

ADVANTAGE

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ISSUE TEN

AEW·THURNE

The way to the future

Portion Control – the right direction

Currently, much is being said about the future of meat and fish processing – and no wonder. Processors all over the world face uncertainties in ever changing markets, but history tells us that investing in the right production technology can help to offset some of the many potential pitfalls that lie ahead for our industry.

There can be no doubting the fact that the future is portion control as consumer lifestyles and fast changing retailing methods continue to influence the way that food, especially meat and meat products, is manufactured.

Fast, efficient automation, together with easy hygiene, maximum utilisation of space, high levels of accuracy and superb product presentation are absolutely essential for modern processors who need to respond quickly to the continually changing demands of their retail and food service customers.

We at AEW-THURNE can provide you with the very latest portion control slicing, sawing and shaping technology to help you 'stay on the highway to success' and face the future with confidence.

IN THIS ISSUE

Maximising profits: page 2

Quality – whatever the shape: pages 3-4

American Hero: page 4

Exceeding expectations: page 5

Get into shape: page 5

Increase your productivity: page 6

Media Comment



Maximising profits in Portion Control

by Chris Harris
Editor, Meat Processing Global

The demands of the supermarkets are having a striking influence on the way meat and meat products are manufactured.

The price war that is being conducted between major multiple retailers around the world has helped to force producers and processors to look at their margins and to find new ways to maximise their profit. In such a cut and thrust world, the smallest increase in margin and profit can be all-important.

But not only is the supermarket customer demanding cheaper food products, he is also demanding that the product be delivered on time to go straight onto the chiller shelves. As a result, the processor is seeking ways to increase yields and maximise the shelf life of the product.

Speed and accuracy in portion control are essential if the processor is to meet the goals set by the supermarkets, who in turn are reflecting the needs of the consumer in a modern society.

With cooking skills and time availability among the majority of consumers diminishing, the processor is being asked to provide not just the ingredients

for a meal, but a complete meal solution. The consumer requires instructions on how to make that meal solution satisfying and the accuracy of these instructions on the pack labels links back directly to the ability of the processor to produce a line of identical products. Cooking instructions cannot vary from pack to pack, so the product has to be identical.

Similar requirements are also the special dictate of the caterer and foodservice supplier.

While freshness, speed of delivery and the look of the product are high priorities, accuracy of portion weights and shapes are also essential to produce identical meal solutions time after time.

To gain that vital accuracy in portion control, the processor looks to the equipment manufacturer to supply machines that can operate within ever-tighter boundaries.

To achieve these aims, the equipment manufacturer is now producing ever more sophisticated machines. There are now machines with vision technology and monitoring equipment to trace a 3-D image of the raw product to be sliced.

These slicing and portioning machines represent a new wave of technology that can be seen at Worldwide Food Expo. When these machines are then connected to check weighing machines that can relay information back to the slicer or portioner's controls to immediately 'fine tune' any variations, however slight, then the accuracy of the portion, slice or pack is increased. The yield of the product goes up and the processor's margins grow.

Often the speed of the slicer or portioning machine is dictated not by its own capacity, but by the speed of the packaging machines at the end of the conveyor.

To maintain speed and freshness the manufacturing line may be split so that the conveyor can feed two or more packaging machines. Production speeds are maintained and faster delivery to the supermarket is guaranteed.

Slicing and portioning machines can also be seen attached to intelligent management systems that sort and grade the portions into weight batches for even greater accuracy in pack and greater profit for the manufacturer.

The
way
to the
future

They've
seen
the
future

Here's what some of the world's most successful processors have said about AEW-Thurne. To read their stories and others, logon to our website www.aew-thurne.com or

"SmartSlice has made a huge difference to the way we work – quality has improved dramatically, labour costs are down significantly and yields are improving." Australia.

"We have the improvements in productivity we were looking for with this system, but what's even more important is the fact that it cuts a fine steak." USA.

"... companies that don't keep innovating simply won't survive." Denmark and UK.

"They (Junior Slicers) work hard all day and every day, giving us the high throughput and yields that are so essential to us." Southern Ireland.

"Demanded to meet the technical requirements."

"We've found for us consistency is key."

"Meeting the customer's needs is our top priority."

Quality – whatever the shape



With output of around 60,000 tonnes per annum, it's no wonder that Scan Foods, a member of Swedish Quality Meats, are the leaders in Sweden's high quality, cut and cooked meats market. The company is part of

including ready meals, bacon, sausages, cooked meats and ham. Their large retail and food service customer base extends across Sweden and other European countries, including the UK.

With more than 75 years experience of producing meat products, quality is of a standard you'd expect from a Swedish company of such repute and it's here that AEW•THURNE high speed slicing technology has made a significant contribution since the early 1980's.

