

The Balance of Powder with Product Inspection Solutions



Canada's largest independent co-packer of dry powdered goods leads by example with strategic investment in advanced x-ray product inspection technology.

Founded by Louis Sabatini in 1973, Rex Pak Limited is Canada's largest independent co-packer of dry powder goods. Rex Pak produces everything from rice and pasta to cheese and soup mixes, as well as sugar and sugar-substitute sachets. "There is a 60-percent chance that if you open up your cupboards you're going to find a nationally-branded product in there that was actually packaged by us," explains Vice President of Operations Denise Sabatini Fuina who manages Rex Pak's day-to-day operations with her brother, Vice President of Manufacturing Devin Sabatini.



The X36 Series x-ray system suitable for retail packaging applications

Rex Pax Limited

Powered Goods Co-packer

Product Inspection Solutions



Full built-in due diligence and production monitoring statistics

The past 10 years have seen a lot of the consumer packaged goods (CPG) brand-owners increasing delegation of their manufacturing functions to companies like Rex Pak. "Prior to that most of the major brand-owners employed their own packaging division at their own plant," explains Mr Sabatini.

Co-packers are manufacturing and packaging a wide range of branded products and send it complete to the customers' distribution center for them. "This development has allowed Rex Pak to become a market leader in the dry powder segment, allowing us to grow our business by leaps and bounds over the past few years."

Mrs Sabatini Fuina explains the company's vast experience and expertise in high-quality custom blending of powdered and dry bulk products to the exacting standards of its many national brand-owning customers as a key core competency.

Flexibility is Key

Serving customers in the ever-changing food industry requires a

lot of flexibility from its co-packing business partners in order to keep brand-owners happy and ready to respond quickly to new trends.

"This is why we provide such a wide range of options," says Mr Sabatini, stressing the company's number one priority of meeting customers' specifications and ensuring that consumers receive the safest, highest-quality finished product possible. "Our highly-skilled Quality Assurance (QA) team performs rigorous tests on all in-house blending and finished goods as per our customers' specifications."

"Over the years there have been instances where our customers have given us specific requirements regarding what they need for food safety assurance and compliance," Sabatini says, noting the plant has recent updated its HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) and the SQF (Safe Quality Food Institute) Level 2 certifications.

Laboratory Equipment Solutions

Rex Pak currently use METTLER TOLEDO's Titrator Excellence T5

system to conduct a chemical analysis to identify the concentration of ingredients to meet customers' specs. The lab also employs other METTLER TOLEDO laboratory equipment such as the SmartSample Flexibility reader; and the InMotion Flex Autosampler analysis machine; and a model P25 printer.

Product Inspection Solutions

"Quality is the cornerstone," Mr Sabatini reveals. In addition to x-ray systems, Rex pack also use additional METTLER TOLEDO product inspection technology, supplied in Canada by Oakville-based Shawpack Systems Limited.

On the busy production floor, each of the 30 lines are equipped with METTLER TOLEDO checkweighers to weigh pouch fills. There is also a checkweigher at the end of the line to weigh the total weight of each finished packed product.

"We've had nothing but great results from using these checkweighers. However, we're



Laboratory equipment to conduct chemical analysis



Two X36 x-ray systems were installed in 2016

now upgrading to a new controller (HMI)," reveals Mr Sabatini.

"This is a major benefit to Rex Pak as they don't have to replace complete systems, as some of these units are highly-integrated with the existing packaging systems," explains Shawpak's Vice President Larry Swift.

"The upgrade will provide optimal data capture and statistical reporting functionality that will allow Rex Pak to track full production data, while enabling it to achieve quick ROI (return-on-investment) by controlling all the product trends more accurately."

Other recent capital investments in product inspection at the plant include installation of three METTLER TOLEDO x-ray systems, including an X33 installed in 2013 and two X36 models, which have been up and running since early 2016. The systems are used for finished product inspection of filled, sealed and weighed bags.

"Rex Pak opted for the X33 system, running at a mere 20 watts of

power, due to its very low cost of ownership," explains Mr Swift. Rex Pak utilizes the X36 platform on its larger products, which is suited to handling multiple product types. This solution give Rex Pak complete flexibility which is important in helping to accommodate customer requests.

"We're very happy with these new x-ray systems, they're very reliable, and the data they provide us with goes a long way to fortifying our formal product safety quality control procedures."

The X36 x-ray units, along with the X33 x-ray system, can each run at speeds up to 250 feet per minute (76 metres per minute) as standard or up to a rate of 450fpm (137mpm) on the X36 with a different conveyor configuration. The actual running speed is limited only by the product handling and rejection speeds.

Value-added features of the x-ray systems include:

- Optimal traceability, with the units offering full built-in due diligence and production monitoring statistics, along with real-time process monitoring and the ability to save all the generated x-ray images;
- Customizable material handling solutions, with METTLER TOLEDO and Shawpak working together to design the system to fit the customer's production line requirements;
- Live HMI (human-machine interface) x-ray power change, a key factor for co-packers that

allows them to adjust the x-ray power requirements to the product being produced without needing a service technician;

- Data capture for food safety certification requirements;
- Large technical service support across the U.S. and Canada.

Many of the package types utilized by Rex Pak contain a metal barrier within the film, so the only viable option for proper safety inspection, notes Mr Sabatini, is to use an industrial x-ray inspection solution. "The x-ray systems allows us to search for a wide-range of contaminants such as small mineral stones and other natural products," he explains.

"Our METTLER TOLEDO equipment, from the checkweighing systems, to our new x-ray and laboratory equipment provides both the customer and us with complete peace-of-mind that only safe food is going to go out in the market.

"More and more, our customer discussions reveal a high level of interest in having their products x-ray-inspected, and we have also had many potential 'would-be' customers contact us to ask if we have x-ray inspection units in place.

"So when the need arises to add some more x-ray inspection systems to our operations," concludes Mr Sabatini, "we know exactly where to turn."

About Mettler-Toledo Product Inspection:

The Product Inspection Division of METTLER TOLEDO is a leader in the field of automated inspection technology. Our solutions increase process efficiency for manufacturers while supporting compliance with industry standards and regulations. Our systems also deliver improved product quality which helps to protect the welfare of consumers and reputation of manufacturers.



Checkweighing



Metal Detection



Track & Trace



Vision Inspection



X-ray Inspection

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