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*Story on page 14*



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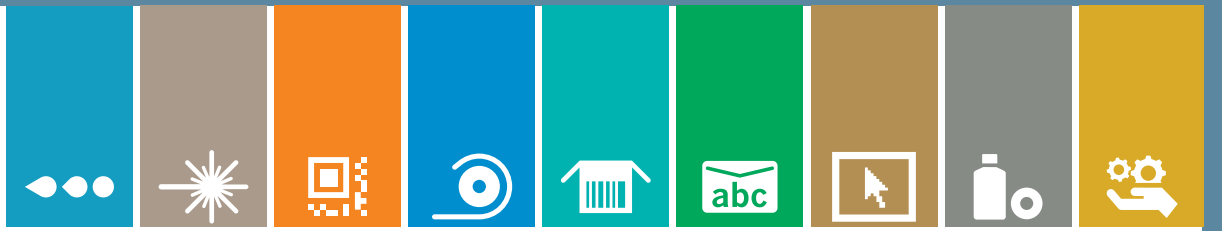
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# CANADIAN PACKAGING

SERVING CANADA'S PACKAGING COMMUNITY SINCE 1947

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## T.O. REEFER MADNESS A SORRY SIGHT

The trouble with epic game-changing promises is the inevitable disappointment and disillusionment that follows when those promises fall short of initial expectations and fanfare.

And while it's too early to wag a finger at our new Liberal federal government for not yet delivering on the party's multitude of pre-election pledges, there are disconcerting signs that the new Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's promise to legalize cannabis for recreational use in Canada may not turn out to be the smooth *fait accompli* that a substantial portion of the Canadian electorate might have expected from a new leader with seemingly impeccable credentials as a progressive trailblazer in tune with the changing times and public mood.

It's not about anything he said, mind you, but rather the deafening silence of indifference from PM's office immediately in the wake of last month's highly public police crackdown on dozens of cannabis dispensaries that have sprung up around Toronto in recent months—hardly to anyone's surprise in the context of one of the most eagerly-anticipated federal legislations in many years, if not decades.

And not just in Canada, mind you: the rest of the world is also keenly watching how Ottawa goes about legalizing cannabis for all adult-age consumers some time in the spring of 2017.

Being the first G7 country to do so has already earned both Justin and Canada an enormous amount of priceless goodwill and admiration on the international stage in recent months, along with a moral responsibility to deliver a workable blueprint.

As *The Economist* pointed out in its recent leadoff editorial: "Trailblazers like Canada are writing rules

that the rest of the world will copy; once laid down, they will be hard to uproot." (*The Economist*, February 13-19, 2016)

So it would be epic shame and cowardice if any proposed legislation fails to deliver on the basic underlying promise of being the beginning of the end of a tragically futile and costly world war on weed driven largely by dubious science and systemic, institutionalized public misinformation.

Alas, it was all there to see as Toronto's finest carried out their dispensaries purge in downtown Toronto on the afternoon of May 26—ironically two days before the city was to host thousands of visitors to the *Lift Cannabis Expo* exhibition at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

Resulting in 90 arrests and 186 charges, the infamous *Project Claudia* operation provided Toronto police and local politicians a grandstanding, gloating and cynically self-serving photo-op far out of proportion with the amount of cannabis seized—about 600 kilos of product, with half the weight in form of pot-infused edibles and drinkables.

With Toronto street dealers and lawyers being the crackdown's only beneficiaries, Canada's 'trailblazing' aspirations are in grave danger of losing their shine and stardust if such pre-emptive heavy-handedness is allowed to spill into other jurisdictions ahead of a proper parliamentary debate and vote.

Given the enormous economic stimulus that cannabis legalization would breathe into our skittish economy—along with a multitude of exciting new business opportunities for Canada's innovation-shy packaging business—every day wasted before cannabis is made fully legit, as promised, is an opportunity missed. And that's a real bummer, man. 🍁

George Guidoni

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Cover photography by Naomi Hiltz



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## SQUEEZE BOTTLE PASSES THE MUSTARD TEST WITH A TASTEFUL SUMMER PRODUCT LAUNCH

If variety is the spice of life, then the venerable **Maille** brand of mustard is nothing less than living proof to the notion—offering consumers worldwide an extensive range of authentic gourmet mustard blends to help turn ordinary foods into memorable taste sensations.

Produced in France since 1747 by **La Maison Maille**, the **Maille** brand not only earned the north-eastern French city of Dijon timeless fame in the world of global cuisine with its namesake variety of super-tangy *Dijon* mustard, but has also grown its product portfolio to comprise 84 varieties of mustard and over 120 gourmet vinegars.

Here in Canada, the **Maille** brand has just expanded its local product range earlier this month with the launch of an all-new **Maille Honey Dijon** blend at supermarkets and grocery stores across the country just in time for the upcoming tidal wave of summer barbecues, picnics, campfire cookouts and

other outdoorsy meal occasions.

Previously available exclusively at select gourmet food stores in the brand's traditional wide-mouth glass jars, the **Maille Honey Dijon** is now also retailing nationally in the shatterproof, 250-gram plastic squeeze bottles that make this delicately balanced blend of tangy Dijon and sweet blossom honey a mess-free snap to take along to cottage vacations, a picnic in the park, or for dining *al fresco* at home.

Notably, the brand's classic elegant black-and-gold labeling and closure retain their one-of-a-kind classy elegance that has long earned the brand's long-time mainstays—including **Maille Dijon**, **Horseradish**, **Province Style**, **Creamy Dijon** and **White Wine** mustards—an intensely loyal following among discerning Canadian consumers.

For all its undeniable widespread taste appeal,



though, one of mustard's arguably best-kept secrets is its multitude of health benefits—actually being the only condiment that is allowed in most popular weight-loss diets.

“For adults trying to cut down their fat intake, a tablespoon of mustard has far fewer calories than, for instance, a tablespoon of mayonnaise,” says Harry Lasousis, in-house sommelier for the **Maille Boutique** showcase store in London, U.K., one of the company's six boutique locations worldwide.

“Likewise, mustard is a healthier option for kids who tend to love high-sugar ketchup,” says Lasousis, citing the product's high nutrient content of *omega-3* fatty acids, selenium, fiber, protein, magnesium and calcium.

“Mustard can increase saliva by as much as eight times to aid in the digestive process,” Lasousis explains, “and eating spicy, whole-grain mustard can even increase your metabolism by as much as 25 per cent immediately following consumption.”

## CRAFT DRINKMAKER MAINTAINS ITS HIGH-FLYING START IN THE CANADIAN MARKET

Traditionally confined to bars, pubs and taverns, mixed cocktails have come a long way in the Canadian alcoholic beverage market in the 21<sup>st</sup> century so far—in large part thanks to highly innovative and entrepreneurial craft spirits producers like the London, Ont.-based **Black Fly**.

Named after one of Canada's most cunning insect pests that flies largely under the radar to deliver a mighty bite out of nowhere, the 11-year-old company has likewise taken the market by storm over the last decade—as evidenced by its fast-growing product range and lighting-fast growth in market share.

With last month's launch of the new **Black Fly Gin Tom Collins** bottles and **Black Fly Vodka Sour Raspberry** tall-boy cans, the company now produces 13 different pre-mixed cocktail recipes retailing nationwide (excluding Quebec), while enjoying about a six-percent share of the estimated \$240-million market for RTD (ready-to-drink) alcoholic beverages in Ontario.

“In crafting new Black Fly mixed drinks, we always look to deliver authentic, classic flavors in the Black Fly style, which means we use quality ingredients, real juices and real spirits to deliver what we promise: not-too-sweet, refreshing, ready-to-drink mixed drinks that are delicious all year round,” explains Black Fly co-founder Cathy Siskind-Kelly.

“Our Black Fly drinks are safe to serve and enjoy wherever glass is not welcome—offering an easy choice for barbecues, cottage entertaining, backyard parties, and at home with friends anytime,” she states. “Serving Black Fly drinks is an easy way to make sure you spend your party actually enjoying the party.”

Made with real lime and lemon juices and lightly sweetened with cane sugar, the **Black Fly Gin Tom Collins** is a light, tart and refreshing classic cocktail packed in shatterproof, resalable 400-ml plastic bottles retailing in high-impact, decorative paperboard four-packs—produced by **Packaging Technologies Inc. (PTI)**—that provide an equivalent of nine standard bar drinks, according to Black Fly.

For its part, the new **Black Fly Vodka Sour Raspberry** combines the irresistible taste of fresh raspberry juice blended with smooth, Can-

adian-made vodka in the 473-ml single-serving aluminum cans boasting high-impact graphics created by the London, Ont.-based **Backwell Design Inc.**

With its fast-growing variety of flavors, Black Fly has also expanded its in-house packaging capabilities with the introduction of varied 12-bottle **Bar in a Box** party-packs comprising three bottles of four of the company's craft-produced cocktails, which include the all-time classic recipes such as *Tequila Margarita*, *Long Island Iced Tea*, *Whiskey Sour* and *Rum Mojito*, among others.

Packaged in pre-printed corrugated carriers supplied by **Norampac Inc.**, the 12-bottle variety pack offers the convenience of a portable, on-the-go mini-bar requiring nothing more than some ice to serve up some upscale, cosmopolitan thirst-quenchers.

“Our diverse range of mixed drinks creates an instant and varied bar for parties—delivering refreshing classic mixed drinks that are ready-to-serve and offer the perfect pairing with wine and beer to simplify entertaining and to round out a great bar selection,” says Siskind-Kelly, who co-founded the company with her partner Rob Kelly in 2005 after receiving the first distillery license awarded in Ontario in about 100 years.

Siskind-Kelly relates both partners knew from the outset that quality packaging would be key to their success, securing the services of London, Ont.-based graphic designers **Hall and Associates** to create the distinct Black Fly ‘Splat’ logo that is replicated throughout all the main product packaging and labeling components to project a strong common brand identity.

As she recalls, the splashy ‘Splat’ graphic was developed in large part by actually hurling and smashing fresh blueberries against a white screen.

“As an independent Canadian spirit producer competing in a category dominated by global companies, we knew our packaging would need to not only capture consumers' attention on the shelf, but ensure that we communicated what was special and unique in the bottle,” Siskind-Kelly told **Canadian Packaging** recently. “Traditionally, coolers and other RTD beverages targeted women consumers, with suppliers mostly dominated by large global brands.

“So we looked at what the craft-beer brewers were delivering to consumers and saw an opportunity to bring craft-produced spirit beverages to today's consumers—both men and women—that were embracing the idea of buying locally-made, high-quality drinks made with superior ingredients and packaged in unique, convenient, and environmentally progressive packaging.”



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# NOTES & QUOTES



From Left: FoldedColor Packaging co-owner Jackie Steiner, founder Macy Steiner, president Jan Steiner, and director of business development Patrick Green accepting the Silver Edison Award at the Edison Awards Gala ceremony in New York City.

■ **FoldedColor Packaging**, Corona, Ca.-based online supplier of custom-printed folding cartons, has been awarded a **Silver Edison Award** in the competition's Work and Home Environment category for the company's web-to-carton online ordering system for cost-effective production of short-run folding carton orders. Selected following a thorough review process conducted by experts in the fields of science, technology, design, engineering and marketing, the company's unique web-based order entry system allows customers to select box templates online, obtain instant pricing, edit online or offline, approve their design through an interactive 3D proof, order short-runs as low as 50 boxes, print unlimited spot colors at no additional charge, and receive their order in as little as five to seven business days. "This prestigious award validates our team's hard work and ingenuity in creating an exciting technological advancement in the folding-carton industry," says FoldedColor president and chief executive officer Jan Steiner. "Through intuitive online design tools, low order minimums and proven production capabilities, we've successfully made gorgeous custom-printed cartons available to the masses." According to FoldedColor, all folding cartons are manufactured from fully-recyclable, **SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative)**-certified **SBS (solid bleached sulfate)** paperboard, employing proprietary extended color gamut printing technology and a seven-color offset process to produce brilliant colors and graphics.

■ Industrial conveying systems manufacturer **Dorner Mfg. Corp.** of Hartland, Wis., has completed the acquisition of **Geppert-Band**, Jülich, Germany-based manufacturer of modular belt conveyors. "As we continue to see growth internationally, the addition of Geppert-Band will allow us to better serve the European market," says Dorner's chief executive officer Terry Schadeberg. "Its product offering and capabilities complement our existing strategy," he adds, "and we're very pleased to welcome them to the Dorner family."



■ Industrial products distributor and mechanical repair services provider **Wajax Equipment** has acquired the business assets of Montreal-based **Wilson Machine Co. Ltd.**, an established provider of repair services for industrial gearboxes and precision rotating machinery founded in 1913. "The acquisition of Wilson further enhances our position of being a leading provider of asset management, repair and maintenance services in Canada," says Wajax vice-president of service operations and engineering David Dembski. "With this valuable addition to our team, we can now manage all stages of the customer's asset life-cycle in-house: from failure analysis to on-site gearbox inspections and installation support."

■ **Motion Industries, Inc.**, Birmingham, Ala.-headquartered supplier of industrial power transmission and control technologies and a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Genuine Parts Company**, has reached a definitive agreement to acquire **Colmar Belting Company**, Boston, Ma.-based regional distributor of power transmis-

sion products and conveyor belting for manufacturing, food-processing, HVAC and recycling industries. "Growth is the key driver behind this transaction, and the complement of Colmar's belting and power transmission expertise places us in an even stronger competitive position in the northeast region," says Motion Industries senior vice-president of shops and services Tony Cefalu, adding all Colmar locations will continue to operate under existing management teams. "We are excited to be part of Motion Industries," say Colmar's co-owners Michelle and Rob Labossiere. "Joining the Motion Industries team allows Colmar to continue to provide outstanding service to our customers, while providing excellent opportunities for our employees."



■ **ORBIS Corporation**, Oconomowoc, Wis.-headquartered manufacturer of reusable plastic pallets and other packaging products for transit and distribution, has selected its Toronto manufacturing facility as the company's **Plant of the Year** award recipient for 2015. Employing 140 people to manufacture plastic totes for food-and-beverage and other consumers goods industries, the Toronto plant was selected in recognition of its achievements in exceeding the company's goals and milestones in the areas of employee relations, manufacturing efficiency, cost management, profitability and labor optimization, according to ORBIS. "We really strive to get our team involved in all aspects of the business: be it safety, quality, productivity or continuous improvement," says Toronto plant manager Steve Smith. "In 2015 we achieved our best-ever performance," he adds, "and are extremely proud to receive this award for a second time since 2012."



