

western Food Processor

SUMMER 2025

The magazine for food professionals & processors

Stay Safe!

**A WORKSAFEBC PERSPECTIVE ON
PREVENTING MACHINE-RELATED
INJURIES IN THE WORKPLACE**

**BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE
OF THE BEEF-HOLDER**

A LOOK INSIDE CANADA'S
BEEF INDUSTRY

**THE BC FOOD &
BEVERAGE INDUSTRY
LOOKS FORWARD**

SEALING THE DEAL

INNOVATIONS IN FOOD
PACKAGING AND LABELLING

+ THE U.S. IS DITCHING FOOD DYES. WILL CANADA FOLLOW?

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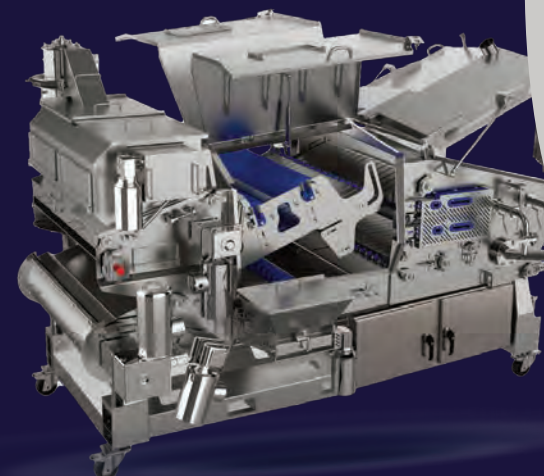
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Publisher's Message

A Call to Action

Amid the current economic uncertainty, Canadian food processors are calling for action to protect and further enhance the country's food industry.

Employing more than 320,000 Canadians across over 8,000 companies, food processing is the largest manufacturing employer in the country. It also serves as the single largest purchaser of Canadian agricultural products, and we have rightfully earned the reputation of having one of the safest food systems in the world.

Many in the industry, however, feel that not enough is being done to strengthen our food system and future proof it against the type of threats that have been coming from the U.S.



What can be done? Here are some of the key recommendations:

Launch a Dedicated Food and Beverage Manufacturing Modernization Fund:

Establish a specialized industry-focused fund to drive investments in equipment, automation, sustainability, and innovation—empowering manufacturers to modernize, expand, and stay ahead in an increasingly competitive market.

Introduce Competitive Tax Incentives for Investment:

Expand tax measures that encourage capital reinvestment, productivity enhancements, and long-term domestic growth.

Advance Regulatory Relief and Modernization:

Commit to effective and science-based regulations that support innovation and growth without adding unnecessary burden.

Secure a Strong, Stable Workforce:

A reliable, skilled workforce is the foundation of food and beverage manufacturing in Canada, yet labour shortages continue to constrain growth and disrupt operations.

Strengthen Supply Chains and Infrastructure:

Food and beverage manufacturers rely on efficient, reliable supply chains to receive ingredients, move goods, and deliver products across Canada and to global markets.

Promote Canadian-Made Food and Beverage Products:

At Home and Abroad: Develop a national strategy to elevate the profile of food and beverage products manufactured right here in Canada—both domestically and on the global stage.

Canada has a natural advantage when it comes to food production and we need to pursue a national growth strategy with this as a core element.


Frank Yeo,
Publisher & Editor

western Food Processor

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REUSE WASTE HEAT & REDUCE YOUR ENERGY COSTS WITH HEAT RECOVERY TECHNOLOGY

In industrial manufacturing, heat recovery is a key strategy that can be implemented to improve energy efficiency, reduce costs, and minimize your environmental impact. By capturing and reusing waste heat, you can reduce your industrial facility's energy consumption, lower your operating costs, and improve the sustainability of your operations.

The successful implementation of heat recovery techniques and systems requires careful planning and significant investment. Luckily, Efficiency Manitoba can help make your heat recovery project easier and more affordable with their technical expertise and financial incentives through their Custom Energy Solutions Program.

What is heat recovery?

Many industrial facilities generate a substantial amount of heat as a waste byproduct of its equipment and systems operations. Instead of letting the heat escape, it can be recovered and reused, ensuring as much energy as possible is used for productive purposes (like generating electricity or heating your building) instead of dissipating into the atmosphere.

Heat recovery refers to the manner of capturing and reusing waste heat produced during industrial processes to use energy more efficiently. This process has the potential to save a significant amount of energy while minimizing negative impacts on the environment. Looking into heat recovery options for your facility is an essential step in reducing its overall energy consumption.

The benefits of heat recovery

Incorporating heat recovery processes into your operations has a multitude of benefits:

- ✓ **Energy savings:** When you recover waste heat and use it to generate usable heat or electricity for your facility, you're offsetting the need to use energy from the grid. That means relying less on external energy and saving electricity and/or natural gas.
- ✓ **Cost savings:** Though initial investments in heat recovery systems can be significant, the long-term savings in energy costs, reduced fuel consumption, and operational efficiency can lead to substantial cost reductions.
- ✓ **Reduced greenhouse gas emissions:** If your facility uses natural gas, heat recovery can offset a portion of that consumption. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions, which is good for the environment.
- ✓ **Improved operations:** Reusing energy you've already generated in your operations means your facility can run more efficiently, increasing the productivity of your processes.

Save on project costs with Efficiency Manitoba's Custom Energy Solutions Program

If you're interested in benefitting from the savings heat recovery can offer your industrial facility, Efficiency Manitoba is here to help. Their signature industrial offer, the Custom Energy Solutions Program, provides a performance-based incentive to industrial, large commercial, and agricultural customers who take on energy-saving projects. You can receive an incentive of up to \$0.25/kWh of annual electricity saved and \$0.30/m³ of annual natural gas saved. So the more energy your project saves, the higher the incentive.

Heat recovery in action

Efficiency Manitoba has already supported several industrial companies in implementing heat recovery into their operations. For example, J.R. Simplot Company participated in the Custom Energy Solutions Program to make their potato processing operations more energy efficient. As part of their large plant expansion at its Portage la Prairie facility, they implemented a blow-down heat recovery system in their steam boiler plant. This project is saving J.R. Simplot Company an estimated 108,800 m³ of natural gas every year, and they received nearly \$75,000 in incentives through the program.

Start saving energy today

Efficiency Manitoba is ready to work with you to implement heat recovery (and other energy-efficient solutions) in your facility. Be sure to contact them in the early stage of your project; their team can help you identify optimal energy-saving opportunities for your facility and find ways to maximize your overall long-term savings.

To learn more about their offers for energy-efficient industrial technologies and systems, visit efficiencyMB.ca/industrial.