High levels of production, coupled with superb presentation and very low waste are important priorities when it comes to slicing ham, bacon and cooked meats. To cope with increased demand, the company recently purchased a

fully automatic AEW•THURNE bacon line complete with an IBS 2000 Vision Slicer, checkweigher and automatic feed to the packaging machine. The system produces 140g packs containing 8 slices.

For salami, ham and cooked meats slicing, an AEW•THURNE Polyslicer Plus was recently installed at the company's Kristianstad plant. The slicer incorporates a unique software package, specially developed by AEW•THURNE engineers to enable accurate profiling of the product prior to slicing. This is most important as some of the sausage style products can take on an awkward shape after hanging. This could affect yields and pack weights, but with this feature the Polyslicer produces perfect portions at the required correct pack weights every time.

While perfect slicing performance is critical to Scan Food's quest for quality, it's not the only reason for

choosing AEW•THURNE. In cooperation with our distributor for Sweden, I.O. Trading, AEW•THURNE provides complete service support including technical and operator training.



Scan Food's Supply Chain Manager, Bjarne Andersen said, "AEW•THURNE are always anxious to help – more so than others. This is critical to us as the pressure on response to order time is always present. Machines are becoming increasingly complex too, so we need to have thorough training and with the cost of labour being so high in Sweden, we just can't afford downtime."

Quality – whatever the circumstances.

Swedish Meats, a cooperative formed in 1999 by more than 50,000 Swedish farmers who brought together abattoirs, cutting and processing operations into one united group.

Scan Foods have six processing plants that produce a wide range of products,

AEW•THURNE portion control slicing and sawing. If you'd like contact us and we'll send you the relevant copies of *Advantage*.

and for our products is running at an all time high and SmartSlice helps us meet it. No doubt about it, AEW•THURNE provides us with the service, technology and machines we need to help us remain competitive." UK.

We've proved that AEW•THURNE's slicers are the only machines that can deliver consistent quality, speed and reliability." USA.

ing urgent orders is no problem and, even more importantly, we can achieve consistent quality of cut that is so important with this type of product."

any.

I.O. TRADING

30 years of slicing know-how

I.O. Trading AB of Insala near Gothenburg represents AEW•THURNE in Sweden.

I.O. Trading is a family owned business with some 30 years experience in slicing and packaging equipment for the meat industry. They are also

market leaders in the distribution of inline printers that print directly onto the pack. Ivan Olsen heads the I.O. team who, in conjunction with AEW•THURNE, provide first class sales and service support to our customers in Sweden.

VISION ON!



Two new additions to the SmartSlice range – SmartSlice Vision and SmartSlice XT – will take care of your slicing needs now and well into the future.

SmartSlice Vision

Responding to the fast changing retail and food service market with high volumes of fresh, boneless, fixed weight/fixed thickness portions is easy with SmartSlice Vision. Thanks to state-of-the-art vision technology, a fast, three dimensional profile of the product is made before cutting. The user chooses the cutting priorities and the machine automatically decides on the optimum cutting pattern required to produce superbly presented, accurate fixed weight portions at high speed with the highest possible yield. For example, in smartweight mode, the main priority could be 150g portions, but if the slice becomes too thin, 200g may be the best alternative. The machine portions to fixed weight and/or fixed thickness in up to four zones. Fifty product programmes allow quick product changeover.

SmartSlice XT

If you need to produce high volumes of case ready, fresh, boneless, fixed thickness

portions, SmartSlice XT is the slicer for you! A built-in product measurement system enables the computer to decide on the best possible cutting pattern required to maximise the yield from every piece. Cutting patterns provide a choice of portion thickness priorities to ensure maximum yields and users can select up to 4 thickness zones plus a front and rear trim slice option. If need be, each of the zones can be programmed with a different slice thickness cutting pattern, with the last zone providing end piece optimisation.



Both new machines have compact dimensions to make the most of existing floor space and can be incorporated in-line for continuous production. User-friendly controls make for fast, easy operation and minimal training time and, in common with all AEW•THURNE machines, they offer fast and easy cleaning to meet rigorous standards of hygiene.



American HERO!

America's most famous hamburgers are precisely two and a half inches square and they all have five holes in them. When Edgar Waldo 'Billy' Ingram founded White Castle in 1921 he changed the face of fast food with his small, low cost hamburgers, so much so, that in 1930 the President of the National Restaurant Association declared the White Castle hamburger to be "America's Food".