1997

Creation of **NORAMPAC**, a partnership between **CASCADES** and **DOMTAR**



2006

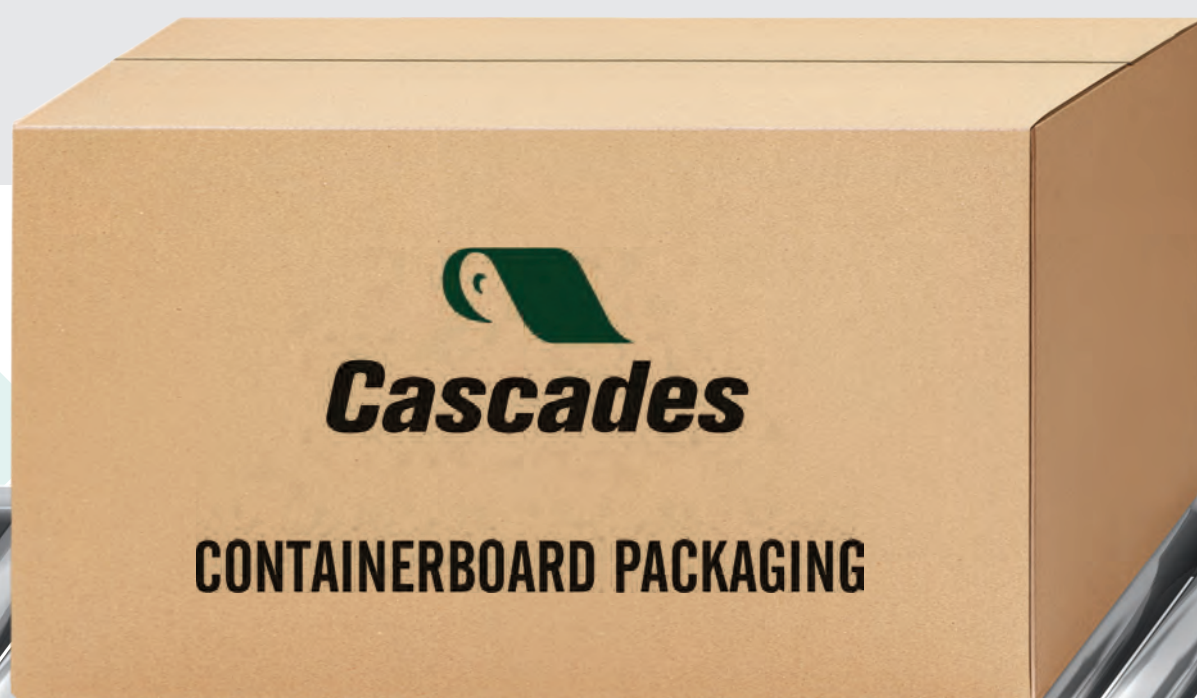
**CASCADES** becomes the sole owner of **NORAMPAC**



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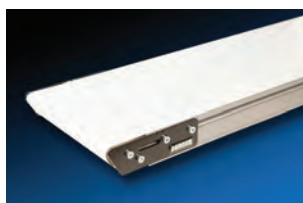
## BELTING IT OUT

The newly-redesigned **2200 Series** belt conveyors from **Dorner Mfg. Corp.** incorporate a range of new value-added performance features such as a high-speed nose bar transfer option, redesigned frame, additional belting and expanded guiding to provide a stronger, faster and more flexible platform for small to medium-sized part applications.

According to Dorner, the new single-piece frame design reduces the need for additional stands to handle loads of up to 120 pounds, while the nose bar transfer option with V-guided belt tracking helps to ensure safe transfer of parts at speeds of up to 200 feet per minute for enhanced productivity.

**Dorner Mfg. Corp.**

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## SETTING A REALLY HI BAR

Developep to offer a more sustainable condiments packaging solution for the foodservice industry, the new **Hi-Bar** condiment trays from **Winpak** boasts a fully-recyclable, proprietary material structure that avoids the use of PVDC coating, while also offering superior moisture and oxygen barrier compared to traditional PVDC-coated polystyrene (PP) trays. Available as pre-formed condiment trays for applications such as dipping sauces, salad dressings and condiments like ketchup, BBQ sauce and mustard, the **Hi-Bar** material can also be supplied in rollstock form for high-speed FFS (form/fill/seal) packaging of condiments, aseptically-filled coffee creamers, jams, jellies, syrups, etc., on the **Winpak Hi-Bar WC-5** packaging machine that can fill up to 700 cups per minute, using the **Hi-Bar Rollstock Lidding** material to ensure superior product protection and consumer-friendly peelability at the point of use.

**Winpak**

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## COLOR YOUR WORLD

The new **ColorWorks C7500G** label printer from **Epson America, Inc.** allows industrial manufacturers to print on-demand color labels on glossy media at high speeds using the company's long-lasting, instant-drying **UltraChrome** ink to produce bright, vibrant, photo-quality colors on glossy label surfaces. Powered by Epson's **PrecisionCore** print chip technology, the robust benchtop on-demand printer is intended primarily for high-mix, low-volume applications that require a large number of label varieties—enabling users to achieve significant label cost savings by eliminating the need to maintain a large inventory of pre-printed color labels. Equipped with **ZPL II** programming compatibility to allow direct plug-in replacement for manufacturers operating two-step printing with traditional thermal-transfer printers, the printer produces full-color labels from blank stock by automatically merging “color pre-print” images that are stored in the printer's memory with existing unmodified monochrome data streams—producing high-resolution images with very precise dot placement at speeds of up to 11.8 inches per second.

**Epson America, Inc.**

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## BUILT FOR LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

The **HL6200** series high-speed palletizer from **Columbia Machine** has recently been extensively redesigned to enhance safety, flexibility and performance with a contemporary, completely modular, clean-design and user-friendly machine with fully-integrated upper and lower guarding, full-height light curtains, patent-pending dual slot automatic hoist pins, ergonomic low step-height machine access, level interior rollers surfaces, and interlocked hoist area access doors. Designed to deliver optimal operational flexibility, the **HL6200** combines Columbia's operator-friendly **Product Manager** HMI (human-machine interface) terminal, a bi-parting stripper apron and modular construction into a compact footprint to allow the user to adjust and modify layer patterns, view and export production reports, adjust drive speeds and timer settings, and access manuals and schematics all through the HMI. For its part, the machine's bi-parting stripper apron—combined with the case stops in the row-forming area—enables users to create gaps in both front-to-back or side-to-side orientations. Built for reliable around-the-clock operation, the modular **HL6200** can consistently palletize at rates of up to 120 cases per minute, depending on the pattern, while accommodating standard speed enhancements—such as a dual infeed or conversion to an inline configuration—to meet any new future line speed requirements.

**Columbia Machine**

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## GETTING A FULL GRIP

The new **piGRIP** suction cup grippers from **Piab AB** are offered with a broad range of lips, bellows and fittings—in sizes from 25-mm to 77-mm—to offer unrivaled customization flexibility to handle a broad variety of products when deployed across a diverse range of packaging machinery, including robotic arms, rotary cartoners, labeling machines and carton erectors. Designed to ensure superior suction grip for higher machine speeds, the **piGrip** grippers feature an industry-first modular suction cup to allow users to choose the right lips for their specific applications. This includes flexible lips to provide extra sealing capability for the handling of surface-leaking and porous materials—such as corrugated cardboard—or foam lips for hard-to-handle products such as rigid food packages, or lids with heavily textured surfaces. Moreover, all of the bellows have a proprietary thin-wall design said to ensure faster compression and higher lifting force compared to conventional cups of the same size.

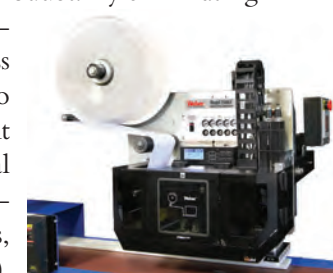
**Piab USA, Inc.**

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## BREAKING FREE FROM THE NORM

The new model **5500LF LinerFree** label printer-applicator from **Weber Packaging Solutions** uses breakthrough adhesive activation technology, from **NuLabel** to dispense, cut-to-to-size and apply linerless labels using standard tamp-blow applying method, whereby the specially-coated dry adhesive material is activated using NuLabel's proprietary, formulated water-based solution that contains no solids and evaporates almost immediately before being attached to the product. By eliminating the need for a traditional pressure-sensitive liner, the pre-coated roll can hold twice the amount of labels—resulting in less downtime and a ‘zero waste-to-landfill solution,’ according to the companies. Equipped with a robust **Zebra ZE-500** print engine that can operate in thermal-transfer or direct thermal mode, the **5500LF** system also features browser-based monitoring, numerous I/O's for connection to external devices, one-to-one media consumption (for thermal-transfer mode),



FOR MORE INFORMATION CIRCLE 107



and durable construction to withstand harsh industrial environments.

**Weber Marking Systems - Canada** 406

ALL READY TO GO

Developed specifically for retort pouch applications, the new *Barialox SBR2* film from **Toray Plastics (America), Inc.** is a high-barrier, transparent, aluminum oxide-coated

polyester film engineered to deliver superior thermal stability and mechanical properties—including high-strength and dimensional stability—to withstand the rigors of the converting process and the intense high heat and pressure of retort sterilization. Demonstrating high resistance to pin-holing, flex-cracking, scuffing and abrasion, the *SBR2* can also be reverse-printed to create a colorful, attractive package that can be safely microwaved with a broad range of pouched food products, including seafood, chicken, prepared meals, rice, vegetables, sauces and many other foodstuffs packaged in stand-up pouching.

**Toray Plastics (America), Inc.** 407

torque intermittent mechanism and an optimized drive curve to maintain stable high-speed movement of main platen, which decreases the stretch of gripper chains and increases the longevity of gripper bar chains.

**Masterwork USA**

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GOING UPWARDLY MOBILE

Designed to facilitate dust-free transfer of bulk materials from drums into process equipment and storage vessels, the new *TIP-TITE Mobile Drum Dumper* from **Flexicon Corporation** is mounted on a mobile frame with quick-action floor jacks for stable operation anywhere in the plant. In operation, a hydraulic cylinder raises the drum carriage to seal the drum rim against a discharge cone, after which a second hydraulic cylinder tips the carriage-hood assembly and drum—stopping at a predetermined dump angle of 45, 60 or 90 degrees with

a motion-dampening feature. As the assembly approaches its fully-tilted position, the outlet of the discharge cone mates with a gasketed receiving-ring inlet—fitted to existing process equipment or to the lid of an optional hopper with integral pneumatic, tubular cable or flexible screw conveyor—creating a dust-tight seal. Once the discharge cone is seated against the gasket, a pneumatically-actuated slide-gate valve opens up to allow material to enter the receiving vessel. Capable of accommodating 114- to 208-liter drums weighing up to 340 kilograms, the dumper can be outfitted with an optional pneumatically-actuated vibrator on the discharge cone to help ensure complete evacuation of all the non-free-flowing materials that may be left behind.

**Flexicon Corporation**

409



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## CASCADES HELPING U.S. SAUSAGE HEAVYWEIGHT TO LIGHTEN ITS CARBON LOAD

Good packaging ideas tend to travel well once they pass the muster with consumers, and for Canada's leading tissue and packaging products group **Cascades Inc.**, reaching a deal to supply one of America's largest pork processors with more sustainable foam trays to pack its flagship brand of dinner sausages certainly opens up a whole new world of enticing growth opportunities.

Introduced in the Canadian marketplace in 2013, the company's **EVOK** range of polystyrene foam



trays—made with 25-percent recycled content—is poised to become a common sight on the fresh-meat shelves of U.S. supermarkets and grocery shops in coming years, with leading sausage producer **Johnsonville Sausage, LLC**

already transitioning its fresh dinner sausage offerings to the more eco-sensitive packaging option. Now being manufactured at the Cascades' U.S.-based installations, the **EVOK** trays are expected to enable the country's largest sausage brand to reduce its GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions by 15 per cent,

according to Cascades, compared to using trays made from regular polystyrene foam.

According to the two companies, such reductions will add up to the 750 metric tons of carbon-dioxide annually, which is equivalent to more than 270,000 round trips to the grocery store in an average-size vehicle.

"This partnership reinforces our leadership position as a manufacturer of environmentally-friendly packaging for fresh food and our dedication to being a solution provider of choice for our clients," says Luc Langevin, president and chief operating officer of **Cascades Specialty Products Group** in Kingsey Falls, Que.

## Pineberry Manufacturing Inc. Appoints New Regional Sales Manager

Pineberry Manufacturing Inc. has named Daniel Liverant Sales Manager for Latin America and Eastern North America.

Pineberry Manufacturing Inc. recently appointed Daniel Liverant to its growing sales department. As one of Pineberry's Regional Sales Managers, Daniel will be responsible for driving the sales strategy and operations, maintain customer relationships, participate/attend industry trade shows and events, and work with the Pineberry team to sell, concept, design, quote and implement projects in his territory. He will report to David McCharles, President and CEO of Pineberry Manufacturing Inc.

Daniel is an accomplished B2B sales professional with a proven track record. He has managed his own sales territories, networked with customers and industry professionals, and maintained customer relationships throughout his career.

Since 1984, Pineberry Manufacturing Inc. has been developing high-quality friction feeding, printing, packaging and custom automation solutions for the plastic card, packaging, distribution, food and beverage, pharmaceutical, graphic arts, and mailing and fulfillment industries. Additionally, Pineberry specializes in integration, working with OEM's and providing customized solutions for the most demanding environments. Whether it is a standardized leaflet feeder, feeding and labeling bags, feeding cookies or an integrated custom solution, Pineberry has the expertise to provide exceptional products to make your project a success.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CIRCLE 109

## PUTTING PEDAL TO THE METAL FOR CROWNING GLORY

Being infinitely recyclable without losing its original strength and product protection properties, metal packaging continues to play a key role in the ongoing efforts by multinational brands to introduce more sustainable packaging into the global marketplace—as the recent U.K. launch of several bestselling coffee brands from **Nestlé Professional** attests.

Manufactured by **CROWN Aerosols & Specialty Packaging Europe** in Mansfield, U.K., the new metal containers—made in 500-gram, 750-gram and one-kilogram sizes for the **NESCAFÉ Original**, **NESCAFÉ Gold Blend** and **NESCAFÉ Azera** brands—were developed after extensive consumer research conducted by Nestlé earlier in the year.