Aquapak Appoints Retail Packaging Expert and Polymer Scientist to Advisory Board

Aquapak, which specialises in developing high performance, environmentally safe materials to reduce plastic pollution and improve recycling, has appointed retail



Karen Graley team as they develop multiple applications for its marine-safe, non-toxic Hydropol polymer technology, which provides an alternative to conventional plastics.

Hydropol is currently used in place of conventional plastic in crisp and snack wrappers, and for garment bags. It makes unrecyclable packaging fully recyclable because it is dissolvable and biodegradable and breaks down harmlessly in all existing recycling streams. If it does escape into the environment, it biodegrades completely, leaving nothing behind (i.e. no harmful microplastics). This means that consumers can put packaging and wrappers made with Hydropol in their kerbside collections where it is recycled alongside paper, plastic, metal or food without any risk of contamination, where it disappears without a trace.



Professor Andrew Dove

The Circular Plastics Taskforce Bolsters Leadership by Welcoming Circular Materials and Recycle BC

The Circular Plastics Taskforce (CPT) has expanded its membership with the addition of Circular Materials and Recycle BC on its Board of Directors.

These new members will continue to enhance the important work of the CPT and strengthen CPT's governance structure to include three leading Canadian Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs), joining current member Éco Entreprises Québec.

"Circular Materials is excited to join the CPT Board of Directors and work closely with business and industry leaders to collaborate, share best practices and drive innovation," said Allen Langdon, CEO, Circular Materials. "Working together, we will undertake key research and initiatives to help solve important challenges and drive collective impact."

"We are excited to formalize our commitment to the Circular Plastics Taskforce," said Sam Baker, executive director, Recycle BC. "This important collaboration will allow all partners to continue to play a leading role in advancing solutions for optimizing plastics recycling, including work already underway with Recycle BC, like Bibliflex, a project to improve the understanding of flexible plastic packaging composition to better address packaging design and recycling processes".



Launched in 2020, the CPT is a one-of-a-kind initiative dedicated to finding concrete solutions for improving post-consumer plastics management. It brings together four major food, beverage, and packaging companies in Canada — Cascades, Danone Canada, Keurig Dr Pepper Canada and ProAmpac — with the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada and Éco Entreprises Québec. The addition of Circular Materials and Recycle BC underscores the CPT's commitment to supporting the advancement of extended producer responsibility (EPR) and the implementation of efficient recycling systems across Canada. This collaboration aims to enhance post-consumer plastic packaging recycling and advance the circular economy.

NCC Automated Systems Joins Paxiom Group

NCC Automated Systems has announced its integration into the Paxiom Group of packaging automation companies.

As part of the Paxiom Group, NCC Automated Systems will leverage its expertise in conveyor manufacturing to complement Paxiom's extensive range of automated packaging solutions. Together, the companies will offer a comprehensive suite of products designed to meet the diverse needs of customers, from primary packaging to end-of-line automation. Together, NCC Automated Systems and Paxiom Group are poised to lead the industry in packaging automation, delivering innovative solutions that enhance efficiency, productivity, and customer satisfaction.



Cimcorp Appoints Jarno Honkanen as VP of Solutions & Technology

Cimcorp, a pioneer in robotic handling solutions, has appointed Jarno Honkanen as VP of solutions & technology. With over two decades of expertise in solution management, sales, and software development with Cimcorp, Honkanen brings a wealth of knowledge and a fresh perspective to the company's leadership team.

Honkanen said, "What excites me about this role is the opportunity to combine cutting-edge technology with customer-focused solutions. Cimcorp's innovative spirit and dedication to excellence make this an incredible place to be."

Honkanen's impressive career of almost 25 years working with automation includes leading roles in developing innovative automation solutions, such as advanced robotic systems for material handling, and optimizing workflows for multinational clients. His expertise in streamlining complex systems has consistently delivered measurable improvements in efficiency and performance. His focus on customer-centric approaches and actionable strategies aligns seamlessly with Cimcorp's mission of simplifying automation for global businesses and makes him an invaluable addition to the leadership team.



Jarno Honkanen

New Digital Platform Offers Comprehensive IP Support to B.C. Businesses

Innovate BC's new IP Hub digital platform supports B.C. entrepreneurs in developing their understanding of intellectual property (IP) to support the building and implementing of an effective IP strategy to help grow their business.

Developed as part of the Province of British Columbia's Intellectual Property Strategy, the free-to-use IP Hub offers a tailored experience that will connect users

innovate BC

with information and resources based on an assessment of their current IP competency.

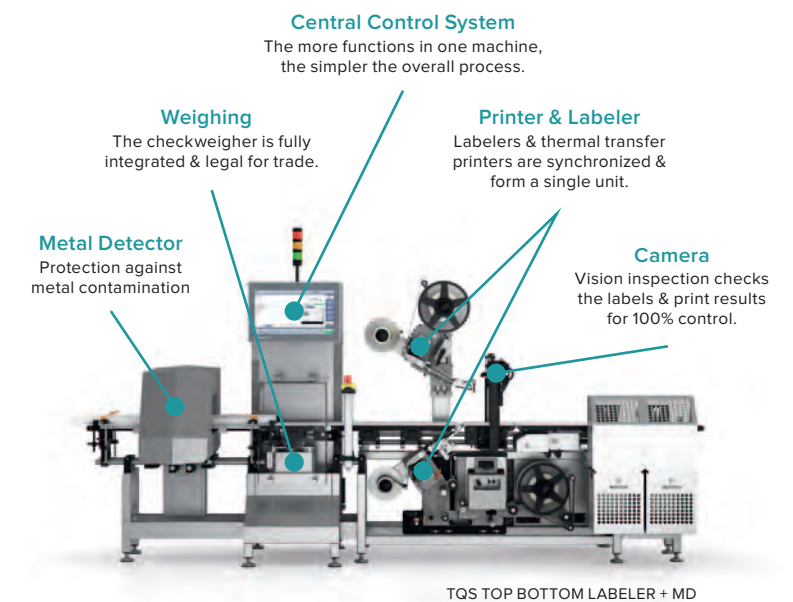
"B.C.'s Intellectual Property Strategy is about supporting our local businesses by giving them the tools they need to protect, grow and profit from what they create," said Diana Gibson, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation. "The launch of the IP Hub is a key part of that — helping entrepreneurs, researchers, startups and our high potential businesses fully understand their IP, scale their businesses, and keep their talent right here at home in British Columbia."

The strategic management of IP is essential for companies developing innovative products or solutions, playing a crucial role in commercialization, increasing revenue, and competitiveness. The IP Hub offers relevant and timely resources that meet the user's current level of IP comprehension and will provide them with ongoing support to build, implement and expand their own IP strategy.

