



CASE STUDY

Frozen Fruit

UniTrak was approached by a US regionally-based family-owned business that produces and distributes fresh-picked and frozen fruits. The current generation, along with a group of support professionals, manages the office and fields to grow, harvest, process and deliver premium berries to stores around the USA.

This customer produces frozen products are distributed under private and its own labels, encompassing all varieties of berries, mangoes, pineapples, and mixed fruit. In addition, they have hand-picked Fresh Division seasonally distributes raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, and strawberries. The company's Organics line, launched over 12 years ago, was a natural extension to the minimally invasive farming techniques

CUSTOMER

Regional Producer of Fruit

INDUSTRY

Food

MATERIAL

Frozen Berries

EQUIPMENT

S-2 Open TipTrak™ Bucket Conveyor

CHALLENGE

This customer experienced a particular challenge in processing frozen berries and cherries. Their production system employed an inclined belt conveyor at the end of the sorting line to lift the sorted product 14 feet to a bin which fed the packaging line. This conveying method resulted in significant spillage of product, with a consequent loss of throughput and productivity.

There was product spillage accumulating in the bins below the inclined conveyor. An estimated 3 percent of the product being conveyed was lost at this processing stage. The inclined conveyor jerry-rigged with plastic sheeting to prevent the product from spilling during conveying.

CUSTOMERIZATION

Following a detailed application review of this company's spillage problem on the sorting line, UniTrak proposed and installed an open frame S-2 model TipTrak™ bucket conveyor with all stainless steel construction. The TipTrak™ was equipped with clear polycarbonate covers, NSK Silverlube™ bearings with end-caps, bolt sleeves, and a discharge chute that was continuously welded inside and out, for food-grade applications. Because the product they had to convey was inherently sticky, the unit was also equipped with a heavy-duty bucket knocker to help clear product from the buckets on discharge.

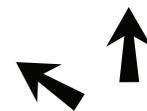
Telescoping legs allowed the TipTrak™ conveyor to be installed on an uneven floor surface. Once leveled, the legs were welded to completely seal the openings. To ensure fast cleaning with minimal downtime, the TipTrak™ was supplied with a washdown duty motor, gear reducer, and waterproof bearings.



SOLUTION

Photos 2 and 3 (see below) show the TipTrak™ conveyor installed in the processing line. Note the lack of product spillage at the infeed, discharge and travel areas of the conveyor. A unique feature of TipTrak™ bucket conveyors is the presence of a flexible joint strip between each bucket in the bucket assembly. Unlike conveyor designs which feature overlapping buckets, the TipTrak™ joint strips serve to seamlessly interlock the buckets and prevent any product spillage as the filled buckets travel through the conveyor.

The TipTrak™ unit supplied to our customer is capable of moving 240 pounds of product per minutes, with an estimated 50 percent savings per pound bag due to reduced waste from spillage. Due to the improved throughput and productivity which resulted from the reduced spillage, the TipTrak™ conveyor supplied paid for itself within 6 months from the date of installation.



Photos 2 and 3

LET'S TALK

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