According to Nestlé, "Consumers were impressed with the premium feel of the metal packaging, the function-



ality of shape, and the resealable hinged lid that further protects the product within."

In fact, Nestlé adds that its consumer surveys about the new packaging, which replaces the old composite cylindrical tin with a plastic overcap, "some of the most positive results seen by the company for any packaging format."

The new **NESCAFÉ** packaging consists of three main components:

- A three-piece tin with a rounded, rectangular shape;
- A resealable hinged-lid plastic cap, developed by **AptarGroup, Inc.**, which uses patented *Click to Close* technology to keep contents fresh and flavorful;
- The **PeelSeam** peelable end, manufactured by Crown, consisting a thin, flexible aluminum-foil lid heat-sealed to a rigid steel ring for easy removal.

"Once again, metal has presented itself as the 'go-to' material for a world-leading brand," says Véronique Curulla, marketing director at **CROWN Aerosols & Specialty Packaging Europe**.

As Curulla relates, Crown worked closely with Nestlé from initial concept to final completion to develop a contemporary-looking container with a more ergonomic and user-friendly shape to enable consumers to hold it easily with one hand.

Curulla also points out that metal naturally lends itself to a crisper, more premium finish in terms of decoration—making it exceptionally well-ideally suited for the high-quality graphics on Nestlé packaging.

Says Curulla: "We are incredibly proud of what we have achieved with Nestlé: the new tins represent a truly collaborative effort between Crown's European teams and Nestlé's own creative group."

"The feedback received from consumer research speaks for itself and demonstrates that working in close partnership with our customers can deliver outstanding results."



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## A SWEDE AND SIMPLE SOLUTION FOR MILK PACKAGING CHECKS ALL THE RIGHT BOXES

For Swedish dairy producer **Skånemejerier**, embracing sustainable packaging comes naturally.

So being the first European company to market its product in the first one-liter milk bottle made entirely from non-oil based bio polymer produced from sugar cane is all part of the environmentally-conscious corporate culture that helped make it the country's third-largest dairy company.

"Sustainability is a vital consideration throughout all our operations, including our packaging, where we always seek to choose a solution with minimal impact on the environment," says the company's sustainability manager Armina Nilsson.

Developed by the **RPC Group's** Denmark-based division **RPC Promens Consumer Nordics**,

the new **Module** bottle not only boasts 100-percent renewable content, but also uses special mineral filler in its construction to reduce the amount of polymer required to make each bottle.

For now, Skånemejerier is using the **Module** bottle—available with a choice of closures and features a four-sided label applied by RPC Promens—for its range of non-homogenized milk. (See Picture)

"The new bottle from RPC Promens is ideal for our milk," says the dairy's strategic purchaser Thore Bengtsson. "We have an excellent working relationship with the company, and their ability to handle the tight deadlines for this project



was particularly beneficial."

According to RPC Promens, as consumers continue to take a greater interest in the types of foods they are buying, their focus is also starting to switch to the way those products are packaged.

"According to [market research firm] Euromonitor, one of the top 10 global trends in 2016 is greener food," says RPC Promens senior sales manager Jan Weier.

"There has been strong growth in organic food products recently, leading to more attention being paid to how they are packed," Weier explains. "By using this new material, we can offer our customers a renewable and sustainable solution."

## CARTON BOTTLE IN TIME FOR SPRING

It may be the proverbial drop in the ocean for now, but the impending launch of a **Tetra Top** carton bottle in the U.S.—manufactured by **Tetra Pak** primarily from plant-based materials—seems like a bright idea whose time has clearly arrived.

Marketed by the Glens Fall, N.Y.-based **JUST Goods, Inc.**, the 500-ml **Tetra Top** bottles used to package the company's **JUST** brand of 100-percent spring water incorporate caps and tops made from **HDPE** (high-density polyethylene) material derived from renewable sugar-cane. Combined with the **FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)**-certified paperboard used in the main sleeve of the carton, the new package boasts 82-percent renewable content.

"Compared with different types of plastic water bottles, this bottle innovation significantly reduces the product's carbon footprint, which aligns well with our business ethos," says **JUST** Goods chief executive Grace Jeon.

Sourced from the Glens Falls watershed in the Adirondack Mountains, the **JUST** water brand will initially retail at **Whole Foods Market** stores across the U.S., as well as at numerous U.S. airport restaurants and fast-food eateries operated by **OTG Management**.

"We started **JUST** with the belief that everyday products should evolve in ways that will continually reduce their impact on the environment," Jeon points out, "while creating positive impact in communities where we operate."

According to Jeon, **JUST** Goods had negotiated a deal with Glens Falls to pay six times the municipal rate for the water it sources from the watershed, a protected landmark, while promising not to use more than three per cent of the excess watershed.



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**June 21-24**

Munich, Germany: **Automatica 2016**, international robotics and automation technologies exhibition by Messe München GmbH. At the Messe München Trade Fair Center. To register, go to: [www.automatica-muenchen.com](http://www.automatica-muenchen.com)

**June 23**

Toronto: **The Business of Water: Canadian Water Summit 2016**, by PAC, Packaging Consortium. At Hilton Toronto. Contact Lisa Abraham via email [registration@watersummit.ca](mailto:registration@watersummit.ca); or go to: [www.watersummit.ca](http://www.watersummit.ca)

**Sept. 7-10**

Jakarta, Indonesia: **IndoPlas, IndoPack** and **IndoPrint**, international plastics, processing and packaging, and printing exhibitions by Messe Düsseldorf Asia and PT. Wahana Kemalanaga Makmur (WAKENI). All at the Jakarta International Expo. In Canada, contact Messe Düsseldorf (Canada) at (416) 598-1524.

**Sept. 13-15**

Chicago: **Labelexpo Americas 2016**, labeling technologies exhibition by Tarsus Group Ltd. At Donald E. Stephens Convention Center. To register, go to: [www.labelexpo-americas.com](http://www.labelexpo-americas.com)

**Sept. 28-29**

Niagara Falls, Ont.: **PAC to the Future: Packaging in 2025**, conference by PAC, Packaging Consortium. At Hilton Niagara Falls. To register, contact Lisa Abraham of PAC via email [labraham@pac.ca](mailto:labraham@pac.ca); or go to: [www.pac.ca](http://www.pac.ca)

**Oct. 4-7**

Tokyo: **Tokyo Pack 2016**, packaging technologies exhibition by the Japan Packaging Institute. At the Tokyo Big Sight Exhibition Center. To register, go to: [www.tokyo-pack.jp/en](http://www.tokyo-pack.jp/en)

**Oct. 12-14**

Nairobi, Kenya: **East Afripack 2016**, regional processing, packaging and converting technologies exhibition by Ipack-Ima Spa. At the Kenyatta International Conference Center. To register, go to: [www.ipackima.it](http://www.ipackima.it)

**Oct. 13**

Toronto: **Ontario Craft Brewers Conference & Suppliers Marketplace 2016**, by Ontario Craft Brewers (OCB). At Allstream Centre at the Exhibition Place. Contact Christine Mulkins at (647) 242-3686; or via email [pr@ontariocraftbrewers.com](mailto:pr@ontariocraftbrewers.com)

**Oct. 19-26**

Düsseldorf, Germany: **K 2016**, international trade fair for the global plastics and rubber industries by Messe Düsseldorf GmbH. At Messe Düsseldorf Fairgrounds. Contact Messe Düsseldorf (Canada) at (416) 598-1524.

**Nov. 6-9**

Chicago: **PACK EXPO International 2016**, international packaging technologies exhibition by PMMI-The Association for Packaging and Processing Technologies. Concurrently with **Pharma EXPO 2016** pharmaceutical and packaging conference and trade show by ISPE (International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering). Both at the McCormick Place. To register, contact PMMI at (571) 612-3200; or please go to: [www.packexpointernational.com](http://www.packexpointernational.com)

**Nov. 14-15**

Amsterdam, The Netherlands: **AIPIA World Congress and Exhibition on Active & Intelligent Packaging**, by Active & Intelligent Packaging Industry Association (AIPIA). At Mövenpick Hotel Amsterdam City Centre. To register, please go to: [www.aipia.info/congress](http://www.aipia.info/congress)

**Nov. 14-17**

Paris, France: **ALL4PACK Paris**, global marketplace for packaging, processing, printing and handling by Comexposium Group. At Paris Nord Villepinte. To register, please go to: [www.all4pack.com](http://www.all4pack.com)

**Nov. 29-30**

Berlin, Germany: **European Bioplastics Conference**, by European Bioplastics. At Steigenberger Hotel. To register, please go to: [www.european-bioplastics.org](http://www.european-bioplastics.org)

**2017****Feb. 27 - March 1**

Philadelphia, Pa.: **PACK EXPO East**, packaging technologies exhibition by PMMI-The Association for Packaging and Processing Technologies. At the Pennsylvania Convention Center. To register, go to: [www.packexpoeast.com](http://www.packexpoeast.com)



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# BEYOND SKIN-DEEP

A high-speed Coca-Cola canning line deploys innovative sensor technology to predict and prevent potential product quality issues in real time

BY GEORGE GUIDONI, EDITOR  
PHOTOS BY NAOMI HILTZ

Just as an ounce of prevention is always better than a pound of cure, resolving product quality issues before they occur is a priceless commodity for today's busy high-speed packaging lines.

And you'd be hard pressed to find things busier or faster than the four high-speed canning lines housed at a sprawling, 225,000-square-foot production facility operated by **Coca-Cola Refreshments Canada** in Toronto's northwest neighborhood of Weston.

A key part of **Coca-Cola's** Canadian manufacturing footprint for over 60 years, the 130-employee Weston canning plant runs largely flat-out on a three-shift, six-days-a-week schedule to produce millions of cases of canned **Coca-Cola**, **Diet Coke** and **Coke Zero** brands of the company's beloved cola beverages for coast-to-coast distribution across Canada.

Along with packaging the **Nestea** brand of iced teas and co-packing the fast-growing **Monster** brand of energy drinks, the Weston plant is a highly automated operation whose somewhat weathered exterior belies the wealth of modern, cutting-edge technologies employed inside to produce over 50 different fast-moving SKUs (stock-keeping units) at lightning throughput speeds and under extremely tight tolerance levels for final product quality.

Producing a fairly diverse range of packaging sizes and formats—from banded six-packs to 32-can boxes, in sizes from 222-ml 'mini-cans' to the wide-mouth 695-ml 'King cans'—the Weston plant takes pride in putting a high premium on product



Above: The information picked up by the drone can's sensors is read by a series of black-colored Quantifeel tags positioned along the canning line and displayed as a pressure heat map on the system's touchscreen terminal.

Left: Quality assurance manager Kavitha Naidu holds up the Quantifeel drone can embedded with tiny sensors within its rubbery red skin surface to pick up and record all the points of impact while traveling along the line.





Manufactured by the Ball Packaging production facility in Whitby, Ont., the lightweight 355-ml aluminum cans of Coca-Cola are automatically rinsed and conveyed towards filling stages just above a high-volume blower positioned underneath to remove all excess moisture from the cans.

quality, according to the plant's quality assurance manager Kavitha Naidu and plant manager Omar Silva-Zapata.

"The Weston facility has adapted to the many changes in the industry," says Silva-Zapata, citing four major plant upgrades, expansions and modernization projects carried out at the venerable facility over the years. "Our experienced workforce is diligent and passionate about producing the Coca-Cola brands, working extremely hard to guard our reputation.

"Our production lines are continuously upgraded to ensure state-of-the-art performance," Silva-Zapata told *Canadian Packaging* on a recent visit to the Weston plant.

"The result is a lean operation that is competitive, flexible and capable of ensuring the highest standards of quality and food safety for our customers and consumers," he states.

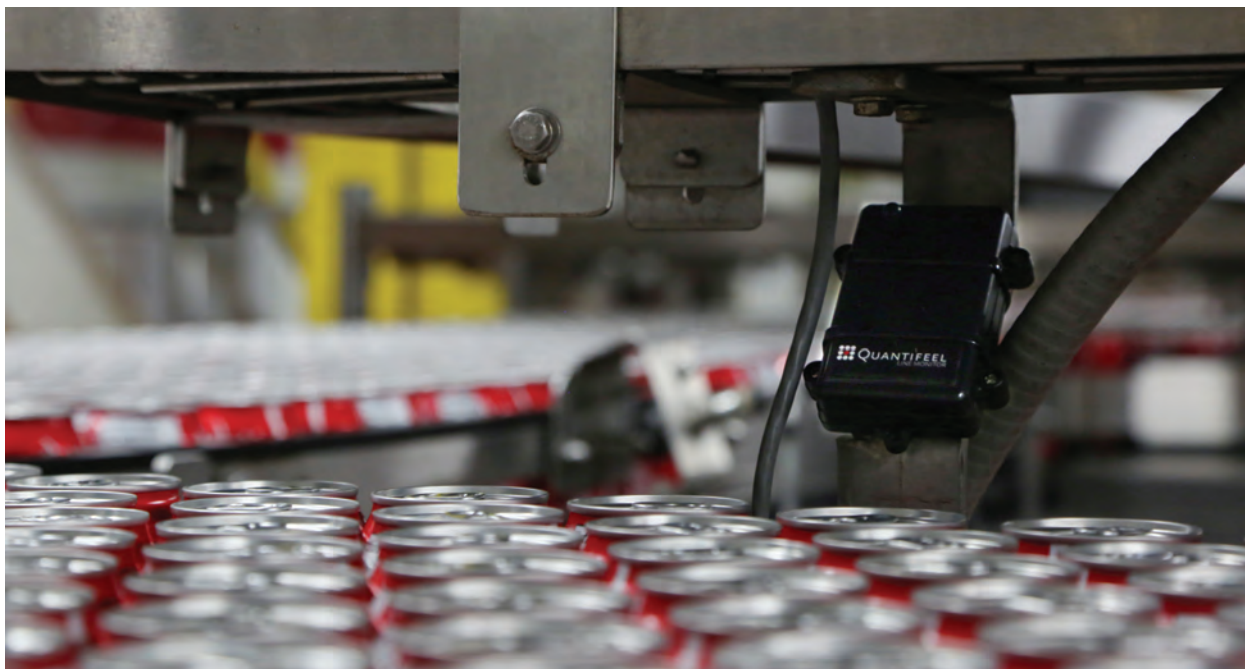
With the global beverage industry being "one of the most competitive in the world," according to Silva-Zapata, the Weston plant spares no effort or expense to maintain its good standing in the Coca-Cola's far-flung global empire—boasting globally-recognized **ISO (International Standards Organization)** for quality managements in three most critical categories (*ISO 9001*, *14001* and *18001*), along with the vaunted *FSSC 22000* food safety standard accreditation issued by global standards organization **NSF International**.

