

PACKAGING AUTOMATION ECLIPSES THE COMPETITION

Foodex, NEC Birmingham, March 21-24

Stand X040

Packaging Automation Ltd (PA) will be unveiling the future of high speed tray heat sealing when it launches its eagerly-anticipated range of flexible new machines at the Foodex show at the NEC in Birmingham.

On demonstration at the company's stand will be the revolutionary Eclipse TL6 Twin Lane which has been specifically designed for rugged reliability and high performance. The Eclipse range, including the new SL6 Single Lane, combines PA's unrivalled engineering experience with cutting edge technology to raise the bar for cost-effective and versatile tray heat sealing machines.

PA is acutely aware of the need for manufacturers to minimise the impact their operations have on the environment, so the Eclipse range also offers the inside cut option and the capability to run sealing film as thin as 17 micron which reduces film usage by an impressive 20 percent when compared to existing tray sealers. In addition the machine has been designed to cut energy costs by reducing the air consumption of the machine by 50 percent.

Sealing packs at an impressive rate of up to 180 per minute (90pm for the SL6) the Eclipse range includes an inbuilt tool loading system which, when combined with the lightest tools in the market, allows manual tool changes and accurate docking of electrical and gas connectors, removing the need for a mobile loading jig. The top tool comprises single impression removable cartridges that enable continued operation during repairs and maintenance. Spare cartridges can be supplied to allow full capacity operation at all times and a complete tool changeover can be achieved within two minutes.

Simplified operation is demonstrated by a Minimal Operator Interface that eliminates operator errors and improves efficiency by pre-setting all machine parameters, including tool recipe settings and pack handling, at the touch of a button. For further flexibility and long term value the TL6 can be converted to an SL6 to accommodate 560mm pack widths on a single lane machine.

Other key features of the Eclipse include redesigned tooling heater mats with an integrated thermocouple. Manufactured from a new waterproof material, these mats heat up 30% faster and have a significantly longer life than materials previously used. To save on critical downtime, a Pack Crush Protection system prevents smashed packs when incoming trays are not orientated properly and quick release cutting blades allow for replacement in seconds.

Like PA's other models, the Eclipse also offers modified atmosphere with gas flushing for longer shelf life, energy saving features, such as automatically switching to stand-by when not in use, and for the fresh produce, sector clip-on lids can be replaced by pre-punched film allowing pack contents to breathe.

Ideal for a wide range of foods, tray sealed packs offer consumers and retailers what they want – convenience, protection and freshness – and PA's new Eclipse range gives the manufacturers what they need – less waste, reduced pack weight and increased productivity.

PA has been manufacturing packaging machines for nearly 50 years, and this invaluable experience in research and development is reflected in the Eclipse range, which not only carries the PA seal for reliability but combines efficiency with the environmental benefits vital to food manufacturers.