

Egg Grader and Supplier Tracks Millions of Eggs with Datalogic's Power scan - Datalogic

To keep with changing demands, Gebroeders Van Beek implemented a tracking solution to trace millions of eggs per week. Now, Van Beek has achieved its goal with full traceability of all their eggs.

To Keep Up With Changing Demands, Gebroeders Van Beek Implemented a Tracking Solution to Trace Millions of Eggs Per Week

Overview

The global egg industry is changing rapidly. More and more consumers want their food to be produced sustainably and especially in egg production, people care about animal welfare far more than in the past. Furthermore, government and retailers today require transparency throughout the production chain. In order to comply with regulations, there is a growing trend toward traceability.

Today, consumers who pay a premium price want to be assured that they are purchasing organic eggs. Retailers want to be certain that they can perform efficient and effective recalls in case of emergencies because their brand name is usually on the egg cartons. Traceability, therefore, has become very important to the egg industry.

Printing farm IDs on eggs is one part of the solution, but there also is a need to track where eggs have been sent and especially in egg grading centers, this is quite a challenge. Generally, egg grading centers collect eggs from more than 50 farms each week, where they are graded, packed and shipped to retailers, wholesalers or other food industries within a few days. This is not a simple task; volumes are high and grading centers are processing millions of eggs per week.

Gebroeders Van Beek in Wehl, Netherlands, is an independent family-run company and has been active in the egg industry for nearly a century. The company has one of the largest egg grading centers in the Netherlands and naturally, is one of the largest private label suppliers to Dutch and German retailers as well as the owner of one of the strongest brands in the Dutch retail sector. In order to address consumer needs and advance internal operations, Gebroeders Van Beek wanted a strong and efficient traceability solution.

The Challenge

Egg grading centers, like Gebroeders Van Beek, collect eggs from egg farmers. The eggs are packed on pallets of 10,800 eggs and collection is completed at least twice a week. Gebroeders Van Beek is collecting more than 200 batches of eggs per week, each consisting of one or more pallets. Often, these eggs will be graded, packed and shipped before the end of the next day.

Gebroeders Van Beek uses Moba grading machines for the grading process. Pallets with eggs are loaded on one side of the machine and on the other side up to 16 packing lanes deliver eggs in different packs for different sizes and different brands. These packs are then packaged in transport

cases (or crates) and “palletized.” The pallets with graded and packed eggs are stored and then later shipped to retailers, wholesalers or the food industry.

The challenge for Gebroeders Van Beek is to keep track of which retailer the eggs are being sent to while tracking each individual pallet that has been collected from a farm. In order to choose the best solution, Gebroeders Van Beek partnered with Ovotrack, a company who provides one of the most advanced solutions for tracking and tracing of eggs.

The Solution

Ovotrack uses an advanced system that was developed in a Dutch egg grading center and has since grown into a complete logistic solution for grading centers around the world. Datalogic is the sole provider of scanning products that complete Ovotrack’s solutions and Vierpool BV, a Datalogic solution provider, is the technology partner for Ovotrack.

The new tracking solution at the Gebroeders Van Beek grading centers works by first receiving the eggs that are labeled by the farmers. These labels are scanned during receiving with a corded Datalogic PowerScan™ PM8300 cordless industrial reader. By scanning the labels, the stock position of ungraded eggs is increased simultaneously. During scanning, the operator utilizes Datalogic’s exclusive Green Spot technology to ensure codes are read. In addition, the PowerScan PM8300 reader has the ability to read damaged, dirty or poorly printed bar codes, making this reader perfect for the job.

Before the eggs are put on the loader of the grading machine, the pallet labels are scanned again. For this activity, a cordless bar code reader is needed because the operator scans the pallets while driving a forklift truck. Vierpool and Ovotrack both chose Datalogic’s STAR Cordless System™, a narrow-band radio, to facilitate the cordless scanners. Used in conjunction with STAR-Box™ and STARGATE™ components, 100% coverage for the PowerScan PM8300 scanners is realized in the egg grading center of Gebroeders Van Beek.

After reading the pallet bar code, the display on the PowerScan reader tells the operator what to do. When the pallet is from a different farm, the PowerScan reader gives a warning signal, and on the display it tells the operator “Batch change.” In this case, the operator needs to put a batch change identifier on the pallet of eggs. This identifier is read later by a Datalogic DS2100 fixed scanner to keep track the exact moment of change from one farm to another.

The Results

The Ovotrack solution with Datalogic bar code technology helped Gebroeders Van Beek to achieve a solution with full traceability of all their eggs. By using the solution with PowerScan PM8300 readers, Gebroeders Van Beek is able to recall any pallet of eggs in case of an emergency, which is critical for customer safety.

The solution also enabled Gebroeders Van Beek to automate the loading of the grading machines. This means that one man is now loading the grading machines instead of six men in the past, a clear cost benefit from this solution.

Customer

Gebroeders Van Beek

Industry

Manufacturing

Sub-Industry

Food & Beverage

Application

Track and Trace

Country

Netherlands

Datalogic Products

PowerScan™ PM8300

Datalogic DS2100A

Datalogic Partner

Ovotrack

Vierpool BV