Once assessed, users will have access to a wide range of supports that are available within B.C. and across Canada, aligned to their business stage, sector, size, and other characteristics that inform IP strategy. Resources include access to localized IP programming, a calendar of relevant and upcoming IP-focused events, education materials, and more.

/TQS from Wipotec Solutions in Food Manufacturing

Wipotec's TQS offers solutions for marking, labeling, and verifying products in food manufacturing, ensuring traceability and compliance with regulations. The TQS system can be used for labeling perishable foods and other products requiring special handling. Incorporating TQS into food manufacturing can improve product traceability ensure compliance with regulations and enhance overall quality.



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The Kraft Heinz Company Announces Ongoing Evaluation of Strategic Transactions to Unlock Shareholder Value

KraftHeinz

PITTSBURGH & CHICAGO – (BUSINESS WIRE) — The Kraft Heinz Company (Nasdaq: KHC) (“Kraft Heinz” or the “Company”) today announced that the company’s board of directors and executive leadership team have been evaluating potential strategic transactions to unlock shareholder value.

“At Kraft Heinz, our goal has always been to make high-quality, great-tasting food for all and to keep consumers at the forefront of all we do, enabling us to drive profitable long-term growth and value creation,” said Kraft Heinz CEO Carlos Abrams-Rivera. “Consistent with this goal, over the past several months we have been evaluating potential strategic transactions to unlock shareholder value. As we look to the future, we will continue to inspire and delight consumers with our iconic brands, fulfilling our mission.”

Kraft Heinz today also announced that Berkshire Hathaway Inc. (together with its affiliates, “Berkshire Hathaway”) has informed the company that, consistent with its other non-controlled investments, it will no longer hold Board seats on Kraft Heinz. As such, Timothy Kenesey and Alicia Knapp have stepped down from the Board due to their relationship with Berkshire Hathaway. With these changes, Kraft Heinz has reduced the size of its Board to 10 members.

Miguel Patricio, Chair of the Board of Kraft Heinz, said, “On behalf of the Board, I’d like to thank Tim and Alicia for their commitment and contributions to Kraft Heinz over the years. We greatly value our strong history with Berkshire Hathaway and look forward to continuing our relationship.”

Mr. Kenesey’s and Ms. Knapp’s decisions are not the result of any disagreement with management or the Board related to the company’s operations, policies or practices.

Kraft Heinz intends to continue its evaluation of strategic transactions to unlock shareholder value. There can be no assurance that the company’s assessment process will result in any transaction, or any assurance as to its outcome or timing. The company has not set a timetable for completion of this process and does not intend to make any further announcements regarding the process unless and until it determines that further disclosure is appropriate or necessary.

Food and Beverage Industry Faces Mixed Outlook, FCC Report Says

Canada’s food and beverage manufacturers face a year of uncertainty, with opportunities tempered by economic challenges, trade disruptions and shifting consumer habits, according to the latest FCC Food and Beverage Report.

FCC Economics forecasts a modest 0.6 per cent increase in food and beverage sales to \$168.8 billion in 2025, but a 1.5 per cent decline in sales volume, reflecting ongoing adjustments to beverage manufacturing. Profit margins are expected to improve slightly, though they will remain below pre-2019 levels, with variation across sub-sectors.

“The food and beverage industry faces ongoing pressures from economic challenges and trade disruptions,” said Amanda Norris, senior economist at FCC. “While sales growth is projected to increase slightly, manufacturers will need to carefully navigate rising costs and shifting consumer habits to maintain profitability.”

For 2025, FCC Economics forecasts a further decline in beverage sales of -2.5 per cent and -2.6 per cent in volumes. The anticipated decline is driven by a continued shift away from alcoholic beverages, particularly beer, and a slight slowdown in non-alcoholic beverage sales after four years of strong growth.

While inflation has eased and labour market pressures have relaxed, consumer spending remains uncertain. Per capita consumption of food and non-alcoholic beverages declined for the fourth consecutive year in 2024, down 1.0 per cent from 2023 and 8.0 per cent since 2021, as household budgets remained tight. However, food and non-alcoholic beverages showed signs of recovery near the end of 2024, while alcohol consumption continued to weaken.

“Consumer behaviour is shifting, with a growing emphasis on value and products that align with individual preferences,” said Norris. “In this environment, manufacturers who adapt to changing trends and focus on meeting diverse consumer needs will be better positioned to build brand loyalty and strengthen sales.”

Another strong year for dairy product manufacturing sales is expected for 2025. FCC Economics forecasts an 8.3 per cent increase in sales and a 6.0 per cent increase in volumes. Gross margins in the sector are expected to improve in 2025, to the highest level over the past two years, with support from higher sales and declining raw material costs.

Strong price growth has driven double-digit sales increases in the sugar and confectionery sector since 2021, and 2025 is expected to bring another 10 per cent increase in sales, with volumes rising by 6.7 per cent. While higher revenues helped offset rising expenses in 2024, margins remain under pressure from high cocoa prices and

potential trade disruptions. With over 90 per cent of confectionery sales tied to exports, particularly to the U.S., the sector faces risks from shifting trade policies, though steady growth in non-U.S. markets suggests diversification opportunities.

In addition, Canada’s aging labour pool will continue to exert pressure on wages, this impact will be less pronounced than in previous years, with the decline in raw material costs helping to offset total expense.

“The food and beverage sector is at a crossroad, with both risks and opportunities ahead. Manufacturers must focus on innovation, strategic market diversification and cost management to stay competitive,” Norris noted.



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interpack 2026 Fully Booked

With just over a year to go, interpack returns in 2026 in Düsseldorf, Germany, from May 7 – 13, with full force — with dynamism, a passion for innovation and intensive exchange of ideas within the global processing and packaging community. Some 2,800 exhibitors and trade visitors from around the world are expected. The Düsseldorf fairgrounds are again fully booked. “Packed halls, high-impact presentations, genuine innovations: anticipation is building for the sector’s no. 1 event. If you’ve missed the registration deadline, I can only encourage you to get in touch with us again,” said Thomas Dohse, director of interpack. “Floor planning is still in flux. We are examining each request individually and try to find the right solutions.”

The planning provides for a focus on interpack’s eight main visitor target groups: exhibitors offering solutions for the food, beverages, confectionery, baked goods, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, non-food and industrial goods sectors can each be found in their own respective areas, making orientation easier. And the extensive section at the “heart” of interpack — packaging materials and packaging goods — along with machines for labelling and marking, production of packaging material and integrated packaging printing, are also brought together in their own halls. In addition, there will be the accompanying suppliers’ trade fair “components”, with two separate halls for the first time.

interpack 2026 will focus specifically on forward-looking topics. They form the thematic framework for dialogue, innovation and inspiration. The Hot Topics in 2026 are: Smart Manufacturing, Innovative Materials and Future Skills.

