

Wipasz poultry division joins the European top league

In 2012, poultry processing success-story Wipasz completed Phase One of a major strategic investment aimed at transforming its operations to be among the most modern in Europe. To implement the project, it carefully chose technology partners capable of helping deliver the vision. For weighing and packing expertise, Wipasz decided to work with Ishida Europe.

Wipasz, one of Poland's leading animal feed suppliers, first diversified into poultry processing in 2010 with the acquisition of a 5,000 bph (birds per hour) facility at Mława.

Two years back, with the Phase One improvements, the company more than doubled its processed output to over 90,000 birds per day. However it was not simply a question of more birds. Previously, the output largely consisted of bulk-packed chickens and chicken

pieces, usually in weigh-priced packs. Now the accent is on smaller, value-added, MAP (Modified Atmosphere) packs which are almost all fixed-weight.

Scope of Phase One

Phase One included the simultaneous modernisation of the live bird collection and reception facilities and the automation of the entire sequence from bird cut-up to packed product.

Ishida installed four brand new packing lines, one each for wings and fillets and two for different leg cuts. Two major advances were firstly the use of accurate weighing technology that enabled fixed-weight packs to become a profitable reality and, secondly, the extensive pack inspection and testing systems that have helped make Wipasz products welcome in the chiller cabinets of some of Europe's most prestigious supermarket chains.



A third factor, of great importance to Wipasz, was the great flexibility of the lines in responding to market needs in terms of pack and product variations.

The importance of accuracy

Each of the new Ishida lines at Wipasz begins with the feeding of pieces from the cut-up line to an Ishida multihead weigher, in most cases a screwfeeder model which gently but firmly propels the sticky fresh chicken into hoppers fitted with scraper gates. The weigher very accurately makes up portions which are then deposited onto one of the lanes of a weigh-batcher and sent to operators for packing into trays and, if necessary, styling. The outstanding weighing accuracy of the Ishidas is crucial in reducing giveaway, helping to maximise the yield of fixed-weight packs from a given bird input.

Testing, testing, testing...

Wipasz is determined to use the most advanced technology to put it ahead of local competitors and in direct contention with major European processors. In appealing to top retailers and their customers it offers first-class tray appearance, thanks to the advanced Ishida tray sealers on its new lines and to the rigorous Ishida vision systems that ensure correct branding and label placement. Even more important from the point of view of major brand owners, Ishida X-ray systems combined with metal detection rigorously exclude metal and other contaminants (including bone in fillets) while other tray sealer features check that the correct modified atmosphere is used for each product. Ishida seal testers then ensure that the atmosphere is securely maintained by excluding any packs at risk of leaking.

Reliable pack data

Another feature of today's Wipasz set-up is data integrity. All information printed onto the sealed packs and their labels is also inspected by Ishida integrated sealtesting/vision systems and checked against information from the line equipment and the company's factory and enterprise-wide data resources. As a result customers can rely fully on weight, shelf-life and other figures.

Ishida worked closely with Wipasz on the overall concept and layout of the packing hall as well as supplying the line equipment.

As Factory Manager Jacek Jelonek expresses it, "In our opinion, controlled product quality, modern technology and flexibility are the keys to success on the domestic and international markets. The Ishida technology acquired by Wipasz allows us to adjust our offer to specific customer requirements."

"We have just completed Phase One of our journey at Mława, and Phase Two is already underway in which, working with our partners, including Ishida, we shall have a capacity of 13,500 birds per hour and one of the most technologically advanced plants in the world."

Ishida multihead weighing plays a central role in ensuring that fixed-weight packs can be delivered reliably and consistently and with the accuracy that ensures profitability by keeping giveaway to a minimum. The model shown here features a rotating infed chute that helps to separate the fillets, and uses flexible screw feeders to gently coax them into the weigh hoppers.



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