

# CONVEYING NEWS

March 2010

## FIFO STORAGE SYSTEM

WMH have designed and built a continuous storage system for handling trays of test tubes for a blue chip pharmaceutical giant. The large unit was designed at WMH's headquarters in Callington, Cornwall, manufactured and fully assembled for testing at their well-equipped modern workshops on their site close to Plymouth.

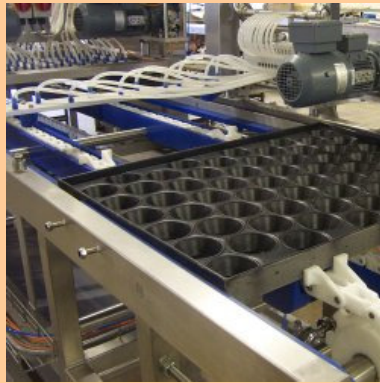
The storage unit was able to handle up to 300 trays per hour, in a stack of 6 storage conveyors. Each tier was capable of holding 150 trays at any time. The control system for the unit was able to track each tray through the system to enable full batch control and precise holding times for each tray.



Standing over 4 metres tall by 14 metres long, this is probably the largest self-contained unit WMH has ever had pass through its workshops.

## PUMPS

WMH have been at the forefront of design and development of high accuracy multi-lane dosing systems for many years. Since WMH manufactured their first peristaltic pump unit over 15 years ago they have been continually refining the design to achieve increased levels of dosing accuracy and finer control of volumes. This programme of improvements has seen a great leap forward in recent months with the development of a radical new control method that has improved accuracy and dosing control significantly.



In site trials WMH is regularly achieving dosing accuracies of +/- 0.1gm with infinitely variable dosage control. The new system also offers a clean cut-off between doses resulting in drip-free operation. Combined with a touch-screen menu driven user interface the new system offers very simple operation for both operatives and engineers.

The new system of control can be added as an upgrade to most existing systems and will be incorporated into all new systems. The savings made in product give-away will in most cases result in upgrade costs being recouped in a very short space of time.

## LANE MERGE UNIT

In partnership with Packaging Automation, WMH have developed an auto lane merging unit that can be incorporated into the outfeed of a twin lane PA top web sealing unit to provide a complete laning and sealing solution.

The laning unit provides a compact solution to the often difficult problem of combining two lanes of product into a single lane for further processing.

The unit is built to WMH's usual high standard using stainless steel and other FDA approved food use materials. The unit is robust and can withstand high pressure cleaning along with the rest of the line. The lane merge unit can be purchased through PA as complete solution with all their new machines or can be supplied direct from WMH for use in conjunction with older machines.

# WMH

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## ROBOTIC FUTURE

With the increased costs of labour and the difficulties of finding reliable staff, many large production facilities are now turning their attention to the often-neglected end of line packing and palletising operations. Over the past few years WMH have worked with a number of blue chip organisations both in the food and pharmaceutical industries in developing robotic packing systems to reduce the staffing requirements to a minimum.



Systems are developed to fit the client's specific requirements and have included:

- Case collation systems to reduce the robot pick rate and increase cycle times.
- Integrated pallet supply and take away systems.
- By-pass routes to manual operations in the unlikely event of system failure.

WMH have the full back-up support of ABB robotics who have many years of expertise. Close links have been with Adaptive Automation for bespoke programming and system set-up. A new Flexpicker robot for use with in-house trials and testing is WMH's latest investment.

## GRILLING CPETS

With consumer demand for more aesthetically pleasant looking microwavable ready meals WMH recognised the need for products to be grilled in their CPETs. After years of development WMH are now ready to unveil their patented system for grilling products in CPETs.

The exact method of operation is a strictly guarded secret but we can say that the system will not damage and deform the trays and maintains full integrity of the tray edges for top web sealing.

WMH CPET grill units are built to the same high standards as their traditional grills offering fully insulated side panels, removable under trays, drop-down side panels and removable grilling panels, which offer full access for cleaning and inspection. Touch screen menu driven user interfaces offer full control of the grilling operation to achieve the desired level of browning and the latest generation of infrared elements offer uniform heating with no drop-off towards the edges.



A new test grill unit has recently been completed and is available for customer trials.

## QUEUING WITHOUT THE CRUSH

Queueing and collation of delicate products is an old problem that WMH has over the years provided a range of successful solutions to. WMH are now proud to announce that they have developed a new solution that eliminates the problems associated with products touching whilst being queued and transferred. The new system is working successfully with delicate products such as pies and quiches.



WMH's new collator enables batches of product to be grouped together prior to loading into travelling ovens or further processing equipment. The new approach works with a range of product sizes. Different transfer arrays can be created with the same system, without the need for change parts.

WMH are now integrating this new system of collation into all their new oven loading systems. It could also be feasible to incorporate the new collation design into existing systems and WMH would be happy to advise on your specific case. For more information please give WMH a call on 01579 383788.

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