Smart Manufacturing is synonymous with more intelligent, sustainable and economical producing. The strong machinery segment at interpack will present new solutions for this — for instance in the fields of AI-supported systems, robotics, automation, intelligent controlling, “value from data” and resource efficiency.

The Innovative Materials hot topic will focus on around 1,000 exhibitors in the packaging materials section of interpack. Highly developed plastics, fibre-based materials and intelligent coatings improve product protection and durability. Monomaterials, bio-based solutions and Design for Recycling promote circular use and reduce the use of materials.

All this is only possible with qualified employees. Future Skills will address the transformation of the working world in the sector. The focus will be on qualification, promoting young talent, digital know-how and the skills required for future-proof processes and technologies.

The exhibits will be complemented by numerous specials events. At the Spotlight Forum, experts will discuss the sector’s current trends. The Start-Up Zone will bring fresh ideas and new perspectives onto the stage. With Women in Packaging, interpack will put the spotlight on female professionals and their role in the sector. And with interpack TV, highlights, innovations and voices will be broadcast directly from the fairgrounds to the world.

Judge Approves \$500M Settlement in Loblaw Bread-Fixing Case

Some Canadian shoppers may soon receive cash from a class-action lawsuit that accused Loblaw and its parent company George Weston of engaging in an industry-wide scheme to fix the price of bread.

Ontario Superior Court Judge Ed Morgan has approved a \$500-million settlement in the case.

The settlement he approved includes a combined \$404 million to be paid by Loblaw and George Weston. The remaining \$96 million is accounted for through a gift card program Loblaw began in 2018 and ran through 2019 in hopes of making amends with customers who paid about \$1.50 more per loaf of bread.

Once legal fees and other court expenses are paid, 78 per cent of the funds will be allocated to shoppers in Ontario with the remaining amount headed for people in Quebec.



Customers who bought bread between January 2001 and December 2021 and did not previously take a gift card from Loblaw will eventually receive up to \$25.

If there is still money left over after that distribution, funds will be divided among anyone who claimed the gift card.

Morgan’s decision ends one chapter in a saga that has lobbed allegations at the country’s biggest grocers, including Metro, Sobeys, Walmart Canada, Canada Bread and Giant Tiger.

While these players have denied their participation in an alleged scheme to co-ordinate the price of bread back to 2001, Loblaw and George Weston told the Competition Bureau they were part of the practice in 2015. Their admission wasn’t publicized until 2017.

They then offered a \$25 gift card to try to compensate customers, but shoppers weren’t appeased and in December 2019, a Quebec class action was filed against them and the other grocers. A Quebec court will hear arguments around whether to accept the Loblaw and George Weston settlement on June 16.

Protein Industries Canada Launches New Program to Help Canadian Companies Navigate Economic Uncertainty



Protein Industries Canada is announcing a new program to help Canadian companies remain competitive in wake of the ongoing uncertainty around trade with the US. The \$3 million program will support the development of new, or the reformulation of existing products, for the domestic market.

“Now more than ever, it is vital that we support our Canadian ingredient manufacturers and food processors. Their ability to remain viable is key to Canada’s agriculture and food sector, and Canada’s domestic supply chain,” CEO of Protein Industries Canada Robert Hunter said. “This program will help our manufacturers and processors create or reformulate products for the Canadian market, using Canadian ingredients.”



The Strengthening the Canadian Supply Chain Program will reimburse up to 75 per cent of eligible costs to a maximum project cost of \$200,000. To be eligible, projects must include at least one of the following:

- Reformulating products with domestically produced ingredients;
- Scale-up and commercialization work to increase the supply of domestically produced food products to Canadian consumers; or
- Scale-up and commercialization of domestically produced ingredients to Canadian manufacturers.

As will all Protein Industries Canada investments, projects are required to use Canadian feedstocks or ingredients derived from Canadian crops such as wheat, oats, barley, peas, soy or fava beans. Other emerging crops, such as lupin or hemp, will also be considered.

In addition to launching the new program, Protein Industries Canada is also

making changes to its Technology Leadership Program to increase the rate of reimbursement on the cost of eligible commissioned capital and equipment. This change, which will be applied retroactively to all current projects, and all projects currently in development, will help offset the cost of installing capital equipment in Canada, helping Canadian companies build out their processing capacity in Canada.



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Host 2025 Strengthens Its Position as a Must-Attend Global Platform For Food Equipment and Artisan Baking

Where can professionals spot the most relevant emerging trends and market opportunities and turn them into real business growth? Fiera Milano presents Host 2025, the leading trade show for the global HoReCa industry, designed to foster connections between supply and demand, encourage dialogue among peers and experts, and offer insights into the consumer habits of tomorrow. The 44th edition will take place from 17 to 21 October 2025.

Foodservice equipment has always been one of the exhibition's key strengths: this year the sector will occupy no fewer than six halls at Porta Est (1-3, 2-4 and 5-7), while Hall 6 will be shared with MIPPP – Milano Pane Pasta Pizza, which will also extend into the adjacent Hall 10. This year, greater synergies will be created through an exhibition layout that encourages seamless connections between supply chains.

Artisan baking will be one of the main themes of the 2025 edition. The long-standing MIPPP – Milano Pane Pasta Pizza show returns in a renewed format, thanks in part to a collaboration with the SIPAN Consortium. SIPAN will further enrich the line-up of top international players by bringing in its network of leading Italian bakery companies.

The refreshed MIPPP will attract new segments of trade visitors and position Italy once again at the heart of the international baking scene with a truly European-level event, enhanced by Bakery Square

— an arena entirely dedicated to the passion for the art of baking, featuring training sessions, knowledge-sharing events, talks and hands-on workshops.

Foodservice and artisan baking will also feature prominently in Host 2025's extensive event schedule, beginning with some thrilling competitions. The Panettone World Championship, the only live competition for large, leavened products, will see 12 national teams from across the globe go head-to-head. Meanwhile, the European Pizza Championship will showcase the talent of pizza makers and professionals from across the continent.

Returning to Host 2025 for its seventh edition, the Smart Label – Host Innovation Award celebrates sustainable innovation. The initiative is promoted by Fiera Milano and Host Milano in partnership with POLI.design and under the patronage of ADI – Associazione per il Disegno Industriale.

