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100% available labelling for the food processing industry

Belgian fresh food group Ter Beke-Pluma uses a labelling system from Zetes to identify boxes of pre-packed meat. It means they can benefit from very precise labelling and less downtime. Chief engineer Johan De Schrijver explains how it works.

Why does Ter Bake place a premium on its labelling system

Johan De Schrijver: We produce hundreds of processed meat packs per minute. These need to be packed in accordance with the requirements of our various customers. Due to company expansion, all warehouse processes were being modernised, including our out-dated labelling system. The main requirements of a new system were robustness and continuity. The system also needed to be integrated with our existing OPUS ERP system, offer high precision labelling, be user-friendly and able to take large label rolls.

What system was installed?

Johan De Schrijver: We are using a labelling system based around Intermec PX4i printers and MD4000 printer applicators with a conveyor belt. A label is applied onto each meat pack using a vacuum plate. Since the start of 2009, we have commissioned 12 devices in Wommelgem. The new system is future-proof, which means that as we grow, the number of labelling installations is expanding. We are now using 3 Intermec printers, 5 single (capable of labelling up to 20 boxes per minute) and 2 double Zetes printer applicators. The latter have been set up in tandem by the conveyor belt because we needed something for the paté line that goes faster.

What are the benefits of the solution?

Johan De Schrijver: Today, we have a lot less downtime as a result of system defects. As we are using larger label rolls, a shift team can work 8 hours straight without having to switch rolls. Moreover, operators have no trouble switching the layout of labels according to the customer. Labels are applied to within 5 mm accuracy limits, printing and legibility of bar codes is top notch and our ink cartridge consumption has gone down. Finally, Zetes offers a fast and efficient service.