The holes appeared in 1948, thanks to an enthusiastic White Castle employee, who discovered that they enhanced the flavour and removed the need for turning when cooking, thereby enabling the hamburger to be cooked on, say, a bed of onions, with ease. Today, the craving for White Castle Hamburgers is met by their own 348 strong chain of restaurants and at retail outlets throughout the country. Production takes place at two plants in Indiana and a new,

about to be opened, facility in Ohio. Frozen ground beef is formed into logs, the holes are added during the forming process, and a fleet of seven AEW•THURNE Polyslicers and two new Polyslicer Plus machines, all with continuous feed systems, slices the logs at high speed. The precise portions are produced in a matrix of 3 x 5 patties which are then laid onto paper. The matrix of patties is then stacked and placed in a carton for shipment.

White Castle's Meat Division Manager, Warren Cook said, "We've proved that AEW•THURNE's slicers are the only machines that can deliver for us. We operate high production facilities and the Polyslicers deliver – with consistent quality, speed and reliability."



Exceeding expectations



Belmont Meat Products Ltd.

If, like Belmont Meat products of Toronto, Canada, you've been running a successful processing business since 1966, you'll know how important it is to keep up with constantly changing legislation and standards. Continual investment in premises and technology is key to Belmont's success and their production facilities are up there with the best, working to strict HACCP guidelines and satisfying full USDA standards.

High quality and excellent presentation are, though, what their retail and food service customers want and again, Belmont shines. Their wide range of pre-pattied hamburger products, bulk ground beef, marinated meats, lightly fabricated boxed red meats and, of course, portion controlled steaks, sells extensively in Canada, the USA and international markets.

A growing order book convinced Belmont of the need to invest in automatic portion control slicing. Skilled labour shortages and limited production space dictated the need for an easy to operate, compact machine that could quickly and reliably produce accurate, fixed weight portions with a 'hand cut finish'.

An extensive survey of the market place, followed by contact with our Canadian representatives, Toronto based Pemberton & Associates, revealed that the only machine to fulfill their brief was AEW•THURNE's SmartSlice Fresh Meat Portioner. This was coupled to a Delford-Sortaweigh five station checkweigher and grader.

The system handles high outputs of fresh beef striploin and top sirloin portions with ease, automatically slicing,



checkweighing, grading and sorting portions into their appropriate weight bins prior to vacuum packing, after which they are shipped— fresh or frozen – to order.

More time can now be spent on preparation of the primal to ensure high quality portions and greatly reduced waste, resulting in superb yields with consistently high portion weight accuracy.

Belmont's Mykl and David Walderman are more than satisfied with the increases in productivity and profitability

that SmartSlice delivers. "It works all day, every day, without a break and it only requires a minimum of operator input. We now have the ability to deliver high quality steaks on time and we have the capacity for growth," says Mykl.

"The output of our AEW•THURNE SmartSlice machine is mightily impressive and the Delford-Sortaweigh checkweigher/grader is the only thing that can keep up with it," says David. "It has exceeded our expectations."

Get into shape



Processors who want to enter the fast growing and profitable, value added shaped product market at low cost can now do so. AEW•THURNE's new ShapeLine Compact is a competitively priced, mobile, single station, high capacity shaping machine that produces fish and poultry portions of the required shape and texture in three dimensions, quickly and efficiently.

ShapeLine Compact produces superbly presented, accurate portions from frozen, natural fillet, whole muscle or comminuted product without the need for thawing, grinding or further processing. Magazine loading enables multiple portions to be produced in one machine cycle. Portions with different shapes can also be produced to give pack variety as can cavity portions for sauces or fillings.

Ten product programme memories allow quick product change-over and the machine has an impressive output

capacity of around 500kg per hour, depending on the type of product.



Increase your productivity and profits...



SmartSlice Vision

Automatic portion control slicer for cutting fresh, boneless meat, poultry and fish to fixed weight and/or fixed thickness.



SmartSlice XT

Automatic, intelligent slicer for cutting high volumes of fresh, boneless meat or fish to fixed thickness.



PolySlicer Plus

High speed slicer with wide range of slicing options for cooked meats, natural cured products and cheese.



IBS 2000 Vision

Advanced, high volume, fixed weight slicer with fat/lean grading capability for bacon and whole muscle product.



Junior Slicer

Compact, easy to use and flexible machine for slicing a wide range of cooked meats, bacon, cheese and natural products.



APC Slicer

Automatic portion control slicer for cutting irregular or uniform shaped chilled, bone-in or boneless meat or fish to constant weight or constant thickness.



APC Max

Automatic portion control saw for cutting large, cross section bone-in and hard frozen product, e.g. 'T' bone, to fixed weight or fixed thickness.



APC Saw

Automatic portion control saw for cutting bone-in or hard frozen meat or fish to fixed weight or fixed thickness.



APS 200

Automatic saw for fast, accurate, constant thickness portioning of bone-in or hard frozen meat or fish.



400 Bandsaw

High speed, high accuracy portioning bandsaw for high volume meat and fish processors, large retail and catering butchers.

If you want a profitable future, call us:

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