In addition, the Weston plant is also fully **IMS (Integrated Management Systems)**-certified for food and workplace safety, quality and environmental management, with its production staff well-trained in all aspects of *HACCP (Hazardous Analysis Critical Control Points)*, *GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice)* and *CIP (Clean-in-Place)* protocols and procedures tailored to demands of the Weston plant's unique hot-fill pasteurization process.

With quality being Coca-Cola's number one



Kavitha Naidu and plant lead-hand Frank Stirpe conduct a random quality check on an empty can pulled off the fast-moving Line One to inspect for any signs of denting or other points of impact that can result in a product defect.



One of many Quantifeel tags installed above the fast-moving rows of filled cans of Coca-Cola cans picks up real-time line status updates from the red drone can also traveling along the conveyor belt to locate excessive pressure points.





Manufactured by Videojet Technologies, the Videojet 3320 laser coder used to generate permanent product codes on the filled cases of Coca-Cola brand cans at the Weston facility is a high-speed system capable of printing speeds of up to 1,300 characters per second. *Inset:* A control panel for one of several Videojet CIJ printers also on line.



Filled cases of Coca-Cola cans are arranged into their assigned layer patterns for stacking on one of the Weston facility's two fully-automatic T-Tek palletizing stations positioned directly below on the plant floor.



The Weston canning facility employs a multitude of heavy-duty SEW-Eurodrive electrical motors (*inset*) to power high-speed conveyors from Descon Conveyor Systems transferring the product through its packaging stages.

commitment, the company is always looking for the latest technology to improve production while increasing throughput speeds, which currently reach up to 1600 cans per minute.

Most recently, the Weston facility deployed an innovative sensor-based inline quality assurance system developed by technology entrepreneurs **Smart Skin Technologies** of Fredericton, N.B.

Called **Quantifeel**, the system is based on the use of a sensor-activated container shaped to the exact dimension of containers used on the packaging line and wrapped with a rubbery-layer of a layer of *Smart Skin* material embedded with millions of tiny sensors to record all the movement and external forces experienced while travelling along the line with the real packaging containers, including cans, glass bottles and PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic containers.

Described as a “state-of-the-art system for measuring line pressure and 3D orientation,” inserting the *Quantifeel* sensor onto a live packaging line outfitted with data-reading sensor tags enables users to generate a real-time pressure map of all the key pressure points encountered at various points along the line on the user's PC or other smart device—essentially painting a clear picture of where the potential problem areas are located on the line.

“By embedding the *Quantifeel* sensor into a line, the dynamic effect of pressure and movement exerted on the device can be observed in real-time and analyzed to understand the effect operational parameters have on line performance, improving efficiency, reducing wastage and minimizing downtime,” according to Smart Skin Technologies.

For Weston plant's quality assurance manager Kavitha Naidu, implementing the *Quantifeel* system on the plant's Line One earlier this year represents another milestone in the operation's continued “journey to excellence” in reducing the number of consumer complaints to historical lows, with outright elimination of them treated as an achievable target.

Naidu reveals that her dedicated team leveraged its expertise in *DMAIC* (*Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control*) problem-solving methodology to identify the common sources of consumer complaints: the so-called ELLFs of “empties, leakers and low fills.”

Says Naidu: “We were able to achieve high product quality while reducing the defects over the year by collaborating teamwork with dedication, commitment and technology.

“With the packaging industry continuing to innovate with lightweight cans, it becomes all the more essential to identify the pressure points on the packaging line,” says Naidu, citing the pressure level of 60-*psi* as the maximum allowed tipping point for ensuring each can makes it through all the packaging stages in prime condition.

“Smart Skin is a highly reliable technology that could be effectively used as a troubleshooting tool in identifying the pressure points on





## COVER STORY

the lines,” she explains, “especially around the packaging rails.

“The Smart Skin ‘can’ is identical to a regular aluminum can, containing billions of pressure sensors in its surface.

“As the Smart Skin ‘can’ is run on the conveyors along with the finished product cans, the sensors pick up the pressure points and the data is relayed as a live pressure map.

“Based on these reports, one can tell the exact location where an aluminum can could have got damaged or impacted due to pressure and hence fix the specific spots to reduce the pressure impact,” says Naidu, citing pressure, belt vibration, tilting, jamming and excessive can rotation as the most common culprits behind the incidence of dented or otherwise damaged cans.

“The data obtained through the Quantifeel system has enabled us to reduce the pressure on the cans along the many different bends, turns, curves and rails—thereby reducing the dents and leakers on our finished goods.

“Restoration of the filler and seamer, training to develop competency of the operators, tighter inspection program, and frequent audits also improved the process, thus reducing the dents and damages on the can body,” says Naidu, adding the Weston plant is considering implementing the Quantifeel system on its other three packaging lines down the road.

This would further enhance the plant’s formidable manufacturing skillset based on a well-integrated assortment of “world-class automation technologies,” according to Naidu, that make the facility run like clockwork throughout the years, even during its super-busy summertime seasonal peak.

“Our process is fairly automated, with the cans received just-in-time and automatically loaded into depalletizers and transferred through conveyors in single file to the filler to be filled with the product and sealed,” Naidu describes.

“After the empty cans are filled, and the filler operator ensures that all the quality requirements are met, the cans are automatically case-packed, palletized and stretchwrapped to be shipped to the market,” says Naidu, noting the plant exclusively uses the more compact custom-sized **CHEP** wooden pallets to enable the forklift drivers to haul off two full pallet loads for shipping or storage in one trip.

“Everything we do here is driven by our culture of continuous improvement in productivity and quality,” Naidu states, citing the plant’s ambition to reach the designated “world-class” status within the global Coca-Cola network by the end of 2017.

“Our products service a broad variety of retail, institutional and foodservice customers from coast to coast,” she



Manufactured by WestRock, the fully-automatic model Duodozen 125M cartoner is a high-speed multipacking system used by the Weston plant to package both 12- and 18-pack cases of canned product at line speeds of up to 1,600 cans per minute.

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Stacked layers of empty aluminum cans shipped from Ball Packaging have their UPC numbers and barcodes collected and verified by an OMRON Electronics controller prior to being unloaded inside the depalletizer and fed onto the packaging lines.



The SpiralVeyor vertical conveyors manufactured by AmbaFlex are used throughout the 225,000-square-foot plant to enable smooth and gentle transfer of filled cases of Coca-Cola cans to the building's end-of-line packaging area for palletizing and stretchwrapping.

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points out, "and it is our goal to service the market by providing the customers with the most convenient package of highest possible quality.

"While many consumers are looking for convenience by opting for smaller packages, like our well-received 222-ml mini-cans, there are also many consumers looking for greater value in our big packaging formats, so it is our job and to provide the customers with the most convenient package for them.

"We must be doing our job well because our customers love our products," Naidu asserts.

"The brand loyalty for our products is one of the highest in the industry," she says, adding the Weston plant is fully committed to combining its operational excellence with Top Tier environmental performance.

Aside from using fully-recyclable primary and second-



Manufactured by Nordson Corporation, the 25-liter model DURABLU 25 adhesive melter utilizes the Advantra LT range of hot-melt adhesives from H.B. Fuller (inset) to ensure efficient, secure and reliable gluing of carton flaps on all the filled multipack cases of Coca-Cola cans packaged at the Weston canning plant.





Positioned at the end of the plant's canning lines, one of the fully-automatic Octo-Thread rotary ring stretchwrappers from ITW Muller swings into action to apply tight layers of stretchwrap film around the palletized loads to ensure maximum stability in transit.

ary packaging—including aluminum cans supplied by **Ball Corporation** and recycled paperboard folding cartons manufactured by **WestRock** (formerly **MeadWestvaco**)—the Weston plant has carried out a number of significant process improvements to help minimize its environmental footprint in recent years.

“We are 100-percent committed to achieving our company’s 20/20 vision,” states plant manager Silva-Zapata, citing the company’s publicly unveiled **2020 Vision and Roadmap for Winning Together** global corporate plan that pledges, among other things, to make Coke “the global leader in sustainable water use and industry leadership in packaging, energy and climate protection.”

Says Silva-Zapata: “We are extremely proud to have achieved 100-percent internal recycling rate in our manufacturing facilities, and with water stewardship as one of the most important drivers in the company, we are also proud to have achieved world-

# COVER STORY



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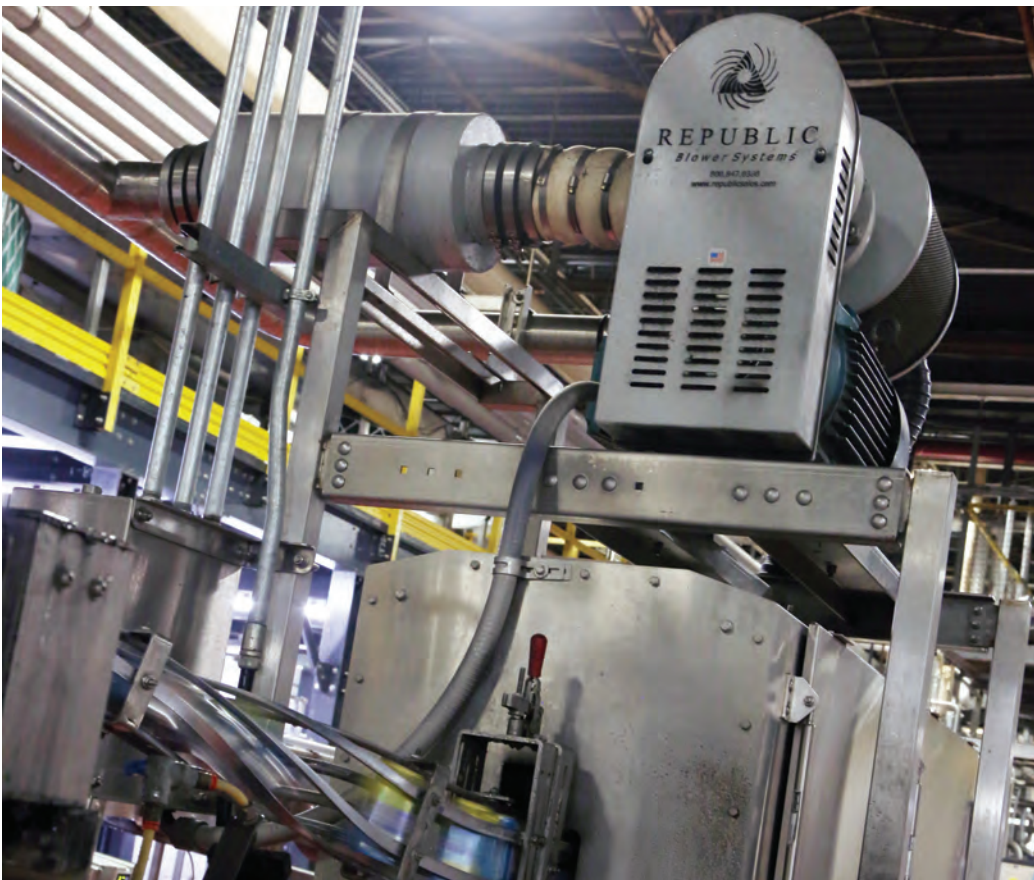


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The Weston plant's canning lines employ high-performance centrifugal blowers, manufactured by Republic Manufacturing and distributed by R.E. Morrison Equipment, which quickly dry the fast-moving rinsed cans traveling on overhead conveyors above before they enter the filling stations downstream to commence the hot-fill pasteurization process.



COVER STORY



The Weston canning plant exclusively uses the signature-blue wooden pallets (*above left*) supplied to the facility in large quantities daily by leading pallet pool operator CHEP Canada in custom-sized dimensions that enable the plant's forklift operators to pick up and carry off two full pallet-loads at a time for maximum workflow efficiency.

class WUR (water usage ratio), which means that the total amount water used towards production is very close to minimal loss.

"This is also the case with our EUR (electricity usage ratio) performance," he points out.

Going forward, both Silva-Zapata and Naidu expect the Weston plant to remain a key part of Coca-Cola Canada's manufacturing landscape of the future by continually improving its operational efficiencies, product quality, customer satisfaction and, of course, packaging excellence.

"Packaging always has a significant impact on our marketing strategies," Naidu sums up.

"As consumers look for convenience and value and as our customers look to minimize their amount of inventory," she relates, "our supply chain team is continually challenged to implement an adaptable distribution network with equipment that will provide the required flexibility and speed-to-market to succeed well into the future.

"Given the right tools, such as the Smart Skin technology for example, there is nothing our people cannot achieve," Naidu concludes.

"At the end of the day, our biggest core competitive strength is our people." 🍁



A fully-stacked 21-layer pallet-load of canned cases emerges from a T-Tek palletizer to make its way to a nearby ITW Muller stretchwrapper to secure the load into place to ensure optimal product safety during transport.

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(From Left) Leahy Orchards Inc. vice-president of purchasing and logistics Philip Seguin, director of operations and supply Mitchell Leahy, and president and chief executive officer Mike Leahy with a display of Leahy brand Applesnax applesauce in a variety of packaging formats.

# APPLAUSE FOR APPLESAUCE

Quebec apple grower achieves niche market success with its wholesome applesauce and high-speed robotic packaging technologies

BY ANDREW JOSEPH, FEATURES EDITOR  
PHOTOS BY COLE GARSIDE

For apple growers **Leahy Orchards Inc.**, a family-run business headquartered in Franklin, Quebec, coming up with a new retail product turned out to be a real smash. Back in 1980, James R. Leahy sought an avenue for apples deemed unfit for retail sale due to market standards, and came up with the idea to further process those apples into a high-quality applesauce.

Thought to have been ‘discovered’ in the mid-1700s, applesauce is a purée made of apples—either peeled or unpeeled—with some spices added, such as cinnamon or allspice, as well a sweetener.

Used as a condiment and even as a dessert, applesauce is produced by the cooking down of apples with a liquid such as water or apple cider to create a purée.

For Leahy Orchards, finding an alternative use for these secondary apples was a way for the company to carve out a niche market, producing private label brands for global grocery chains and also its own **Applesnax** applesauce brand for the retail Canadian and U.S. markets.

