

AFA Systems moves into tray packaging market

By Jenny Eagle+, 29-Jan-2014

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AFA Systems has launched the MK-CTP (Compact Intermittent Motion Tray Packer) as it expands into the tray packaging market.

The machine was launched this month and can package products including beverages, jars such as peanut butter and canisters.

AFA Systems, Canada, has worked with energy drink, Red Rain from Cott Beverages, Planters Peanuts, and Private Label Brands.



Logical next step

Eric Langen, sales and marketing manager, AFA Systems, told FoodProductionDaily.com it was a logical step forward for the company.

"We launched this system now because we want to move into the tray packing market," he said.

"We have already had great success with cartoning and most of the cartoning technology can be adapted to tray packing. Therefore, we found this was a logical step forward by introducing a new tray packer."

According to Langen, its clients were typically using old mechanically driven systems or operators to hand pack trays.

"Our clients found mechanically driven systems took a very long time to changeover, had a greater amount of mechanical components and were difficult to home when belt slippages or jams occurred.

"All these problems lead to increased costs for our client's respected production lines," he added.



North America

"In addition, the cost of using labour to package products is right now uncompetitive for companies in North America. Especially, when competing with emerging marketplaces. Therefore, using fully automatic systems allows for a significant reduction in labour costs.

"With MK-CTP, we have found our clients have seen a reduction in changeover time, maintenance and spare costs, which is allowing them to be more competitive in their respected field. They have also been able to be more flexible which ensures a more diversified product offering."

The MK-CTP can complete four processes on one system; these include collating product, loading product, forming trays and sealing the loaded tray.

To form trays, the MK-CTP uses a pneumatic tray former to place the tray onto the carrier lugs. These then position the formed tray to the loading area of the MK-CTP.

The MK-CTP's dual loader acts as a collating, loading and stabilizing system which minimizes the use of mechanical components. After the tray is loaded with product, a Nordson Problue 7 Adhesive System will apply adhesive and AFA's flap closing mechanism will seal the minor and major flaps.

The machine uses Allen Bradley Servo Motors and CompactLogix Control System. Festo Pneumatic Cylinders are used on the flap closing mechanisms and the tray former.

Changeover can be achieved through the use of SIKO Counters, references on key adjustments points, servo

driven push button length changeover and Suspa height adjustment systems.

"The use of servo motors gives the customer numerous benefits over mechanically driven systems such as reduction of footprint, easy set up and changeover, better fault diagnostics and troubleshooting, reduced maintenance costs, reduction in spare part costs, more precise and efficient operation, and greater flexibility," said Langen.

Click [here to see the MK-CTP tray packer in action](#).

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