Smart Label includes three award categories: Smart Label, for products with distinctive innovative content; Innovation Smart Label, for innovation that goes beyond established trends; Green Smart Label, for outstanding eco-sustainable features. The award has enjoyed increasing success with each edition: to date, more than 950 applications from around the world have been submitted across six editions, and over 280 products have been recognised for their innovation.




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Protein Industries Canada Launches \$15 Million in Genomics and AI Programs to Strengthen Canada's Agrifood Sector

Protein Industries Canada has announced an additional \$15 million in funding provided by the Government of Canada. Focused on two key streams — Genomics and Artificial Intelligence — this new investment will help strengthen Canada's agriculture sector and domestic food supply chain by bringing new tools to plant-breeders, farmers, ingredient processors and food manufacturers.

By advancing genomics and AI technologies, these programs will enable farmers and companies across Canada's agrifood sector to build a more resilient, efficient and sustainable food system. This full value-chain approach will expand the range of Canadian-made ingredient options while also creating new economic opportunities — bringing the country closer to realizing its \$25 billion agrifood growth potential.



Through the new five-year Genomics Stream, Protein Industries Canada will invest \$7 million into the commercialization of new and improved broad-acre crop varieties, with a focus on pulse and cereal crops. Projects under the stream will apply genomic tools in plant breeding and variety development to meet industry demand, aligning innovation across the value-chain, from growers to ingredient manufacturers. The additional \$8 million into artificial intelligence programming will boost Protein Industries Canada's current investment under the Government of Canada's Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy. Projects that will be considered may involve: the development of tools that accelerate seed genetic work; supply chain optimization; on-farm information gathering; quality assurance and food safety protocols; and ingredient and food formulation.

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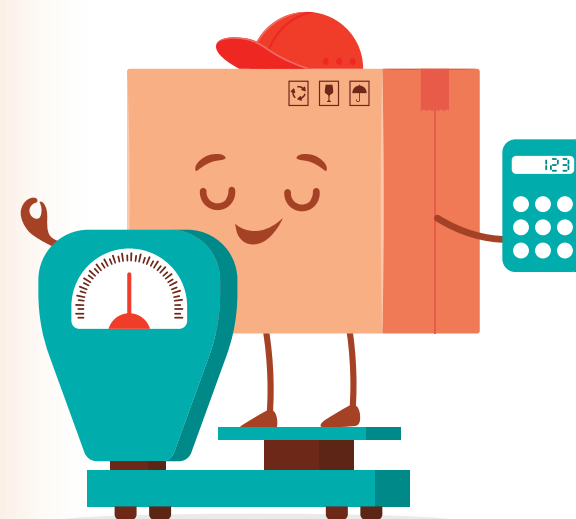
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Turning Waste Into Food

Scientists from Tecnológico de Monterrey Study How to Transform Whey Into Sustainable Protein

Each year, millions of tons of whey, enough to fill thousands of Olympic swimming pools, are discarded, polluting aquatic ecosystems and wasting a resource with high nutritional value. Now, scientists from Tecnológico de Monterrey, in collaboration with the Technical University of Denmark (DTU), have found a revolutionary solution: converting this industrial byproduct into single-cell protein (SCP) through mixed microbial communities. This discovery promises to transform the food industry and provide sustainable solutions in the face of climate change and the growing global demand for proteins.



The research is based on an innovative precision fermentation process, using strategic combinations of microorganisms, particularly yeasts and bacteria of industrial relevance, which can work in synergy to break down the lactose in whey and transform it into protein-rich biomass, without the need for genetic modifications.

"The use of microbial communities is key in this process. In nature, microorganisms do not function in isolation but in consortia where they complement each other. We leverage this principle to optimize the conversion of waste into a product with high added value," explained Dr. Mario Antonio Torres Acosta, who leads this development and holds a Ph.D. in Biotechnology from Tecnológico de Monterrey and is an honorary professor at University College London.

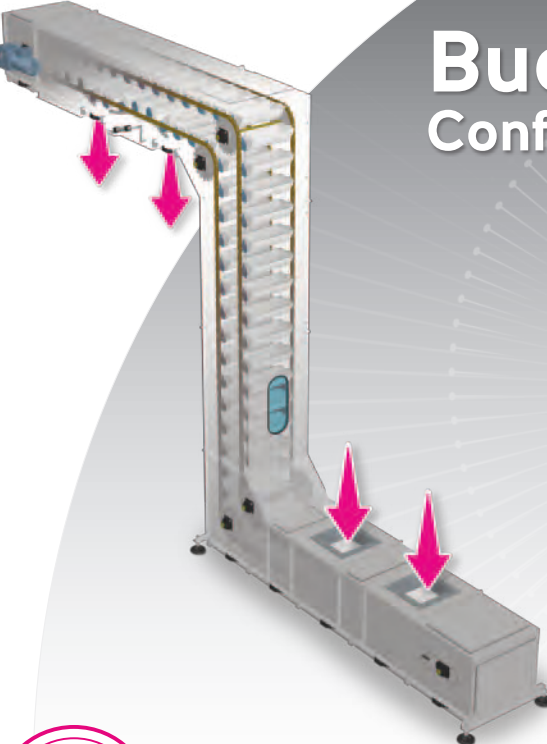
His research has focused on the application of innovative techniques in bioprocesses, including techno-economic modeling of biotechnological processes and the fermentation of waste for the production of single-cell protein intended for the food industry. The approach of this research seeks to avoid the use of genetically modified

organisms (GMOs), which would facilitate its market acceptance and industrial scalability. The combination of yeasts and bacteria in a controlled ecosystem allows maximizing protein production without altering the natural composition of the microorganisms involved.

Whey waste represents a significant environmental challenge. Up to 47% of the whey produced by the cheese industry is discharged into water bodies, causing pollution and ecological imbalances. In Mexico, it is reported that in regions such as Veracruz and Chiapas, more than 100,000 litres of whey are dumped daily into rivers, altering their composition and affecting biodiversity.

Whey is highly nutritious, but its release into rivers and soils generates an excess of nutrients that promotes the uncontrolled growth of microorganisms. This can lead to phenomena such as eutrophication, reducing the oxygen available in the water and affecting aquatic life.

The project developed by Tecnológico de Monterrey, in collaboration with the Technical University of Denmark (DTU), seeks to find a viable alternative based on circular economy principles, repurposing this industrial byproduct to generate an accessible and sustainable protein source. This technology could be easily implemented in various regions of the world where cheese production generates large volumes of residual whey.



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STAY SAFE!

November 2024: a worker in a Greater Vancouver baked goods manufacturing plant suffers a hand injury after getting caught in the rollers while cleaning a dough sheeter. That same month, a worker in another facility incurs an arm injury by getting snagged between the paddles of a dough pump.

