher designed to handle movement-resistant products. Part of Ishida's recently launched R-Series, this 14-head model was equipped with screw feeders rather than the more conventional vibrating feeders.

Ishida began developing this method of handling chicken as far back as 1992. Its most recent models use a single coreless screw made of stainless steel for each weighing head.

Fast but gentle

Product falls from the dispersion table at the top of the weigher onto the screws. These rotate gently, driving the product out towards the weigh hoppers in a controlled manner. The rounded cross section of the screws and the flexibility of their spiral structure ensure that the chicken is not crushed or damaged.

Additional aids to keeping the product moving are seen in the new weigher's hoppers. Made of sturdy, non-stick plastic, these are fitted with scraper doors to prevent product build-up. Stolle's marinated chicken line has speeded up to 35 weighments per minute thanks to the new Ishida, a rate one would previously have expected from a relatively free-flowing product.

Stolle's Marketing Manager, Albert Focke, with some of the products.



Accuracy adds a competitive edge

Accuracy too has markedly improved, with giveaway cut by half to between 0.5 and 1.5%, helping Stolle to maintain their leadership.

Hygiene considerations

As Norbert Toben, Technical Director at Stolle points out, "Poultry processing is subject to especially stringent hygiene regulations." The Ishida multihead, with its lift-off, drop-on contact parts and its watertight body, perfect for hosing down, enables excellent hygiene, but not at the cost of large amounts of downtime.

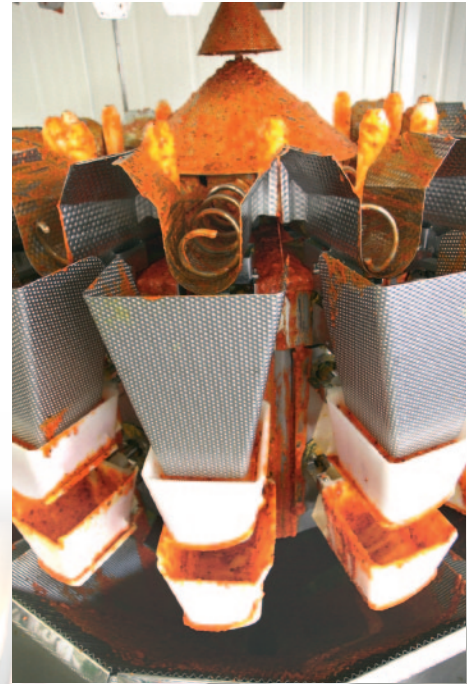
Full changeover cleaning, only required when there is a change in the marinade being used, takes under thirty minutes. "Because we work with marinated products," explains Norbert Toben, "the layout of the weigher is a particular advantage."

Greater efficiency

So has improved automation brought the desired results? "We are now significantly more efficient," maintains Stolle Marketing Manager Albert Focke. "As far as weighing is concerned, Stolle has been relying on Ishida solutions for a long time – and very satisfactorily so."

Perhaps the strongest testimony to the new weigher is the fact that Stolle bought it knowing that it would have to function at full capacity for only eight months of the year.

Despite this, it has paid for itself in less than one and a half years.



Ishida Europe Limited

11 Kettles Wood Drive
Woodgate Business Park
Birmingham
B32 3DB
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)121 607 7700
Fax: +44 (0)121 607 7666
info@ishidaeurope.com

Ishida Czech Republic

Tel: +420 317 844 059
Fax: +420 317 844 052
info@ishidaeurope.cz

Ishida Romania

Tel: +40 (0)21 589 73 52
Fax: +40 (0)21 310 34 22
info@ishidaeurope.ro

Ishida France

Tel: +33 (0)1 48 63 83 83
Fax: +33 (0)1 48 63 24 29
info@ishidaeurope.fr

Ishida Russia and CIS

Tel: +7 499 272 05 36
Fax: +7 499 272 05 37
info@ishidaeurope.ru

Ishida Germany

Tel: +49 (0)791 945 160
Fax: +49 (0)791 945 1699
info@ishida.de

Ishida South Africa

Tel: +27 (0)11 976 2010
Fax: +27 (0)11 976 2012
info@ishida.co.za

Ishida Middle East

Tel: +971 (0)4 299 1933
Fax: +971 (0)4 299 1955
ishida@ishida.ae

Ishida Switzerland

Tel: +41 (0)41 799 7999
Fax: +41 (0)41 790 3927
info@ishida.ch

Ishida Netherlands

Tel: +31 (0)499 39 3675
Fax: +31 (0)499 39 1887
info@ishida.nl