

The complete package

Meat Management today spoke to one of Reiser's packaging specialist, Mike Carrington, about what makes this equipment supplier stand out from the crowd.

Q: What do you see as the main challenges for the meat industry in packaging in the short to medium term?

A: "It's all about the Four Rs – namely, Reduce, Renew, Reuse, Recycle. The main challenge is to meet all three of those criteria but ensuring the pack is still fit for purpose."

"Customers are also mindful about maintaining or extending the shelf life to ensure food waste is kept to a bare minimum and we all would like to see the goals of the Courtauld Agreement achieved."

"Reduction of the pack weight is another target. To achieve all of these I feel strongly that

there must also be an emphasis on lobbying for a major improvement in the UK's recycling facilities. This would mean that more types of plastic can be reused, rather than entering the waste stream."

Q: What are the main concerns of your customers at present, particularly since the advent of Covid-19?

A: "Even prior to lockdown availability of staff and recruitment to the meat industry has been a problem for



customers. Since Covid-19 arrived and the establishment of social distancing principles the move to automation has become even more important for many businesses."

"Reliable equipment, minimising downtime plays a huge part in an industry where the margins are already under huge pressure. Equipment also allows for flexibility in, for example, switching pack formats without incurring major cost."

"We understand that offering simplicity of operation and maintenance, without being reliant on us, as the supplier, is also important in maintaining an efficient processing/manufacturing process."

Q: What can the range of equipment Reiser offer help meet those for your customers?

A: "Our packaging range includes Variovac horizontal form fill seal thermoformers, Supervac's belt fed and swing lid vacuum packers and Ross and Variovac have pre-made tray sealers, both manual and semi to fully automatic machines."



• A wide range of pack formats can all be tried and tested at the company's UK Test Centre.

Q: What are the main product areas your equipment is best suited for?

A: "We serve the whole food industry but within the meat trade we can accommodate anything from in-process packs so, bacon curing, trim packing, to sophisticated retail packs with a high end presentation."

Q: Does your test facility offer manufacturers the chance to test their own products?

A: "At Reiser UK we have a wide range of pack formats that can be tested in our test centre. We can do, simple flexible vacuum packs, semi rigid modified atmosphere packaging, vacuum skin packs and thermoformable board trays."

"New material types can also be tested. For example recyclable flexible film, to assess and understand applications and limitations."

"Our facility can not only be used for packaging tests, but also in conjunction with the full range of food preparation and production equipment available from Reiser."



• The Variovac Primus.



Q: How flexible is the range of equipment you offer – for example from the smaller operator to the big guns?

A: "We supply a wide range of customer from small owner-operator companies making their first foray into thermoforming equipment, to multi-site operations."

"Every single one of our customers receive and benefit from the same robust machine construction and reliability of operation, along with nationwide Reiser technical support as a given."

Q: In your view what makes Reiser stand out against its competitors?

A: "For me the Variovac mantra – Simpler, Faster, Better sums up what we are all about at Reiser."

"We offer superior forming quality from the Variovac Rapid Air System which means optimum pack robustness along with potential reductions in material thickness – which is what customers are looking for. It also speeds up the forming process."

"The Variovac Rapid Air System also provides reliable, repeatable seal integrity. The hygienic design is outstanding and last, but certainly not least it's all about following up on what we promise so I firmly believe our Reiser support – in service, spares and product specialists makes us the complete package for the meat industry."

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Reiser continues to develop its partnership with the UK industry



• The Reiser premises in Milton Keynes.



In this short question and answer session, Managing Director of Reiser UK Richard Watson talks about the philosophy of the business and reveals that 2019 is a landmark year in the company's history.

Q. Over the last twenty six years Reiser UK has pretty much become a household name in the UK meat industry, supplying a variety of famous brands. What do you put the success of the business down to?

A. To answer a complex question simply, I would say it's three things. Great products, great service and a lot of hard work. We are an American owned business, established for 60 years this year and opened our dedicated UK office and service centre in the UK back in 1993.

Since then the growth of the business here has been phenomenal and for many years we have dealt with the biggest names across the UK market, not forgetting the numerous and wide ranging smaller and medium sized enterprises and companies that we have helped get started and work with for many years as they expand too.