Also, in November and in Greater Vancouver, a worker is hurt while trying to remove an object from the conveyor of an automatic dough-kneading machine while it's operating.

This is just the tip of a long list of incident reports compiled by WorkSafeBC regarding injuries sustained in the food processing industry. And while managers try their best to look after staff, interaction with any equipment is potentially dangerous: in 2023 alone, B.C.'s food and beverage manufacturing sector had an injury rate of 4.12, compared to the provincial average of 2.08.



In food and beverage manufacturing, between 2013 and 2019 a total of 7,142 injury claims were filed in B.C. (comparable rates were filed in other Western provinces). Getting caught in equipment was a common mishap, accounting for 549 claims. The most affected areas were wrists, fingers, hands and other upper extremities, with injuries occurring the most when workers serviced or repaired machines or cleared jams.

For a sector whose participants often operate on razor-thin profit margins, any injury is a calamity: not just for the worker, but to the flow of operations and of course the company's bottom line and reputation.

That's why organizations such as WorkSafeBC promote safeguarding as an essential operational tool. "I think people in the food processing sector do their best to safeguard their operations," says Tami Der, occupational health and safety consultant at WorkSafeBC. "But at times additional expertise or resources may be needed."

WorkSafeBC defines safeguarding as measures that "protect workers against contact with hazardous moving parts or other harmful conditions when working around machinery and equipment. Safeguards include barrier guards, safety devices, shields, awareness barriers, and warning signs. These methods can be used on their own or in combination to protect workers from hazards."

While this definition might bring to mind large operations

For a sector whose participants often operate on razor-thin profit margins, any injury is a calamity: not just for the worker, but to the flow of operations and of course the company's bottom line and reputation.

with complex machinery and robotics, Der emphasizes that safeguarding applies to everyone — even small, family-run businesses. "Even if you're a small operation using basic equipment, you still need to safeguard it as designed," she says. "As your business grows and your equipment becomes more advanced, your safeguarding needs will grow, too. And once you hire employees and start paying premiums, you're responsible for their safety, whether you have two workers or twenty. With growth comes added responsibilities, like forming health and safety committees and conducting regular inspections."

"The point is, you should be thinking of safeguarding right from the beginning, concurrent to envisioning how your business will grow."

Protecting workers from machine-related injuries is a matter of due diligence



Some points from WorkSafeBC:

Identifying areas of risk starts with conducting a thorough risk assessment.

Work collaboratively with your employees — and, in larger operations, your health and safety committee — to identify potential hazards. Pay close attention to machinery with moving parts that could cause injuries such as entanglement, cuts, or crushing. The risk assessment not only helps you uncover these dangers but also guides the order in which they should be addressed, ensuring that the most serious risks are tackled first.

Review each machine's owner's manual to ensure all safeguards are in place and functioning according to the manufacturer's design.

Observe how workers interact with the machinery, taking note of where a worker could be exposed to hazards of the equipment. Pay close attention to areas where body parts could come into contact with hazardous components.

Evaluate the likelihood of an incident occurring and the potential severity of injuries.

This will help determine where the most urgent improvements or safeguards are needed.

Der says, "We have various resources available on our website for employers to utilize, and one of the best things they can do if they're planning to open a new facility is develop an inherently safe layout. Where does the equipment go? Where do the people go? We have tools available for that as well."

As automation and advanced processing equipment become more common in food processing facilities, owners and managers need to be aware that injury risks grow correspondingly.

As automation and advanced processing equipment become more common in food processing facilities, owners and managers need to recognize that the nature of injury risks may change. As equipment and processes evolve, it's important to regularly update risk assessments to ensure they reflect current conditions. For those unsure how to properly safeguard their workplace, Der recommends reaching out to their industry's health and safety association. "They have resources and experts who can help assess your workplace and identify the risks," she says.

Meanwhile, WorkSafeBC can advise about compliance and offer online materials. All told, preventing injury will become more effective over time, especially if open



communication among workers is emphasized so they can report concerns about current safeguards or suggest improvements.

That, combined with regular inspections, exploring new safety technologies, and regularly updating practices, will keep operations efficient and productive. **WFP**



Help prevent work-related injuries by safeguarding your equipment.



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The BC Food & Beverage Industry Looks Forward

Helping Canadian Food Processors Rise to Today's Challenges

While BC Food & Beverage has been around for 21 years, the association and its members are now seeing some of its most challenging times.

According to James Donaldson, CEO "There's so much uncertainty today with tariffs and worry about how to deal with the unknown. As part of our advocacy work, we're trying to bring clarity and be the voice of industry. One of our roles is building community, collectively learning from each other because there's power in being able to problem solve together."



James Donaldson, CEO, BC Food & Beverage.

The New Growth Hub

As a non-profit, the association has limited resources, but since 2023 has been putting together a learning

system to provide tools, resources, training, accelerator programs, workshops, and e-learning modules in different formats accessible to any company, no matter how many employees or where they are in B.C.

"We're building content right now and will be launching the program on our website (bcfb.ca) later this year," said Donaldson.

"We've also moved to a new office to facilitate larger meetings among peer groups. Because many events are held in the lower mainland area, we have invested in a much-improved audio/visual system to make content and events available in all areas of the province."

Other exciting projects are coming together that will fit into the Growth Hub: emergency preparedness tools, on-demand content, learning modules, and guidebooks.



Co-founders of Fromage Protein Pops, Nuala and Fiona Bobowski.

Frozen treats made with cottage cheese for a protein boost and 60 per cent less added sugar than traditional ice cream.

"We'll continue to look for opportunities to add to the program and ensure content is relevant to current times," said Donaldson. "It's about keeping everyone informed and up-to-date quickly and having peer groups connect remotely — normally impossible when there are more than 3000 processors in the province right now all spread out and different sizes."

In response to the "buy Canadian" movement, BC Food & Beverage created a "Made in Canada" kit, downloadable for free across the country, and on the website is a resource page with updated information and links to provide relevant industry information.

Facing the Impact of Tariffs on the Food Processing Sector

"Canada needs to build a more self-reliant food system, and there is a huge opportunity to further develop our food processing industry," said Donaldson. "Even if the tariffs go away, there will always be uncertainty; we're going to have to reprioritize; we need to support and foster a healthy food system here in B.C. and Canada. Also, we don't live in a vacuum. If there's ever a national disaster in the U.S. or

"Canada needs to build a more self-reliant food system, and there is a huge opportunity to further develop our food processing industry," said Donaldson.

another part of the world, it would ultimately affect our food supply. We're extremely vulnerable, and this is the time to look to dealing with this.

