



Case Study

LOMA'S LATEST COMBO SYSTEM MAKES A FRENCH CONNECTION

By specifying Loma's latest integrated AS Combo checkweigher and metal detector, Forchy Pâtisserie has improved both the inspection quality and efficiency of its production lines.

The French are renowned for producing fine wines, creamy cheeses and tempting cakes. This enviable reputation has meant French food manufacturers have enjoyed a strong export market based on the country's internationally celebrated produce. One company perpetuating this tradition is Forchy Pâtisserie, bakers of fruit, sponge and chocolate cakes and delicious desserts.

Based in Yvetot near Le Havre, Forchy Pâtisserie manufactures cakes and speciality produce for large supermarkets in France and outlets in Belgium, Italy and Greece. Maintaining stringent quality standards is of paramount importance to safeguarding Forchy's market position, so the company recently invested two state-of-the-art combination inspection units from Loma Systems.

The new machines, which incorporate a Loma IQ² metal detector and Loma AS series checkweigher, supersede the baker's previous system, which relied upon manual product-weight checks and a conventional metal detector system. As Yves Forchy, production manager at Forchy Pâtisserie, explains, the impact of the new all-in-one system was apparent from the outset.

"Since the installation of the new equipment we've been able to manage the weights and metal objects on our production lines more effectively," he says. "The Loma machines have helped us improve the quality of production by enabling us to revise some of our existing processes and decrease the number of weight discrepancies."



The company acquired two Loma AS 1500 Combos last year and installed them at the end of the company's production lines. The machines inspect up to 1,800 packaged units per minute using sophisticated checkweighing equipment that can achieve accuracy levels of $\pm 0.5\text{gm}$ ($\pm 0.017\text{oz}$). In addition, the unit's highly advanced metal-detection system provides sensitivity and versatility - memorising up to 100 different product characteristics.

The two machines operate on four production lines, which Yves says has helped the company gain some much-needed floor space. "We went for Loma's combination metal detector and checkweigher because it's easy to use. It enables us to organise our work more effectively since there is less setting-up time and it frees up more floor space."

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The machines are moved between production lines as the work flow dictates, which has had a knock-on effect for the whole production process. “The systems are very accurate,” Yves says, “so they’ve raised the team’s awareness of better weight management. We revised processes earlier in production to make sure all weights checked by the Loma machines are correct. For instance, we looked at the ingredients in each preparation and adapted them to obtain the correct weight in the final product.”

Inspecting finished products that vary between 275g and 400g in weight, Loma’s AS Combos form an important safety net that safeguards the French manufacturer against the threat of contaminants and the crippling costs of inaccurate product weights. At Forchy Pâtisserie, the machines also reduce the company’s administrative burdens by linking to Loma’s PC-based software package LomaNet 3, which collates reports from the machines and archives them on a central computer.

The ingenious system can store a multitude of reports gathered from up to 31 devices on a daily, weekly or even monthly basis, which has meant the family run business has been able to streamline its administrative functions. Yves says: “The benefits of LomaNet include faster production times, automatic data-storage capabilities and the fact that no paper is needed.”

By adopting a progressive quality control strategy, Forchy Pâtisserie has refined its production practices and secured even greater levels of efficiency. As Yves points out, the introduction of Loma’s AS Combo units have been key to obtaining these improvements. “Since using the Loma machines, Forchy Patisserie has gained time at the end of the production line, but more importantly, we’ve also improved the quality of our production.”