At the same time, it diversified its product portfolio to also include a range of tasty mixed fruit purées, fruit and vegetable purées for newborns, and a wide variety of gooey goodness for bakery products sold in various sizes from as small as 90 g containers to 1,000 kilogram tote tanks—however, 85 percent of all product produced at Leahy Orchards is applesauce.

Nowadays, Leahy Orchards and its 282 employees process an average of 225,000 kilograms of fruits and vegetables daily on its nine production lines operating three shifts, including one just for facility sanitization.

“The further processing aspect of Leahy Orchards Business is pretty busy, with us processing approximately 120 million pounds of apples annually,” Leahy Orchards president and chief executive officer Mike Leahy told **Canadian Packaging** magazine during a recent interview.

“Revenue-wise, we’re over Cdn \$100 million, and consider ourselves to be a good Canadian market leader with a growing presence in the U.S. market,” says Leahy.

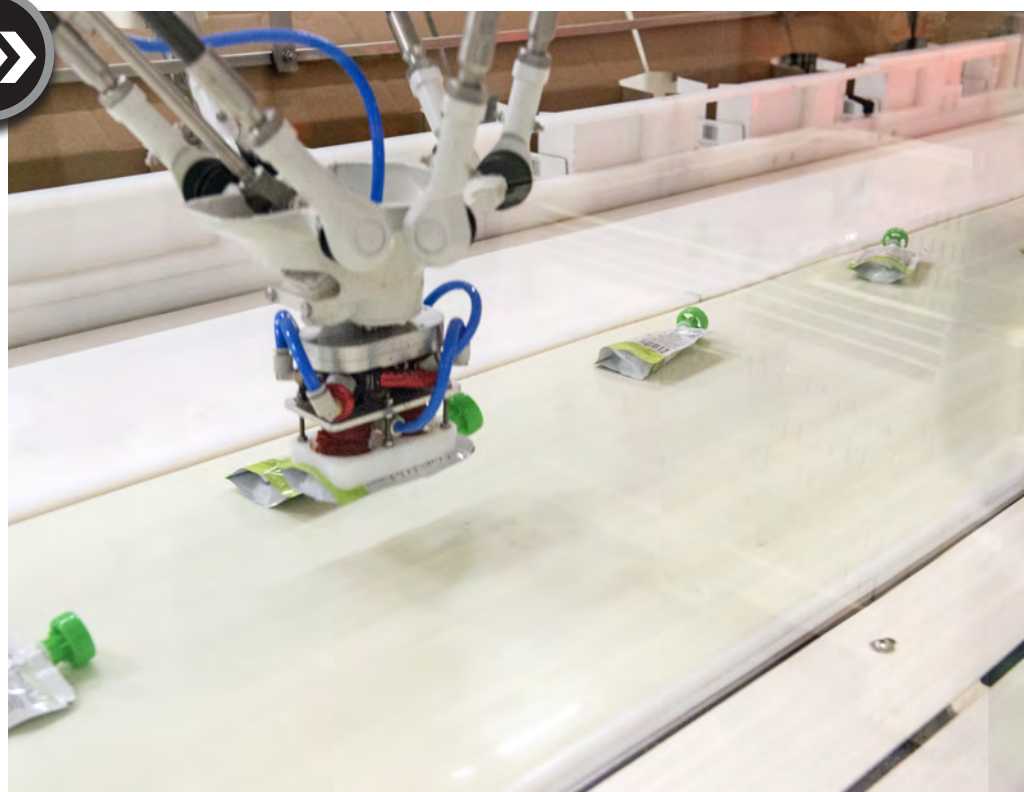
He says that when it came time to find something to do with the fruit that wasn’t fit for supermarket shelves because of undersizing, misshaped or even under-colored, all of those apples were categorized as wasted.

“Wasting food is not a good thing, so we began using that same category to make our high-quality products,” explains Leahy. “In fact, processed apples do come with a value-added benefit, as they





A StrongPoint Automation top-load cartoning system installed at the Leahy Orchards production facility in Franklin, incorporates a series of fast but gentle Fanuc pick-and-place robotic systems.



A close-up of a StrongPoint Automation End-of-Arm-Tool for the Fanuc M-2ia robotic picker system, with StrongPoint's top-load cartoning system in the background.

are shelf stable for a longer period than fresh commodity products."

Not just limited to the Canadian market, Leahy says that Leahy Orchards is indeed a global entity within the niche further apple processing segment, establishing and maintaining a satisfying ability to work with customers and consumers with their ever-changing requirements.

"Because we are a family business, we can make rapid decisions other business need more time to analyze," notes Leahy, "so our business values are akin to our own family values."

The core business values of Leahy Orchard revolve around ensuring the customer is always satisfied—something that affects how the processor makes business decisions.

"We've been at the same location here in Franklin, since the beginning, though we continue to expand our facilities and our business," says Leahy adding that the company is within 10 kilometers to a U.S. crossing, one hour to Montreal, five hours to Toronto. "Plus it is on our home farm, so along with the nostalgia, we are also within close proximity to our apple supply."

He did note, however, that along with Quebec, the majority of its conventional apple supply also

comes from Ontario and New York.

"With the organic market segment for our apple products growing the way it has," offers Leahy, "we have looked to other sources for supply to compliment our current organic apple crop, including Washington State."

Leahy Orchards has been providing its co-packing expertise for major brands for over 30 years, attaining a well-earned reputation for high-quality applesauce products and on-time production and delivery.

While the company's own *Applesnax* is quite successful, Leahy notes that the majority of the products it produces—approximately 60 percent—are for private label.

"We can work from a customer's recipe, or we can provide recipe formulation development—whatever the customer needs, as we have a great research and development team with both experience and food industry knowledge," notes Leahy.

Primary products processed at Leahy Orchards includes: applesauce; fresh apple slices/dices; as well as apple turnover and pie filling.

"We also have a line dedicated to producing baby food which includes a wide range of fruits and vegetables," mentions Leahy.

Leahy Orchards produces over 450 SKUs (stock-keeping units), with the main packaging formats include PET (*Polyethylene terephthalate*) plastic jars, 100 ounce cans, four ounce cups, and 90 gram pouches.

"We have an aseptic line that can handle multiple formats giving our products a shelflife of two years in ambient temperatures," Leahy says. "Our aseptic package formats include 20 liter bag-in-box, 220 liter bag-in-metal-drum, and a 1,200 liter bag in a plastic or corrugated tote."

Leahy Orchards produces and distributes its products to further manufacturers, bakeries, food-service segments, and retailers.

"Our applesauce products can be found in hospitals, correctional centers, schools, public and private organizations," notes Leahy, adding that for the retail market it prefers not to muddy the competitive waters and instead does private brands and co-packing for its customers.

Leahy says the company does respect its environment, and of course, its employees, but even though there is family at its core, Leahy Orchards encourages common sense while daring to innovate and regularly access how the business and markets are performing.



A Thermo Scientific Ramsey VERSA checkweigher quickly checks and verifies the weight of full cases of Applesnax applesauce before closing the flaps to ensure each contains the pre-determined number of product packs.



A Markem-Imaje 9450 small-character inkjet printer applies lotcode data and best-before information to cases of 24-pack Applesnax applesauce, as a Leahy Orchards production line employee performs a random quality check on a product pouch.





## AUTOMATE NOW



Finished plastic pouches of Leahy Orchards' Applesnax brand of applesauce await to be packed into corrugated 24-packs at the apple processor's production facility.

Cartons containing pouches of Leahy Orchards' Applesnax brand of applesauce move along a Storcan manufactured conveyor system powered by an SEW-Eurodrive motor.

"We certainly aren't the type of company that sits back and then reacts to the marketplace," says Leahy. "We're actually a very proactive company, and we are always looking for ways to improve our business in the near-term, as well as the long-term."

Leahy Orchards operates one production facility and three warehouses in and around the Franklin area for a combined 380,000 square feet of operation.

Along with administration, the headquarters also houses the company's processing plant and shipping area; the other three warehouses store finished products ready for the U.S. market, with two of those facilities feature temperature- and atmosphere-controlled storage capable of holding up to 25,000 bins of fruit, plus an additional 15,000 bins in a true cold section.

Leahy Orchards has effective product quality controls in place to ensure its brands and those of its customers provide nothing but sweet applesauce goodness, noting that when it comes to food quality and food safety, the applesauce manufacturer is certified to the nines, possessing:

- the OCCP (Organic Crop Producers Processors) certification for its line of organic products;

- HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) certification from the **CFIA (Canadian Food Inspection Agency)** in 2004—now an international standard for food safety and quality;
- SQF Level 3 food safety and quality management system certification from **SAI Global Certification Services**;
- Organic certification from **Ecocert**;
- Certified Products Accreditation from **Aliments du Quebec**;
- PEP certification from the **Canada Border Service Agency** ensuring protection of legitimate trade, and;
- C-TPAT certification providing U.S. customs and border protection.

"The autumn is our busiest time, with 'back-to-school' and harvest time occurring," Leahy mentions.

He continues: "In the past, we have added shifts or updated equipment—and we still will—but we are looking at more integrated planning through data analysis on our ERP (enterprise resource planning) system that we developed internally partnered with EVsoft."

Most of the Leahy Orchard production facility is automated, with nine lines producing: jar; cup;

baby-food; pulp; pie-filling; aseptic; two pouch lines and a multipac line for specialty orders like display-ready pallets for promotions.

While its jar line produces the 24- and 48-ounce PET jars for the retail market and 100 oz tins for the food service industry, the new pouch line at Leahy Orchards is being used to produce just one size, though it can be expanded per customer or market requirements.

"The pouch line is currently geared for the retail market, and was introduced because of demands from our customers," says Leahy.

One of its more recent projects has been the ongoing expansion of a turnkey solution for Leahy's cartoning, case packing and palletizing system provided to it by **StrongPoint Automation Inc.**, an integrator par excellence headquartered in Cambridge, Ont. about a one hour drive west of Toronto.

According to StrongPoint president Warren Tait, "The project with Leahy Orchards has been ongoing with expansion over the past 24 months.

"The initial cartoning system, along with the former and closer was provided in 2014, with the balance of the equipment installed and integrated in 2015," says Tait.



Integrated into the production line by StrongPoint Automation, a KliKlok Vari-Right top-load carton closer is used at Leahy Orchards to seal 24-packs of its own Applesnax Organic brand of 90-gram applesauce pouches.



Prior to being moved to a cooling zone, single-serving cups of applesauce processed at Leahy Orchards for a third-party customer await their turn on a Storcan accumulation table supplied by systems integrator StrongPoint Automation.



# AUTOMATE NOW



Tait notes that StrongPoint supplied Leahy Orchards with two horizontal and vertical robotic cartooning systems complete with **Kliklok-Woodman** carton formers and sealers.

The robotic cells are fully engineered and designed by StrongPoint Automation for the Leahy application, acknowledges Tait.

“The Kliklok-Woodman equipment was selected because of the demonstrated reliability of the equipment while operating at the high speeds required by Leahy,” explains Tait.

The equipment supplied by StrongPoint is:

Seven **Fanuc M-2iA/3SL** robotic pickers, with four units in the initial cartoner, and three units on the second cartoner;

Two Fanuc **M-20iA** robots, with one unit in each of the two cartoners;

Kliklok-Woodman **TransFormer** carton former;

Kliklok-Woodman **ECT-625** carton former, and;

Two Kliklok-Woodman **Vari-Right** carton closer/sealers.

Two Fanuc **M-710iC 50H** robotic case packers, one unit in each of the two case packer cells;

Two **Wexxar BEL 270** top case sealers—one per cell—each with a **Robatech USA Inc. Concept** sealing system.

One refurbished Fanuc **R-2000 165F** six-axis robotic system used for palletizing thanks to its 165 kilogram load capacity.

The Fanuc **M-2iA/3SL** delta design is, according to Fanuc, an ultra-compact robotic picker that is at



StrongPoint Automation tabletop conveyor system featuring System Plast NG eVO conveyor belting manufactured by Regal Beloit America, alongside the StrongPoint top-load cartoning system transporting sealed cases of the Applesnax brand of applesauce on to the shipping area.

the ‘cutting edge of high-speed small parts handling’. It has a wide range of motion thanks to six axes and a huge reach, plus it comes with a standard **IP69K** protection for continued high-speed performance in both wet and clean room environments.

The Fanuc **M-20iA** is a slim, but strong six axis robot featuring a hollow upper arm and wrist that easily handles loads up to 20 kilograms with a long reach up to two meters.

The **TransFormer** designed and manufactured by

Kliklok-Woodman, a part of the **Bosch Group**, is a new top loading carton former that offers both form lock-style and glue style cartoning on one machine—and, if that wasn’t enough it can form cartons at a very quick rate of up to 120 cartons per minute with a single head.

Featuring an easy-loading waist-level carton hopper, the **TransFormer** is easy to operate thanks to Kliklok-Woodman’s Insight color touchscreen. It also possesses a unique servo-driven high-precision THK linear rail plunger mounting system for



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A 24-pack of Applesnax Organic applesauce pouches packaged inside a colorful pre-printed corrugated case produced by Norampac, a division of leading Canadian forest products group Cascades Canada Inc.



A Robatech hot-melt adhesive applying system used at the Leahy Orchards processing plant to seal corrugated cases filled with applesauce packages.



A Videojet 3330 series laser coder applying production lot codes and other variable product information (*inset*) to rollstock pouch film prior to it being formed into pouches.

absolute head-to-cavity positioning.

Kliklok-Woodman's *ECT-625* carton and tray former utilizes hot-melt adhesive in its process, along with—according to the manufacturer—an innovative indexing turret to provide carton control that enables the *ECT-625* to handle a wide range of carton and tray designs.

After feeding, the carton remains fixed to the *ECT-625*'s forming mandrel throughout the entire forming process which means a consistent quality tray or carton even if the stock is old or warped.

Kliklok-Woodman describes its *Vari-Straight* as a straight-line closer for tri-seal cartons that uses the equipment manufacturer's revolutionary variable pitch technology to a higher level by providing a controlled carton turn without a change in direction, allowing its unique turning bed with pop-up turning bars to grab the cartons and guide them through a 90-degree turn through to the charlotte closing section.

This carton control, says Kliklok-Woodman, removes slip and timing issues that can be associated with other conventional lugless carton closers.

"Strong Point also supplied two robotic case packing cells complete with multiple EOATs (end-of-arm tooling) and system change parts," explains Tait.

"Each cell," he continues, "was supplied with multiple tools that are controlled by a single robot-mounted Ethernet node that is connected through a master-slave tool-coupling system.