I'm participating on two task forces: one I co-chair with the Deputy Minister and executive of the BC Egg Council that is specific to the entire food industry value

chain, focused on competitiveness and growth; the other is the Trade and Economics Task Force, spanning the whole economy — mining, forestry, agriculture, food — looking at how to respond to the tariffs. We need to focus on what we do well as an industry, as a country and build up that resiliency. Then it won't matter so much what happens around us."

The goal is to encourage continuing investment in learning and success. "Our on-demand training sessions build up credit towards achieving and maintaining industry-leading knowledge, practices, and innovations. Our professional development learning modules help make staff more marketable, become part of the community, and build pathways as well."

There are so many stories, so many passions in the industry and BC Food & Beverage is working to bring them forward through small business planning workshops and the new accelerator program.

One of these stories is Fromage Protein Pops: delicious frozen treats made with cottage cheese for a protein boost, 60 per cent less added sugar than traditional ice cream, and no artificial sweeteners.



Co-founders of Tocha Foods, Vicky Venkat and Matthew Tong.

In 2024, Tong and Venkat sold their first bottle of their original hot sauce, by the end of the year they had two more flavours.



"We had the idea back in 2020," said Nuala Bobowski, co-founder with sister Fiona. "It took a lot of experimenting with a second-hand ice cream maker (Fiona has a PhD in Science) and product development (Nuala's forte). We finalized the recipe in 2024 and opened a food kiosk in Vancouver near the beach to see what people thought. We soon learned that the healthy, flavourful pops appeal to families, seniors, and fitness enthusiasts alike.

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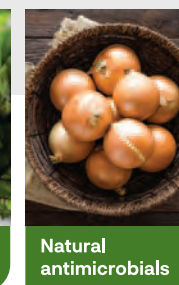
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Laura Gustafson, co-founded Crumblz: Protein by Ulivi with her sister Carla.

Made from nutritious pulse peas for high protein, prebiotic fibre, low carbs, and zero cholesterol, easy to mix into ground meat, rice, or as a complete meat substitute.

The only reason we had the confidence originally to go forward was because of 'The Forum', a support network for women entrepreneurs across the country. Also, BC Food & Beverage have been great. We took a free two-day

business course from them, and they've connected us to others in the industry as we are looking for a small processor that can help us make our mix."

Another innovative startup is Vancouver-based Tocha Foods. Co-founders, Viggie Venkat and Matthew Tong recognized a massive gap in the condiment market: 70 to 75 per cent of people interviewed don't like or cannot handle hot sauces but had no alternative when it came to adding flavour to meals. In May 2024, they sold the first bottle of the Original with its hot sauce flavour profile without the heat and vinegar forwardness. By the end of the year, they had two more flavours, Verde and Yuzu.

"That was a year of development, learning, testing, and iterating, fine-tuning our recipes, and messaging over 25 demos and farmer's markets," said Venkat. "Because our production process is extremely long and labour intensive, we cannot use a conventional co-packer and plan to scale our own production facilities in B.C. as we grow revenues. The cost of logistics in Canada, especially with our heavily DTC-focused strategy, has been another major challenge. We have worked with Canada Post, UniUni and UPS to drop these by 50 to 70 per cent over the last three months, so that has helped immensely." Tocha Foods is now in IGA/Fresh St. in B.C., Country Grocer, Stong's and other independent retailers and hope to expand nationally by the end of this year.

Crumblz: Protein by Ulivi. Laura Gustafson and sister, Carla, have launched their delicious Canadian product made from nutritious pulse peas for high protein, prebiotic fibre, low carbs, and zero cholesterol, easy to mix into

There are so many stories, so many passions in the industry and BC Food & Beverage is working to bring them forward through small business planning workshops and the new accelerator program.

ground meat, rice, or as a complete meat substitute.

"The process of launching our product has been an incredible journey filled with both challenges and exciting wins," said Gustafson. "Building awareness around the product and educating customers on how to use Crumblz has been a key focus and ongoing effort."

The company has secured distribution with UNFI, national acceptance by Whole Foods, and is expanding into Healthy Planet, Country Grocer, Community Foods, Fortinos, and more.

"The support we've received has been amazing," said Gustafson. "We've had backing from the federal and provincial government, Protein Industries Canada, National Advocacy Groups, successful entrepreneurs and their teams, industry trailblazers, global leaders in pulses and even celebrity chefs have reached out to show their support and of course our friends and family! Schools have also connected with us, looking to replace their American protein sources with our Canadian offerings."

The brand has been chosen for UNFI's UpNext program, supporting emerging, sustainability-driven brands to grow and scale their businesses. **WFP**

Commentary

By Jay Holmes, Senior Director,
Food Program Integration Division, Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Food Safety Requirements

Protect Your Consumers and Your Business

Canada's food industry plays a pivotal role in maintaining food safety. If you are making or selling food for someone to eat, complying with federal food safety requirements under the Safe Food for Canadians Act and Regulations and the Food and Drugs Act and Regulations is essential to protect both consumers and your business.

To support you in meeting this obligation, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) makes guidance, tools, and resources available on the CFIA website.

I would like to draw your attention to some of the key requirements, such as:

PREVENTIVE CONTROLS

to help prevent food safety hazards such as Listeria, E. coli and Salmonella and to reduce the likelihood of contaminated food entering the Canadian marketplace. A written preventive control plan may be required;

TRACEABILITY RECORDS

to track your products one step forward and one step back in the supply chain, to protect consumers and potentially minimize economic losses; and

PROPER PACKAGING & ACCURATE LABELLING

to protect consumers from food safety risks and enable them to make informed food choices based on information that is truthful and not misleading.

Failure to meet federal requirements for food safety or consumer protection can have costly impacts on your business and may result in product seizure or recall, license suspension or cancellation, administrative monetary penalties, and/or prosecution.

Ready-to-eat Foods and Listeria

If you make ready-to-eat foods to sell in other provinces, territories or countries, you must follow Health Canada's Policy on Listeria monocytogenes in ready-to-eat foods.

Listeria monocytogenes is a bacterium that can cause the foodborne illness listeriosis, a bacterial infection that can cause serious illness or even death, especially among vulnerable



courtesy shutterstock.com

If you make ready-to-eat foods to sell in other provinces, territories or countries, you must follow Health Canada's Policy on Listeria monocytogenes in ready-to-eat foods.

populations like the elderly, pregnant women, and individuals with weakened immune systems. It can survive in cold, moist environments — even at refrigeration temperatures.

