

WEIGHERS ENSURE SEED ACCURACY

Case Study
Bejo Zaden

Facts and figures

- » Bejo Zaden's pack weights are from 2g to 80g, which represents anything from 250 to 25,000 seeds depending on the variety.
- » The Micro weigher provides accuracy to within 0.03g on a 2g pack, with speeds of up to 75 packs per minute.
- » The CCW-RS multihead weighers are achieving accuracy of within 0.1% of target weight at speeds of 30 bags per minute.

Bejo Zaden has a long-established reputation for quality. The company offers over 1,000 different varieties of seeds for around 50 crops for the global market and a wide range of target groups. Each variety has its unique characteristics, such as flavour, disease resistances, shape, colour, strength, or has been developed to be suitable for a specific climate.

Challenge

Bejo invests a substantial part of its annual revenue in research, but it can take between ten and fifteen years to bring a new variety successfully to market.

The seeds are therefore high value items, which means that accurate weighing is a vital part of the packing operation. At the same time, the seeds present additional weighing challenges since each seed batch is different in its characteristics. A further challenge is that Bejo sells its seeds mostly by number in the pack rather than by weight.

Solution

The ability of Ishida's "Micro" multihead weigher (with just 50cc hopper size) to handle extremely small target weights with pinpoint accuracy has made it the ideal choice for Bejo Zaden, one of the world's leading companies in the breeding, production, processing and sales of premium quality vegetable seeds.

And as a further demonstration of the wide-ranging capabilities of Ishida multihead weighers, Bejo is also using 14 head, 3 litre CCW-RS models for its larger pack sizes, while the very first Ishida multihead that the company purchased in the 1990s is still in operation at the factory, dedicated to Bejo's organic seeds ranges.





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The Ishida weighers are set at a target weight that matches the number of seeds per pack, which vary for each seed batch. For the Ishida Micro weighers, pack weights are from 2g to 80g, which represents anything from 250 to 25,000 seeds depending on the variety. In order to ensure the correct amount of seeds in every pack, the accuracy of each weighment is vital. Bejo reports that accuracy is to within 0.03g on a 2g pack, with speeds of up to 75 packs per minute.

For its larger bag sizes up to 1.5kg, Bejo is using the two Ishida CCW-RS multihead weighers. Again, excellent accuracy - to within 0.1% of target weight - is being achieved at speeds of currently 30 bags per minute but this is limited by the manual packing of the bags into cartons. The company is now installing a robotic pick-and-place system for this operation, which will take the speed of the line to up to 50 bags per minute.

The huge number of seed varieties means there can be up to 20 changeovers per day on each weigher. With easy cleaning using vacuum cleaning and compressed air and the settings for each production run pre-set and easily called up on the weighers' remote control unit, these changeovers can be carried out quickly in around 10 minutes.

Bejo currently operates three Ishida Micro weighers, two 3 litre CCW-RS models and the original CCW-Z model purchased in 1993. And it is the reliable and accurate performance of the weighers that has sustained the company's long-standing relationship with Ishida, one which has withstood the challenges of rival equipment.

“When we installed the new lines for the larger bags, we did trial some alternative weighers,” says Bas Schult, logistics team leader at Bejo Zaden. “However, their performance simply wasn't up to our requirements and this demonstrated the capabilities of the Ishida models.”

“ The Micro weighers in particular are ideal for weighing seeds and have transformed our packing operation for the smaller pack sizes. ”

Bejo also uses Ishida checkweighers throughout its operations.

“Like the multiheads, the Ishida checkweighers are consistently reliable and accurate,” explains Bas.

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