Q. What would you say is the 'Unique Selling Proposition' of Reiser UK when it comes to supplying the products you offer the market?

A. Well, one key factor is our relationships with our many suppliers and that gives us the control that we need in ensuring top quality equipment is available through our portfolio and push them to always be developing products for a changing demand.

Customers are reassured that we can meet delivery expectations, and of course, we offer a wide range of options and solutions to meet the growing needs of our customers too. We also back up our products with a state-of-the-art service structure. The other factor is our people and culture, ensuring that the customer is at the centre of everything we do.

Q. Tell us more about service?

A. We are always conscious that down time costs money. Sometimes big money. Reliability as well as quality is a key requirement when processing and producing meat and related products, we are acutely aware of that.



• Richard Watson.

The Reiser Range

Processing Equipment:

- Vemag - Stuffers, grinders, formers, fillers, portioners, depositors, extruders, and coextruders
- Holac - Dicers, slicers, and cutting equipment
- Ross - Tenderizers, meat presses, slicers and BLC impingement tunnels
- Seydelmann - Bowl cutters and choppers, mixers, grinders, and mixing grinders

Packaging Equipment:

- VARIOVAC - Horizontal form/fill/seal packaging machines
- Ross - Tray sealers for case-ready and modified atmosphere packaging
- Supervac - Automatic vacuum chamber packaging machines



• Vemag offers a highly acclaimed range of equipment.

We can often deal with issues remotely from our dedicated service centre in Milton Keynes and our engineers are very experienced and fully trained in our product range. Of course, we also make field visits as required and offer very cost-effective service contracts which provide peace of mind, plus the reassurance that our unique expertise is on-hand to support our customers when they need it.

I have always believed we should offer in-between sales service rather than after sales service. That is why customers have partnered with us over the decades and continue to put their faith in us and the equipment and production solutions we offer.

Q. At what we all know are challenging times, it seems Reiser UK continues to expand. Can you outline what is happening?

A. It is a very exciting time for the company. We have moved into a new UK headquarters and customer centre in Milton Keynes and have significantly upgraded test kitchen facilities. We can work here with customers and our customers customers, and be a fully integrated part of their product development, testing and innovation.

We do not use the term partnering with customers lightly. For many of our customers we have a long-standing strong relationship and see ourselves as a key part in helping their business progress using the latest equipment and techniques.

As a company with 60 years of experience on an international scale, we have the resources to bring ideas, techniques and real innovation to the table. Our customers success is our success and helps with a strong bond in moving forward, becoming more efficient and, of course, making sure the investment by our customers in Reiser equipment and machinery enjoys the very best pay back times.

Q. And finally how do you see the future of the UK meat industry and your part in it?

A. I suppose if it was easy everyone would be doing it! Seriously, we have great faith in our sector 97% of people eat meat and the fact we are making a very substantial investment in our resources to better serve the industry is, I believe, testament to our belief in the future. There are great opportunities out there and we are excited by the challenges and also excited at being part of a sector where so much has been achieved and is still being achieved every day, with more and more innovation.



• VARIOVAC horizontal packaging machines from Reiser UK.

We have a fantastic range of equipment and fantastic people to back it up. Our job is to help customers to do better and become more profitable and that is a task we at Reiser not only enjoy, but look forward to continuing.

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TOMRA: process optimisation in the meat industry

The TOMRA corporate group, headquartered in Norway, is a world leader in collection and sorting machines that guarantee optimal use of resources across a number of industries. In the meat industry the company offers high-speed, sensor-based sorting and analysis machines that save time and improve yield.

Below, Chris Begley, sales director of Vanguard Processing Equipment Ltd, TOMRA agent for the UK and Ireland, and Bruno Gabriel, sales manager, TOMRA Food (food sorting solutions), explain how TOMRA machines help the meat industry achieve higher margins and better quality through more efficient use of resources.

Q: Can you tell us about TOMRA's motto 'Leading the resource revolution'?

