

SORTING THE GOOD FROM THE BAD WITH NHP AND COMPAC!

Introduction

From the point of harvest, getting fruit from the farm to your dining table is an immensely logistical exercise – especially when these dining tables across the globe demand a year round supply of quality produce in a highly competitive marketplace.

At Paramount Citrus (Delano, California), they are fully aware of this challenge and cultivate and harvest more than 47,000 acres of fresh citrus that include mandarins, oranges, lemons, limes and grapefruits. Pivotal to their customer promise of high-grade fruit is an industry leading system for sorting each piece of produce by weight, size, shape, colour and surface blemishes amongst other criteria. Working with local supplier NHP, New Zealand based manufacturers, Compac Sorting Equipment (Compac), are the proud designers and builders of this system – the InVision 9000.

Project Overview

Compac provide quality turn-key solutions for the global post-harvest food handling equipment industry and at the Paramount Citrus facility, this is certainly the case. Here, their technology and innovation capability is helping the world's largest citrus sorting and packing facility prepare 4000 bins of mandarins into 800,000 bags up to 20 hours a day, six days a week. Designed and built by Compac, the 40-lane sorting and packing line comprises of Compac's industry leading InVision 9000 system for sorting each piece of fruit as well as a number of automation options such as autonomous bin stacking robots, automated bin filling systems and packing lines.

"When we get a request from a fruit packhouse for a machine to grade their produce, we'll design a customised system for them to do so. The main reason our products are successful in the world market is our leading technology and innovation," said Graeme Prichard, Electrical Component Buyer at Compac.

"We spend a lot of time on research and development to ensure we stay ahead of the field and our customers have the confidence they are receiving the best system for them and their individual application."



Using four cameras per lane, the InVision 9000 is able to view from the top and sides of the fruit covering 100% of the surface area of each piece of produce. With up to 60 images able to be captured while the fruit passes through the line, the accuracy achieved is extremely high, resulting in the separation of damaged fruit prior to shipping and the best return from the crops.

The Solution

A major component to the build of these customised systems is the Allen-Bradley® range of products and software available from NHP, with Senior Electrical Engineer at Compac, Baden Crabb, clearly recognising just how important quality components are to his company's final product.

"The flexible software and advanced automation available in our systems makes for one of the highest performing machines on the market and helps provide the best return on your investment," he said.

"Our association with NHP is based around their quality product offering and the level of service that they provide to go with it. Their Allen-Bradley range is integral to our offering and because every job we do is customised, NHP help us with providing equipment that is suitable for a range of countries and specifications around the world."

As well as their involvement in the componentry for the InVision 9000 sorting system, NHP are also able to provide a range of components to help Compac with their extended solution. At the Paramount Citrus facility this includes traceability compliance that is integrated with the sites ERP system as well as washers, accumulators, packing systems and more.

"At Compac we're proud to have an association with NHP and a big advantage is their support. They provide the full service from supply to support and their local stockholdings are very important to us – I'd have no hesitation recommending them," Mr. Crabb continued.



Project Fact File

Project: Compac Sorting Equipment

Location: Auckland, New Zealand

Details: Working with NHP, New Zealand based manufacturers, Compac Sorting Equipment designed and built a customised system for sorting produce for an End User in California.

NHP Products/Services:

- Allen-Bradley® range of products and software