"Each case packer in the cells was supplemented with a BEL case sealer utilizing a Robatech Concept glue system," Tait relates.

The Wexxar *BEL 270* used by Leahy Orchards is a fully-automatic hotmelt adhesive case sealer, robust for continuous use with consistent operating performance.

The *BEL 270* is compact at 1,473mm (58 inches) in length, but it is the safety features on the machine that is a boon for the production line workers.

Wexxar *BEL* touts the *BEL 270*'s design as 'revolutionary', thanks to the elimination of a traditional "flap-kicker" that has been known to cause serious worker injury.

Along with safety, StrongPoint knows the case sealer's ease-of-use would be welcomed by Leahy Orchards, noting that case changeover could be completed from either side of the *BEL 270* in under 60 seconds using two hand-wheel adjustments.

The robotic systems used in the case packing cells are a part of Fanuc's *M-710iC* series, a six-axis medium-to medium-high payload, high-performance family member of its industrial robots.

As denoted by its *50H* moniker, the *M-710iC 50H* robots possess a maximum capacity at the wrist of 50 kilograms, while still able to have that two meter long reach, providing Leahy Orchards with a more than capable robotics solution contained within a small footprint.

"We like the *M-710iC 50H* because Fanuc developed this next-gen robotic system to work at a high-speed, provide excellent flexibility and offer our customer excellent reliability," explains Tait.

"Because the last thing Leahy Orchards—or any manufacturer needs—is down time owing to mechanical failure.

"The *M-710iC 50H* provides consistent precision and excellent performance."

Other equipment used by Leahy Orchards includes:

- conveying systems via **Storcan**, with smooth operating performance powered by motors designed and built by **SEW-Eurodrive**;
- two **Effytec HB404** pouch machines that form

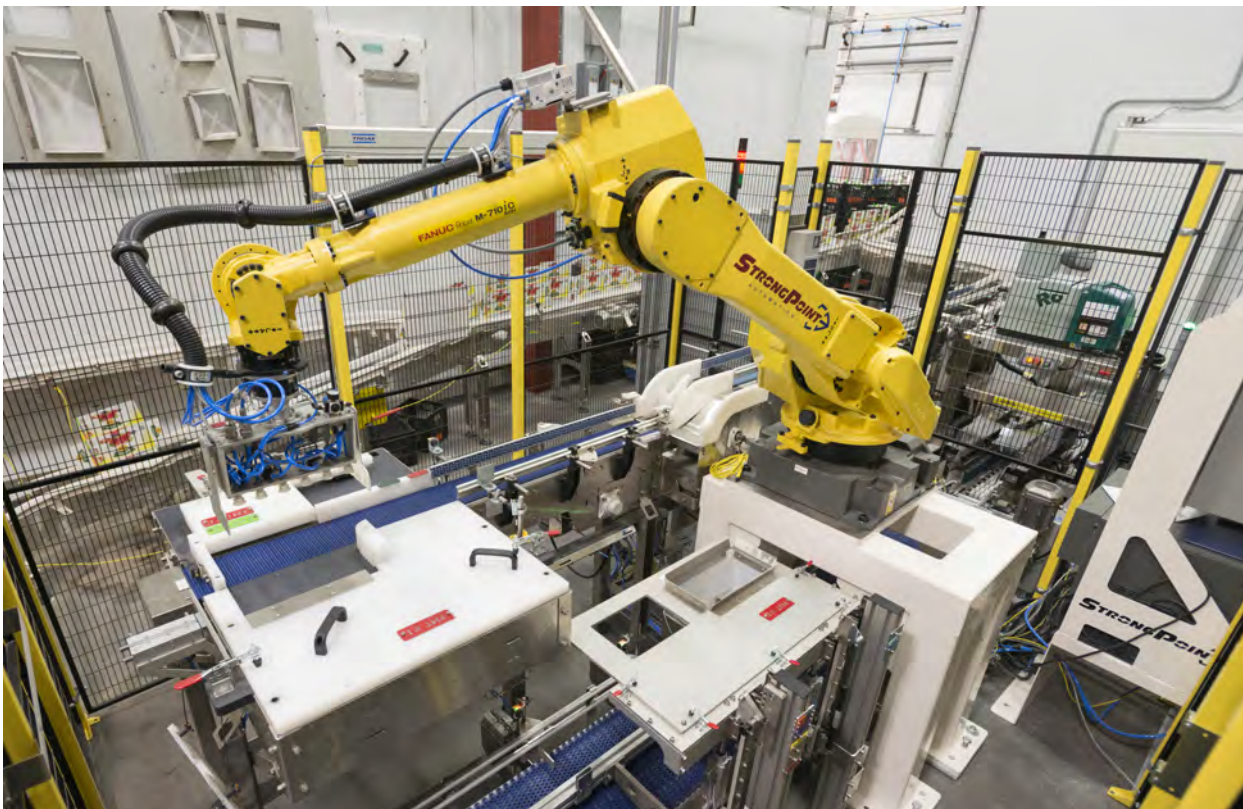




A Delkor Trayfecta S Series carton former discharging Club-style cartons onto the StrongPoint-supplied conveyor system diverting it to a robotic case-packer.

- fill and cap at a rate of 200 pouches per minute.
- two **3330** series laser marking system from **Videojet**;
- Markem-Imaje 9450** small character inkjet coder to apply data to secondary packaging and a **2200 Tamp Blow** labeling system for cases;
- a **Thermo Scientific Ramsey VERSA** checkweigher to ensure consistent product delivery within the paperboard retail packaging;
- two **Delkor Trayfecta S Series** carton formers;
- corrugated materials supplied by **Mitchel-Lincoln Packaging**, and **Norampac**, a division of **Cascades**;
- an **OYSTAR Packaging Technologies** cup filler that also seals the foil lid;
- a **Tecnopool** vertical spiral conveyor system;
- Label printing from **Curtis-JK Printing**, **WestRock** and **Fort Dearborn**, among others;
- PET plastic jars supplied by **Yoshino America Corporation**.

For Leahy Orchards, working with StrongPoint



A StrongPoint Automation robotic case-packing system features a Fanuc M-710i C 50H robot outfitted with color-coded change parts.

Automation was a very positive experience.

“Because of the amount of product we are moving through our production and packing lines, utilizing manual labor would be both cost prohibitive and efficiency prohibitive,” Leahy reveals. “StrongPoint was very efficient in how it set up our production flow, integrating all the robotics and other equipment.

“Our automated lines provide us with speed and efficiency with worker safety looked after, as well. “The team that we have working at Leahy Orchards is world-class, and providing a safe working environment for them is extremely important to us,” sums up Leahy.

“We have a high expectation of our service level and try very hard to satisfy the client’s expectations,” he says.

“And, when it comes to our production performance, we perform via innovation and flexibility.

“It’s win-win.” 🍁

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An STI safety interlock switch with TL4019 guard-door lock designed and manufactured by Omron, installed on a beverage filling machine at the Kerry Foods facility that provides the food processor with a high level of safety for its production line operators.

# SAFETY DANCE

Safety features installed by global automation leader help keep the production line humming for the Quebec branch of a worldwide third-party food processor

BY ANDREW JOSEPH, FEATURES EDITOR  
PHOTOS BY CLAUDE MATHIEU

While Ireland is famous for its lush green landscapes, mythical leprechauns and legendary whiskey, it is also well known for a devastating potato famine that afflicted the country between 1845 and 1852 that essentially reduced its population by as much as 25 percent via a combination of mass emigration and death by starvation.

But nowadays, Ireland is also known as home to one of the global leaders of the food and packaging industry—with processing and packaging facilities spread out over 100 sites and six continents, excluding Antarctica, and some 23,000 employees.

That company is **Kerry Group**, a 44-year-old business most people have never heard of, yet is well-known and even more well-respected within the food industry as reliable third-party manufacturers and packagers who can help customers grow their brand on a global scale—and all the while remaining in the anonymous shadow of the retail market.

Headquartered in Tralee, County Kerry, Ireland, Kerry Group itself is actually divided into separate businesses, with multiple facilities involved in the agribusiness, the ingredients and flavors segment, or immersed in the consumer foods industry.

Kerry Group has never been about seeing its name plastered all over the retail shelves, choosing instead to follow a company goal with a simple and delightful mantra: ‘to delight and nourish consumers across the globe with products people enjoy and feel better about.’

Kerry got its start in 1972, as a private dairy cooperative in Ireland with three shareholders—**Erie Casein Company Inc.** from the U.S. (15 percent); the state-owned **Dairy Disposal Company** (42.5 percent); and a federation of eight small farmer co-operatives in County Kerry (42.5 percent).

Through the 1970s, Kerry expanded its profitable milk business, even while other similar dairy co-ops could not. However, all that changed in 1979 when Kerry County was chosen as a pilot area for a bovine disease eradication program, plus the fact that the summers of that year and 1980 were so wet that the company lost close to 20 percent of its milk supply.

Faced with the very real reality that it might not survive, Kerry needed to diversify into value-added products while reducing its reliance on dairy products, with the company looking to become a large-scale food business provider.

After first diversifying into the convenience meat products business with the acquisition of a pork and savory products business in Ireland, Kerry established headquarters in the U.S. and U.K. and with another acquisition, began to move into the specialist food ingredient market, eventually focusing on research and development to create new products consumers would want.

After much more strategic growth and acquisition over the years, Kerry has



A close-up view of a Domino high-speed product coding system integrated onto the high-volume Tetra Pak liquid filling line at the Kerry Foods facility in Sainte-Claire, Que.

expanded its global reach in: food ingredients; ready-made, food flavorings, as well as in the taste and nutrition sector, amongst others.

As such, Kerry Foods now possesses many successful brands in the U.K. and Ireland, and in parts of Europe, and is now also making successful headway into the North American market.

The company is established, according to a recent Kerry Group document, in 26 countries across five continents, with EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) markets accounting for approximately 49 percent of its sales, 38 percent from the Americas, and 13 percent of its total Group sales owed to Asia Pacific markets.

It is, without a doubt, a global player, with 2015 revenues reaching approximately Cdn \$8.9 billion.

**Canadian Packaging** magazine recently visited a facility situated in Sainte-Claire, Que., where it produces and packages consumer beverage products such as milk and soya shakes for its customers in a variety of plastic bottles manufactured by **Amcor**, and in **Tetra Pak** packaging.

For Kerry Foods, there is simply not just one aspect of the business that is more important than the other, but when it comes to dealing with the equipment it utilizes to process and pack its products, ‘safety’ is key.

Kerry Foods has been working alongside the **OMRON Corporation** for over 10 years at the Quebec facility.





OMRON has been a huge part of the industrial scene in Quebec for the past 30 years, working closely with small OEMs (original equipment manufacturers), and in the wood industry.

Headquartered in Kyoto, Japan, the OMRON Corporation is a global leader in the field of automation, with regional head offices located in Kyoto, Singapore, Shanghai, Amsterdam and Chicago.

According to OMRON's Canadian industrial account manager Robert Lefebvre, OMRON's Quebec arm only began focusing on the food and beverage industry within the past three years, receiving industrial solutions help from its North American headquarters in Chicago.

"Prior to our involvement in the most recent project in 2015, Kerry Foods did have some OMRON equipment in the Sainte-Claire plant," says Lefebvre, "but even then, our working relationship was limited, as they had opted to work within a short list of suppliers and integrators."

However, Lefebvre notes that some two years ago, OMRON heard rumblings about Kerry Foods starting up a new machine safety process, and invited the food processor to attend an annual skill builder safety seminar it was holding in an effort to increase their knowledge and provide Kerry with a larger view of just what they needed to do to ensure proper workplace safety.

Lefebvre says that Kerry was looking for "a partner that could teach them about safety—one who could also offer them a wide range of product, as well as knowledgeable personnel who could help them throughout the full length of their projects."

"OMRON fits that bill, and could also provide them with products that are flexible, high quality and robust," says Lefebvre.

OMRON's primary business is the design and manufacture of automation components, equipments and systems, and was one of first companies to produce an ATM (automated teller machine) with a magnetic strip reader.

On the industrial end, as it relates more readily to the packaging industry, OMRON is very much involved in automation, providing sensors, switches, relays, control components, electrical power monitoring equipment, power supplies and safety components.

In September of 2006, OMRON acquired **Scientific Technologies, Inc. (STI)**, and now uses that company's name as its own category brand for the machine safeguarding products and solutions.

With that acquisition, OMRON became the world's Number One player in the US\$1-billion-global safety device market—a rising trend in CSR (corporate social responsibility) with strong ties to productivity improvement and workplace safety.

Omron, as a primary supplier to industrial workplaces, is dedicated to enhancing a safer workplace, quality of equipment and a mind to a greener environment.

According to Lefebvre, attending OMRON's skill-building seminar on safety has really helped Kerry Foods better identify its own needs in respect to workplace safety.

He says that OMRON and Kerry identified two specific areas of the production line at the Sainte-Claire facility where additional safety features could be applied, namely the robotic palletizing cell and on four Tetra Pak bottle filling lines.

Prior to OMRON's involvement, the robotic cell was already partially secured, but Lefebvre thinks that even so, Kerry Foods did not have a firm grasp on full risk assessment within its own facility.

He says that all the safety devices were replaced



Filled and sealed paperboard Tetra Pak beverage cartons are swiftly moved along a conveying system outfitted with a mounted OMRON E32 fiber sensor positioned on the outer lip to ensure smooth and precise product transfer.



Fresh out of the box, the long-distance OMRON E3G photoelectric sensor is used to help ensure a safe working environment for both personnel and critical production line equipment with sensing distance of up to 10 meters.



The OMRON F3SG safety light curtains are strategically positioned within the yellow-colored beams of the automated palletizing system housed at the Kerry Foods beverage production and packaging facility in Sainte-Claire.



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AUTOMATE NOW



An Intelligrated model Alvey 780 series mid-speed case palletizer with single-lane application can reach throughput speeds in excess of 50 cases per minute as it bundles product loaded on top of a signature-blue CHEP wooden pallet.

with newer technology and better sizing. OMRON applied a total of six **F3SG-RA** light curtains: two on the front and top of the input conveyor; one apiece on the sides, and one near each of the two exits. Lefebvre says that cases of beverages are fed into the palletizing cell by a conveyor, which is protected by two light curtains, and then stacked onto pallets before being pushed to the opposite side of the cell where there are two additional light curtains. “Along with placing six F3SG-RA series light curtains on the robotic cell, we also have applied our dynamic muting function, as well as added Bluetooth programming capabilities on the unit,” notes Lefebvre.

