



ON FURTHER INSPECTION, ARE YOU UP TO DATE?

Loma Systems continues to help food processors meet both the European Food Standards Agency's legislation, HACCP and retailers' requirements to ensure costly product recalls are avoided. Loma's research and development means specific products always meet today's processors needs, whilst providing comprehensive after sales support and maintenance.

With the European recommendation of a common reporting system for all food inspection gathering pace, manufacturers have two main choices to inspect for contaminants: metal detection or X-ray inspection. Metal detection has been available for a number of years, but the latest advances in metal detection technology by Loma Systems mean that equipment is now even more sensitive to contaminants, as well as being more user friendly and designed with a variety of innovative features to meet the increasing demands of food manufacturers.

Previously, metal detectors had to be configured for each product being inspected. The latest developments in metal detection technology mean that detectors can operate at any frequency between 40kHz and 900kHz and have the ability to select the 'correct' operating frequency in seconds. This eliminates the past restrictions caused by single and 'limited' frequency detectors. This feature makes it ideal for the food and packaging industries as major changes in product and packaging no longer require the expense and inconvenience of engineer set up and production downtime is minimised.

Loma have been pioneers in developing this technology and have brought to market their multi frequency IQ³ and IQ³⁺ metal detectors which has already seen huge success across Europe.

Loma's new IQ³⁺ has further enhanced their IQ³ multi-frequency metal detector for improved ease of use. The new IQ³⁺ incorporates an icon driven, intuitive full colour graphical touch screen, making it even simpler for operators to use and achieve maximum functionality from the machine.

Ultimately, metal detectors should be an integral part of food processors' due diligence systems. They are extremely easy to set up, maintain and available in formats to suit a wide range of products and processes. Yet even those companies who have made some investment in the technology need to revisit its effectiveness.

But metal detection is not the only option for contaminant detection. X-ray inspection is becoming increasingly popular as the inspection method of choice amongst European food processors.

The most advanced X-ray systems can now perform multi functions, adding value for manufacturers. In addition, more and more processors can see the benefit of X-ray's advanced inspection abilities. Loma Systems' latest X-ray equipment maximises sensitivity to both metal and non-metallic contaminants such as glass, stone, calcified bone, high-density plastics and rubber and can detect other product defects such as component count, zone mass measurement and shape conformity.

The EU now requires all food businesses to implement a documented food safety management system based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), and leading European supermarkets are driving through X-ray inspection as a 'Code of Practice' for foil or metallised product packaging, meaning reliable and more sensitive X-ray technology is increasingly in demand.

Loma has continued to develop its inspection technology and have produced a new, advanced X-weigh system that combines the best of their top quality, robust X-ray and checkweighing technology. The 'X-weigh' enables the X-ray system to weigh the product whilst simultaneously inspecting for foreign body contaminants in one compact and easy to use format. The combination of the two technologies ensures that food manufacturers' produce is safe and products are consistent in weight, size and shape.

Lastly, with any piece of inspection equipment, manufacturers must consider the robustness and hygienic design of the machine, as without the ability to withstand the harsh washdown procedures (IP69K standards for example) required by some manufacturers, processors can be in breach of the European Food Standards Agency's stipulations. All Loma metal detectors, for example, meet IP69K standards and their entire range is 'designed to survive' even the harshest of manufacturing environments.

Ruud Gruijters, European Sales Director comments, "By utilising the latest advances in inspection equipment, food processors can stay ahead of all EU regulations and continue to streamline production with the help of Loma Systems. Most importantly, by employing the most up-to-date and effective contaminant detection techniques, European processors can protect their brand and reputation."

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