BG: This is the basic idea that drives all our business areas and inspires our extensive efforts in research and development. Global resources are limited, but the world's population is growing steadily. We believe it is essential to use and process raw materials – in this case meat – in the best possible way.

The company was established in 1972 by two Norwegian brothers, Petter and

- The TOMRA QV-P line-detector can detect the muscle myopathy in single chicken fillets or butterflies.



• Bruno Gabriel, sales manager UK, Spain and France, TOMRA Sorting NV.

Tore Plank, who developed the world's first automatic bottle collection system. From there, we extended our business to sorting solutions for recycling and mining. Increasingly, we also received requests from the food industry. All our machines boost processing capacity and availability. For us, the resource revolution means cutting food waste while at the same time increasing profit, food quality and food safety.

Q: Can you give some examples of TOMRA's range of applications for the meat industry?

CB: With our fat analyser we have developed an important piece of equipment that allows burger, sausage and salami manufacturers to optimise quality as well as minimise rejections and waste. For meat products it is important that fat content is under control as this leads to high levels of consistency for the production of minced meat, burgers, as well as cured or dried product. In addition, it ensures compliance with legal requirements regarding fat, moisture, protein and collagen in minced meat, burgers and sausages.

Our solutions are extremely reliable and have low ownership costs, which also makes them attractive to small and medium-sized manufacturers. When a manufacturer does not have a fully automatic line, samples need to be taken to be analysed in a lab, and afterwards, the system has to be adjusted. Valuable product and time are wasted, and line capacity is affected. TOMRA's in-line food analysis and process control keeps manual labour and sorting to a minimum.

Q: What solutions do you offer for the poultry industry?

CB: British consumers eat chicken twice a week, on average, and as a result Britain's poultry sector is among the largest in Europe. This can lead to quality issues due to highly intensive farming. The TOMRA QV-P detects and grades chicken fillets in line according to muscle defects. It results in higher end-user quality, and enables accurate grading for further processing.

Q: How does this help in the detection of wooden breast?

BG: Wooden breast is a problem to all primary and further poultry processors, and it is something that TOMRA has looked at intensively in order to develop a solution. Our in-line equipment and dedicated QVision software accurately grades chicken fillets into multiple grades by measuring the chemical composition of each fillet. The grades are determined by the customer and typically range from no presence of woody breast to a severe presence of the condition. This grading information is vital for processors to decide on the use of the chicken fillets for further processing.

Q: How exactly does the TOMRA system measure fat and other components?

BG: The TOMRA range of process analytics solutions uses Transflectance technology which was developed in-house and is based on conventional NIR spectroscopy. Transflectance was developed specially for the meat industry and is the only solution that can scan the product at high speed, covering full belt width and with deep product penetration. When these scan results are combined with the information from the integrated weighing component, real-time measurement of the entire product is possible.



The technology is not sensitive to product presentation e.g. ground, diced, fresh or frozen meat, and enables very high accuracy and capacity.

- Chris Begley, sales director, Vanguard Processing Equipment Ltd, TOMRA agent for the UK and Ireland.



• QVision: a fat, protein and moisture analysis machine for meat which allows suppliers to provide a consistent product quality.

Q: What are some of the meat industry's challenges that you are responding to?

CB: One important aspect is meeting consumer expectations. Consumer attitudes to farming are changing and in the face of these changes the industry needs to provide products that meet expectations and provide consistency.

For meat processors it is important to ensure smarter purchasing through quality control of raw materials, to reduce human and sampling errors, to enable full quality traceability and documentation of batches, and to increase throughput.

TOMRA equipment delivers consistent product quality that provides large savings by increasing profitability and simplifying daily operation.

Q: How does Vanguard Processing Equipment Ltd fit into this?

CB: We have been supplying high quality food processing equipment for over 30 years to the meat and poultry industry throughout the UK and Ireland and believe that TOMRA equipment can be of great benefit to poultry processing plants by providing a solution to the wooden breast problem. For burger, sausage and salami manufacturers TOMRA equipment is the ideal solution to optimise quality, minimise waste and assure that labelling and ingredient specifications are adhered to.

In short: "The TOMRA technology will play a very important part of the manufactured meat products and poultry industry in the future." ■

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