The **F3SG** series of light curtains is, according to Lefebvre, an advanced system that can be utilized globally. Possessing a rugged **IP67**-rated housing that protects the system during sanitation washdown, the **F3SG** safety light curtain is non-obtrusive in the robotic cell, with each light curtain having a slim profile of just 35 x 35mm.

He says that OMRON also installed an easy-to-program **G9SP** safety controller and a long-lasting and robust **NB** series programmable HMI (human-machine interface) color display with LED back-lighting on the four bottle-filling equipment and the robotic cell to better monitor all safety devices as well as to observe the machine’s operation.

Along with production, Lefebvre says the doors also are in lockdown mode when it is in a wash-down environment.

“The OMRON NB-series provides a feature-rich dependable, and economical HMI lineup for machine builders,” relates Lefebvre. “The NB-series is an excellent choice for integrators looking to interface with our OMRON CP1 family micro-PLC applications.”

On the liquid filling lines, Lefebvre says OMRON also installed its **TL4019** locking guard door featuring its **STI SS** safety interlocking slide bolt switches.

“The **TL4019** are installed on the equipment to help prevent employees from accidentally stopping the filling machines during a production run,” says Lefebvre, adding that it provides a high locking force of 1,200 N (270 lbs) that locks the guard door shut until the machine is safe to enter.

As well, Lefebvre says that the **TL4019** monitors the opening of the equipment door to provide worker safety—meaning the machine will not run if the door is not closed properly.

The **TL4109** possesses a rotatable head that allows for eight actuator entry positions for better installation positioning.

Spread out along a conveying line, OMRON **E32 Series** fiber sensors help monitor the efficiency of




The Tetra Pak aseptic filling machines allow Kerry Foods the flexibility to use a fairly diverse variety of aseptic package sizes up to one liter in an assortment of different shapes for enhanced product branding possibilities.

the production line to ensure Kerry Foods does not encounter bottlenecks.

Some of the critical equipment at the Kerry facility includes:

- **ArrowheadSelect** series of conveyor systems built by **Arrowhead Conveyor Corp.**;
- **Domino**-made product coding/marketing system solutions;
- **Alvey 780 Series** medium-speed palletizer manufactured by **Intelligrated**;
- Conveyor and robotic palletizing from **Fanuc** and **Gescofab** (the latter now part of **Premier Tech Ltd.**);
- Wooden pallets supplied by **CHEP Canada**.

“As Kerry Foods continues to grow its market share in Canada and the rest of the Americas, continuing to ensure the safety of its consumers, customers and workers is a chief focus,” says Lefebvre, “and they can be sure that OMRON will be happy continue with our long-standing partnership.” 

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# SWEET FLIGHT OF FANCY

Ontario cookie producer combines traditional handmade recipes and attractive packaging presentation to fill a growing and promising market niche for vintage pastries

BY GEORGE GUIDONI, EDITOR  
PHOTOS BY COLE GARSIDE

**Y**ou've got to be one pretty smart cookie to make the grade as a relative newcomer to the crowded and fiercely competitive market for cookies and sweet pastries nowadays, and happily for the Aurora, Ont.-based **Cookie It Up**, the company's owner Shane Smith is a shrewd operator of the highest caliber.

Which makes him a perfect fit to steer the cookie business he purchased three years ago—after working for 18 years in the fast-paced information technology business—through its next phase of organic growth in a thoughtful and measured way befitting the company's unique local history and following.

Founded in 1983 by local budding entrepreneur Paige Sillcox as a DIY summer job project while pursuing her undergraduate studies at the **York University** in northern Toronto, the home kitchen enterprise quickly evolved into a full-time venture that was selling about 800 bags of fresh handmade cookies to local residents and business per week by the end of that first summer.

"I remember eating those delicious cookies during my high-school years here in Aurora," says Smith, a Calgary native who spent most of his youth growing up in this picturesque community a short drive north of Toronto, before enrolling into the **University of Western Ontario's** renowned Richard Ivey School of Business in London, Ont.

After graduating with a business degree in 1994, Smith started an information technology business and ultimately moved back to Aurora to raise his young family in the same tranquil, relaxed and picturesque country-like environment that he enjoyed growing up.

But with early retirement never really an option, the natural born entrepreneur was determined to forge himself a new career path either through a new business startup or, preferably, acquiring an existing business that would fulfill both his entrepreneurial ambitions and a personal desire for a healthy work-life balance.

In retrospect, it almost seems that Cookie It Up was always destined to become Smith's springboard for future business success one day.

"I literally just walked off the street, introduced myself to Paige, told her why I wanted to buy her business and if she would consider selling it," Smith recalls.

"As it happened, she told me my timing couldn't be better," Smith told **Canadian Packaging** during a recent visit to the modest 6,000-square-foot bakery employing about 15 full-time production people over a one-shift, five-days-a-week schedule, gradually increasing to 25 line workers to meet the rising demand and seasonal peaks between August and December.

"It really gets busy here as the holiday season approaches," says Smith, "with many people buying our cookies as gifts or for their festive meals and gatherings."

Packaged in elegant, giftbox-like folding cartons



After spending 18 years in the information technology field, long-time Aurora resident Shane Smith (*above*) returned to the picturesque community a short drive north of Toronto three years ago to acquire the Cookie It Up business from its local founder and began investing in new production and packaging machinery to grow the business successfully.





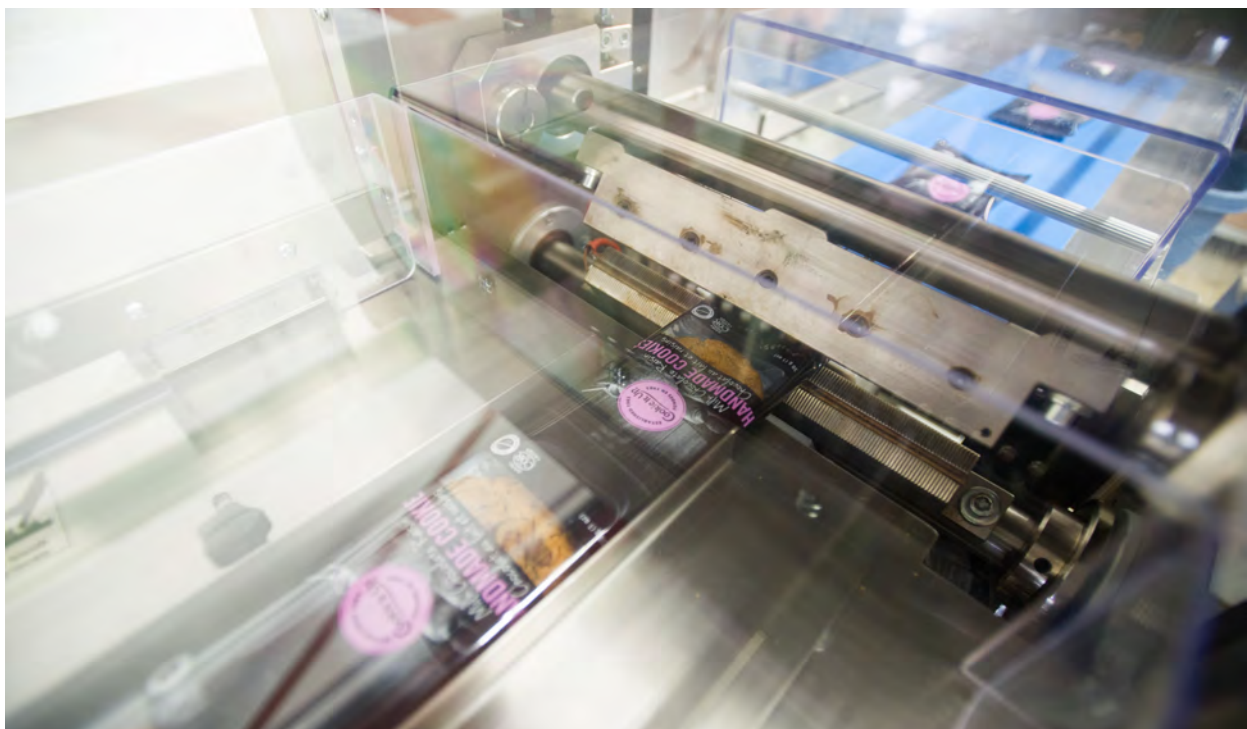
All of the Slek Wrapper flowwrapping machines manufactured by Paxiom feature sanitary stainless-steel surfaces to meet all stringent requirements for food safety.



Installed at the Cookie It Up bakery in Aurora in early May of this year, the model Slek 50 Wrapper horizontal flow-wrapper from Paxiom is controlled via a user-friendly PLC touchscreen interface (*inset*) to enable the plant to produce more than 50 single-serving pouches of freshly-baked cookies per minute in smooth-running, low-noise process.



A machine operator manually places freshly-baked cookies onto the infed conveyor track of the new Slek 50 Wrapper flowwrapping machine manufactured by Paxiom.



The servo-driven model Slek 50 Wrapper installed at the Cookie It Up facility features a self-centering film holder, automatic film registration, and optional gas-flushing capabilities to ensure that each single-serving package of cookies or shortbreads shipped to Porter Airlines retains the fresh taste and texture right up to the moment of consumption.

supplied by the **Lindsay Paper Box Company** and designed by Toronto-based branding services provider **Slingshot**, the company's 170-gram and 154-gram packages of nut-free, kosher-certified cookies and mini-shortbreads come in over a dozen enticing flavors—including *Chocolate Shortbread*, *Chocolate Chip*, *Coconut Cranberry Crisp*, *Salted Caramel Crunch* and *gluten-free Chocolate Chip* and *Blueberry* recipes—currently retailing at leading grocery chains such as **Longo's**, **Metro**, **Whole Foods Market** and **Sobey's** across Ontario, as well as at a number of local independent supermarkets and shops.

Made with fresh, natural ingredients and using no preservatives whatsoever, the buttery premium-priced treats made at the nut-free Aurora facility are amongst “the more expensive cookies you'll find on a supermarket shelf,” Smith acknowledges, “but they are also the only truly handmade cookies you will find there.

“We're not trying to compete with the Oreos of the world,” Smith says. “That will never be our goal in this business.

“Our objective is to give people a special moment of wholesome, handmade indulgence that simply cannot be recreated in a mass production environment,” says Smith, noting that each single cookie formed, shaped

and put into the plant's oven is uniquely different from all the other cookies—much like snowflakes.

“That's all part of the charm,” he states.

“We only use butter and other high-quality, locally sourced ingredients in our recipes,” Smith points out.

“We are happy with the unique niche we have found for ourselves in the cookie product category,” Smith says, “and we are definitely working all the time to grow that niche, but it will never be done at the expense of our product purity or authenticity.

“That really is our calling card and key selling point for our customers.”

While the patient and time-consuming process is admittedly the antithesis of efficient process automation, the Aurora bakery still manages to produce millions of cookies per year, according to Smith, enabling it to market about 15 different SKUs (stock-keeping units) and to do some private-label work as well.

“It's a bit of a Catch-22 for us in a sense that although we would like to speed up the process to increase our volumes,” Smith relates, “we must be careful in how we go about it so that our cookies remain truly special.

“As long as there are enough customers and consumers in the market to support us in what we do to maintain Cookie It Up as a viable commercial business,”

he states, “we'll remain happy to offer them the same handmade quality and taste that attracted them in the first place.”

Smith cites the company's thriving business with the Toronto-headquartered **Porter Airlines** as a textbook example of such marketplace reciprocity.

Operating out of the Billy Bishop City of Toronto airport on the city's lakefront, the regional airline has built its growing business over the years by offering a more convenient and direct option for both business and leisure travellers to reach other important city airports in Chicago, New York, Boston, Montreal and elsewhere across Ontario without the stressful grind of big crowds and long lineups found at larger international airports handling thousands of daily incoming and outbound flights.

As a fairly uncommon gesture of gratitude for customer loyalty, Porter Airlines also offers all its travelers free single-serving packs of cookies and shortbreads both at its departure lounges in-flight—all of them lovingly made and carefully packaged at the Cookie It Up plant in Aurora.

“We have now been serving Porter Airlines for about five years,” says Smith, adding the Porter Airlines business accounts for a substantial portion of the





## PACKAGING FOR FRESHNESS



Designed by Slingshot and printed by Lindsay Paper Box, the folding-carton packs all feature a black-and-white photograph of a historic Aurora sight on the side panel.



Packaged in pre-printed pouches supplied in rollstock by Tempo Plastics, the single-serving cookies are served to travelers at no charge at all the Porter Airlines flights.

plant's total output over the course of a year.

The far-flung market exposure and word-of-mouth acclaim that the Cookie It Up brands earned from being sampled by thousands of grateful daily travelers has been wonderful, Smith contends.

"It really blows me away to see so many emails from people in faraway places, nowhere near our geographic reach, praising our cookies as the best they ever had," Smith relates.

"It's incredibly generous that people take the time to send us a note about how our cookies made their travel a more pleasant experience," says Smith.

"Quite often they will ask where they can buy our cookies. Unfortunately, in many cases we can't accommodate them because they're just too far away," he sighs, "but we are looking at the different ways we can extend our distribution, including exporting some of our products to some select U.S. markets."

If and when that happens, there is a good chance that Cookie It Up may have to find somewhat larger home premises to boost its production volumes, but in the short-term, Smith feels the existing facility can still handle the current growing demand, as long as it continues to invest in productivity-enhancing equipment and technologies.

Since assuming the company's ownership, Smith has upgraded the plant's processing capabilities with installation of a state-of-the-art commercial oven manufactured by **Baxter Manufacturing**, a division

of multinational machinery group **ITW (Illinois Tool Works) Inc.**, as well as a fully-automatic rotary mixer made by commercial kitchen equipment specialists **Hobart Corporation**, also an ITW subsidiary.

To boost the packaging side of the equation, Smith recently purchased a brand new horizontal flowwrap machine provided by **WeighPack Systems Inc.** and **Paxiom Group**, who jointly operate a network of manufacturing facilities in Montreal, Toronto, Las Vegas and Miami.

Installed at the Aurora plant in early May, the shiny new **Sleek 50 Wrapper** horizontal flowwrapping system is currently used to package the aforementioned Porter Airlines treats into the single-serving 30-gram plastic pouches supplied in rollstock by the Innisfill, Ont.-based flexible packaging converter **Tempo Plastics**, which also supplies Cookie It Up with the cellophane bags inserted into the retail folding-carton packages.

Featuring three servo drives, a stainless-steel frame and floor stand, a user-friendly color PLC touchscreen control interface, a self-centering film holder and automatic film registration, the **Sleek 50 Wrapper** machine at the Aurora plant can also be equipped with gas-flushing capabilities.

For the most part, though, the handmade cookies baked at the Aurora plant require no gas-flushing, according to Smith, since they deliver a decent product

## Clean, safe conveying



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The Cookie It Up bakery in Aurora makes extensive use of high-strength, high-quality corrugated shipping cartons, supplied by venerable Toronto-headquartered corrugated packaging producer **Atlantic Packaging Products Limited**, to deliver its delicate handmade products to the retail customers in prime condition with no breakage or crumbling.



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The automatic film registration on the Sleek 50 Wrapper machine helps ensure uniform package consistency for each run.



Each and every cookie produced at the Cookie It Up facility is formed and shaped by hand by one of several line operators from the freshly-mixed slabs of dough (above left) blended to right consistency on a nearby Hobart mixer.

shelf-life of six or nine months, depending on the product.

“Our approach to shelf-life is based on getting the freshly-made product into the package as soon as possible while it’s still fresh,” Smith explains.

“After the trays of fresh-baked cookies are taken out of the oven, we just let them cool down enough so that it is safe to package inside the film—about 20 minutes or so on average—and away we go with the packaging.”

The Aurora plant’s production manager Sonya Formanek, who joined the company at the same time that Smith took it over, says she is very pleased with the machine’s performance, singling out its user-friendly operation, hygienic open-access design for quick cleaning and maintenance, quick change-over capabilities and, to date, virtually flawless performance.

“I have been very impressed with the *Sleek 50 Wrapper* machine so far,” Formanek states, saying the new flowwrapper currently produces about 54 single-serve packs per minute on average.

“The Paxiom team took about two days to install and set up the machine and to train our people on how to use it,”

she recalls, “and it’s been running pretty much trouble-free ever since.

“The actual tooling changeover on this machine is very basic and straightforward,” Formanek relates, “and we are also very happy with the follow-up customer service.

“We have only experienced one technical issue with the machine since starting it up, but that was resolved very soon after we called Paxiom for some assistance and advice.”

Adds Paxiom Group vice-president of sales Nicholas Taraborelli: “The Paxiom Group has garnered significant success since the launch of the SleekWrapper machinery range in 2014 because the domestic market is interested in having access to high-quality alternatives to the expensive imported brands of packaging machinery.

“We strongly believe that we offer our client base the best price-to-value ratio today with our wide range of completely servo-driven flowwrapping machines,” Taraborelli points out, “coupled with the fact that we can service all of our products directly from any of our North American-based facilities.”

Cookie It Up owner Smith fully concurs: “Having this new flowwrapping machine gives us a new level of operational flexibility we have not had before on the packaging side of the business.


“By adding it to the older-model flowwrapping machine we already had in place, we now have the option of running two machines at the same time whenever our production schedule demands it,” he explains, “rather than shutting down after finishing a product run to wait until the product change-over is completed on one of the machines.

“It may be a little thing,” Smith says, “but for an operation of our size, every little thing counts and adds up.

“Above all,” Smith contends, “the user-friendly flowwrapper complements our handmade cookie production process by making it more efficient, rather than diluting its authenticity or integrity.

“And if being more efficient means that we can serve our customers better and make more people happy with our delicious cookies,” Smith concludes, “so much the better for everyone involved.

“Making other people happy is a very rewarding way to make a living.” 🍁



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See online video of the Sleek 50 Wrapper machine +at Cookie It Up on Canadian Packaging TV at [www.canadianpackaging.com](http://www.canadianpackaging.com)

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■ **Sun Chemical Corporation**, Parsippany, N.Y.-headquartered manufacturer of printing inks, coatings, pigments, polymers and other liquid compounds or commercial and packaging printing applications, has appointed Jeffrey Shaw as chief supply chain, quality and business improvement officer.



Shaw

■ Australian-headquartered packaging machinery group **tna** has appointed Peter Oussoren as chief sales officer, responsible for leading the company's regional sales teams to execute its global sales strategies.



Oussoren

■ **Saxco International, LLC**, Philadelphia, Pa.-headquartered supplier of rigid packaging products and services to the liquor, wine, beer and food industries, has appointed Rick Schwartz as senior vice-president and general manager for all product lines for the East Coast of the U.S. and for all of Canada.

■ **Rovema North America**, Atlanta-headquartered subsidiary of German food packaging machinery group **Rovema GmbH**, has appointed Maryann Walburn as northeast sales representative, responsible for the northeastern and Mid-Atlantic U.S.



Walburn

■ **WAGO Corporation**, Germantown, Wis.-headquartered supplier of industrial automation devices and components, has appointed Marc Thibert as regional sales manager for southwestern Ontario.



Thibert

■ **Screen Americas**, Rolling Meadows, Ill.-based supplier of digital printing systems for a diverse range of graphic arts applications, has appointed Paul Chandonnet to the position of regional sales manager for digital inkjet solutions, responsible for territory comprising the eastern U.S. and eastern Canada.



Chandonnet

■ **Pineberry Manufacturing Inc.**, Toronto-based supplier of friction feeding, printing, packaging and custom automation solutions for the plastic card, packaging, distribution, food and beverage, pharmaceutical, and mailing and fulfillment industries, has appointed Daniel Liverant as regional sales manager.

■ Cincinnati, Ohio-headquartered flexible packaging products group **ProAmpac** has appointed Vince Musacchio as president of the **ProAmpac Global Flexibles** business unit, which includes manufacturing operations in Terrebonne, Que., along with plants in the U.K., Switzerland, Germany, Vietnam and Cambodia.



Musacchio



■ The **Association of International Metallizers, Coaters and Laminators (AIMCAL)** has selected the metallized folding carton for **Colgate Palmolive's** new **Colgate Enamel Health** toothpaste brand as winner of the industry group's 2016 *Web-Coated Product of the Year Award*. Produced by the Fairfield, N.J.-based **Unifoil Corp.** utilizing 0.016-inch coated recycled board from **PaperWorks Industries, Inc.**, the laminated carton incorporates a 0.5-mil layer of metallized polyester and a holographic background to create a 3D (three-dimensional) tooth replica on the front panel and three 3D images on the back panel, enhanced with an embossed/debossed area to create tactile representation of the product's efficacy.

■ **Avery Dennison**, globally-operating labeling materials and technologies group headquartered in Glendale, Ca., has reached a definitive agreement to acquire the European business of **Mactac** from private capital investment group **Platinum Equity** for an estimated US\$200 million. Employing about 470 people, **Mactac Europe** manufactures a diverse range of pressure-sensitive materials—including graphics, specialty labels and industrial tapes—at its central manufacturing facility in Soignies, Belgium, generating revenues of about \$170 million in 2015. “The acquisition of Mactac Europe enhances our competitiveness in high-value graphics, where we have sustained above-average growth over the past few years,” says Avery Dennison's chief executive officer Dean Scarborough. “Known for high product quality and outstanding service, Mactac complements our existing business with a strong brand and loyal customer base, while expanding our product offering, capabilities and distributor network.”

■ Globally-operating glass and metal packaging products manufacturer **Ardagh Group** has reached an

agreement to purchase a number of metal beverage can manufacturing facilities in Europe, Brazil and the U.S. from **Ball Corporation** and **Rexam PLC** for a total of US\$3.42 billion, which includes assumed liabilities of about US\$210 million. Expected to coincide with the upcoming closing of Ball's acquisition of Rexam, the deal will significantly expand Ardagh's global can-making capacity with the addition of 10 can manufacturing plants and two end plants in Europe; seven beverage can manufacturing plants and one end plant in the U.S.; two beverage can manufacturing plants in Brazil; and several innovation and support centers in the U.K., Germany, Switzerland and the U.S. Between them, these operations generated revenues of about US\$3 billion in 2015. “We are pleased to expand our consumer packaging business with the addition of a leading beverage can business,” says Ardagh's chairman Paul Coulson. “While we do not currently operate in the beverage can market, the business we are acquiring is highly complementary to our existing metal and glass businesses, having an excellent management team and strong customer relationships.”

■ Leading pulp and paper producer **International Paper** of Memphis, Tenn., has reached a definitive agreement to acquire the pulp business of Federal Way, Wash.-headquartered forest products group **Weyerhaeuser Company** for an estimated US\$1.9 billion. Employing approximately 1,900 people at five pulp mills and two converting facilities in the U.S., Canada and Poland, the acquired pulp operations produce fluff pulp, softwood pulp, and specialty pulp for a diverse range of consumer product applications, including diapers, personal hygiene and paper tissue products, and textiles. “Weyerhaeuser's pulp business has an outstanding customer base served from low-cost, well-run assets that complement our existing system and offer significant synergy opportunities,” says International Paper's chief executive officer Mark Sutton. “This transaction will position us as the premier global supplier of fluff pulp and will enhance our ability to generate additional cash-flow. We look forward to working with the talented employees of Weyerhaeuser as we integrate our businesses and create an even stronger company.”

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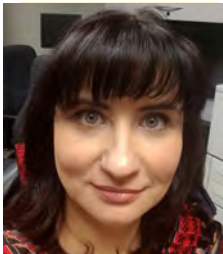
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- ☒ Skew
- ☒ Gap
- ☒ Bundle rejection
- ☒ Non-contact glue application with sensor or camera monitoring

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# UP THE WELL-TRAVELED PACKAGING PATH

With winter dragging its tail just a little too long for everyone's patience this year, I recently treated myself to a week-long escape to Cuba, where traditional product packaging is often quite different to what the Western consumer mind normally expects to encounter. Coming across the mustard and ketchup bottles on the tables of the resort's snack bar provided a timely reminder of the multinuanced nature of international consumer packaging. Produced by **Lider Aliment, S.A.** of Badajoz, Spain, the 270-gram plastic squeeze-bottles of **Manjares** brand of *mostaza* (mustard) and *ketchup* (the seemingly universally-accepted name for the stuff), are fairly familiar in overall packaging shape, with contoured indents facilitating good grippability of the elongated containers, thoughtfully topped off with large white flip-cap closures for dispensing. Upon closer scrutiny though, there are differences of note. Curiously enough, the serving suggestion on the ketchup bottle recommends to serve up the contents as dip in a large bowl with a sprig of basil as garnish. Not something you would see at many kitchens across Canada, at least in my experience. The mustard, it must be mentioned, gets the more traditional graphic treatment of squiggled ribbons served atop hotdogs in white buns, surrounded by fries. Being so used to seeing bilingual packaging on routine daily basis also makes one appreciate the graphic possibilities offered by unilingual packaging, such as the use of a large typeface, more open spacing for product photography, and plenty of room to feature dietary information up front—in this case calories, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt per 12-gram serving—along with prominent gluten-free and lactose-free declarations.



a bonus. In this light, big cheers to the Toronto-based **Quality Natural Foods Canada Inc.** for importing the **MTR Ready to Eat** prepared foods brand all the way from Bangalore, India. Packaged in delightfully designed boxes featuring the vibrant brand colors of saffron red and turmeric yellow, the brand makes effective use of large-sized product photography to showcase the contents inside each recipe—be it *Palak Paneer*, *Chana Masala* or *Lemon Rice*—and three badges proclaiming the product being made from 100-percent natural ingredients, requiring no preparation, and a three-chilli heat rating for easier meal selection right at the grocery aisle. A snap to make by simply tearing open the enclosed 300-gram plastic pouch and pouring the contents into a bowl for microwave cooking—or conversely just boiling the unopened pouch for five minutes and serving it directly onto the dinner plates—these little beauties are a far cry from the bland and tasteless boil-in-bag fare of yesteryear, offering a sumptuous taste sensation in every box.



the shelf—the beauty of this reclosable package lies in the fact that it gets smaller in your purse or bag after each sip—unlike a plastic water bottle or other rigid containers—to make more room for your other stuff.



With laundry being one of those dirty domestic jobs that has to be done sooner or later, the fairly recent explosion of laundry detergent pods and capsules in the marketplace has been by and large a very welcome development for millions of apartment-dwellers spared the burden of dragging big boxes of powder or heavy jugs of liquid detergent around on their trips to the apartment buildings' common laundry rooms. Unfortunately, these bright-colored, water-soluble pods have reportedly become a real health hazard for children mistaking them for candies, with some very tragic consequences. Part of the problem may be the fact that these capsules are predominantly retailed in easy-to-open plastic stand-up pouches whose standard PTC (press-to-close) closures do not offer as much deterrence or access prevention as their brand-owners manufacturers might have thought they did. In this light, the new Club-sized **Sunlight 4 in 1 PowerCore Pacs** from **Sun Product Canada Corporation**—retailing at Big Box outlets like **Costco**—offer a welcome peace of mind to go along with high-impact packaging *savoir-faire*. With the plastic container's faux brushed-steel shrinksleeve exterior resembling the protein-powder megapacks so popular among dedicated weightlifters and bodybuilders—the muscular-looking container is outfitted with a solid reclosable screw-top lid for enhanced product safety, with the Nike-like swoosh of the graphic of the pod inside the rounded square container projecting a confident, action-filled brand image that really means business.



With summer heat finally upon us, staying hydrated is key to enjoying the season safely—preferably with tasty, portable and user-friendly on-the-go beverages such as the **Cool Taste Calamansi** fruit-juice drink imported by **Fitrite Incorporated** from Quezon City in The Philippines. The recyclable 500-ml mylar pouch with pleated top and bottom features a handy drinking spout at the top with a removable cap, with its bright green-and-yellow design and red sashes of color providing an enticing visual reference for the fresh tartness of the *calamansi* (Philippine lemons) used to make a satisfying, thirst-questing beverage that contains 10-percent real fruit juice. While this packaging format is not very fridge-friendly—having a hard time standing up unsupported on its own on



Getting back into the full swing of things at work and at home post-vacation is challenging, so finding dinner solutions that are both easy and interesting is always

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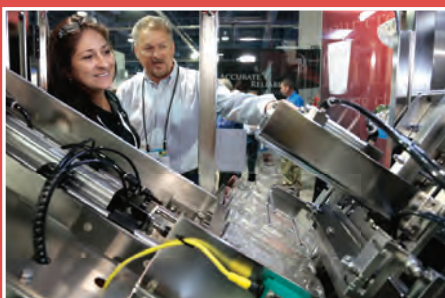
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