Foods that are ready-to-eat may support the growth of Listeria, especially those that have an extended shelf-life, such as (but not limited to): deli meats, cheese, packaged salads, and refrigerated plant-based beverages. **WFP**

The CFIA has guidance available to help food businesses meet the requirements, including how to:

- Establish preventive controls
- Implement sampling and testing programs
- Take action if listeria is found
- Document what your business does to prevent, detect and control contamination.

To find out more: review CFIA's checklist for preventing and controlling Listeria Monocytogenes in ready-to-eat foods. If you have questions, please contact the CFIA by phone or submit your question online.



BC Milk Marketing Board Member Appointment by the BC Milk Industry Advisory Committee

The British Columbia Milk Marketing Board, under federal and provincial legislation, promotes, controls and regulates the production, transportation, packing, storing and marketing of milk, fluid milk and manufactured milk products in British Columbia.

A Board Member is to be appointed by the BC Milk Industry Advisory Committee with a three-year term effective November 2025. (Reference: BCMMB Election and Appointment Rules and Procedures, July 10, 2024)

Board duties include the analysis and interpretation of detailed statistics in relation to production, product quality, consumption patterns, and industry economic impacts, and direct involvement in regional, national and international policies.

The person appointed will have strong skills in communication, complex analysis and decision-making. Good background knowledge of the dairy industry and supply management will be important. Board members are required to relate well to and have the confidence of producers, processors, suppliers, Board staff and other stakeholders.

This part-time position is suitable for an individual who can commit to Board and other meetings, likely or approximating three to five days a month, and who can undertake some travel.

This Board Member cannot be a licensed producer.

The BC Milk Industry Advisory Committee invites applications from qualified individuals who are keen to make an active contribution to the Dairy industry.

If you feel qualified and the opportunity is of interest, to apply for an interview please send your resume in confidence by September 30, 2025:

Via email to: miac@bcmilk.com
Attention: Ben Janzen, Chair, Milk Industry Advisory Committee



Relationships are foundational in any industry. Hearing from people who are leading the way brings the formal education into focus.

product. They must come up with a viable product.”

A small pilot plant at BCIT allows them to work on recipes and formulations, but that’s far from the final step in creating food products.

For the students, determining the best packaging and assessing MULTIVAC’s equipment and knowledge were key aspects of their afternoon. The student’s project is a real-world study of presenting the best food product possible and packaging that meets budgets, is viable, and allows marketing to attract consumers.

Student, Michelle Ma, says the visit to MULTIVAC Canada and the opportunity to ask questions are “very important.”

“We need to think of our packaging, and we need to consider our costing and the machinery we need,” she says. “They’re telling us about the latest technology. We can have microwaveable packaging.”

But, beyond the need to complete their assignments, the students were also gaining insight into their futures. One of Ma’s fellow team members, Ravneet Sran, valued the connections they made at MULTIVAC Canada.

“It really gave me a sense of how to use different equipment, and how the equipment can do different things,” she says. She added that the MULTIVAC team’s input could have lasting benefits for her. “They’re really helpful. I know I can always come back with questions.”

Ma hasn’t yet decided what type of role she will pursue



While packaging is only part of the education journey, it’s a component of nearly everything that’s taught at MULTIVAC.

after graduation, but Sran wants to go into product development, while another student on their team, Natalie Tam, is interested in quality assurance.

Sharing knowledge and creativity in the industry is something the MULTIVAC team enjoys, says Patrick McCarthy, film & materials sales manager for Western Canada.

“It’s a chance to share our individual knowledge with the students,” he says. “Some of them are surprised that we play with the food and formats.”

CURIOSITY MEETS INNOVATION

By Ronda Payne

BCIT Food Processing, Safety, and Quality students brought questions and enthusiasm to **MULTIVAC Canada’s Innovation Centre**

There’s nothing like the enthusiastic mind of a student with a project and passion. BCIT students from the newly renamed Food Processing, Safety and Quality two-year diploma program descended on the Richmond showroom of MULTIVAC Canada on April 15 to engage in some hands-on learning about real-world packaging tools.

Not only did they have questions about the systems and industry as a whole, but they also came with a need to learn. Their graduation depends on it.

Miriam O’Donovan, one of the BCIT faculty instructors, says the group of about 30 was a mix of first- and second-year students. The second-year students had an agenda coming into MULTIVAC, a full-service supplier of processing, slicing, labelling, inspecting, and packaging technology and equipment. Each of the four second-year student groups is tasked with a complete product development project from concept to preparation for commercialization.

“We’re reformulating a plant-based simulated meat patty,” O’Donovan says. “In a couple of weeks, they will present their



BCIT students from the Food Processing, Safety and Quality two-year diploma program descend on the Richmond showroom of MULTIVAC Canada.



He motions to the cans of Play-Doh and loose hockey pucks that students were invited to use with the machines on display to simulate a burger patty, whether frozen or fresh.

"We use these things to try different ideas," he says. "The same process we use with our customers, we are using with the students."

In fact, some of MULTIVAC's customers were on site at the same time as the students, trying out packaging options. They were working with the thermoformer and

Patrick McCarthy, regional sales manager, materials, motions to cans of Play-Doh students were invited to use with the machines on display.

exploring ways to better showcase and seal their meat products.

Students also watched demonstrations of other equipment around the room, like the tray sealer and chamber machines. The MULTIVAC team took the time to demonstrate the equipment's functionality, flexibility, and ability to meet the students' project needs.

Before students began exploring and asking specific questions, McCarthy and Sam Nosek, regional sales manager with MULTIVAC Canada, spoke about what different products can and can't do and dispelled some assumptions the students had.

"You can use microwaveable, bakeable and recyclable packaging based on the products' market needs. Paper, plastic, and foil — the options are almost endless," says McCarthy. "Sometimes what you believe you can't use it for is not true."

Helping foods, like fruits and vegetables, last longer was another point.

"There are opportunities to create packages with various lid types," says Nosek. "Some are breathable. There are varying rates depending on the type of produce."

He added that the event was an opportunity to help the next generation of leaders learn more about the industry they are heading into. They could see the equipment, understand it and have applicable, real-world knowledge for the next stage of their careers.



Determining the best packaging was a key aspect of students' afternoon, accessing not only MULTIVAC's equipment, but also their knowledge.

The event was an opportunity to help the next generation of leaders learn more about the industry they are heading into.

"The two-year program is preparing them for this," says O'Donovan.

While packaging is only part of the educational journey, it's a component of nearly everything students learn.

"We actually expose them to commissary kitchens and farmers' markets," she says. "We take them on a trip to a grocery store to see products in the market. We're trying to prepare them to go out into the industry, so they're not in awe when they go into industry."

She says that applied learning in the program is second-to-none because they must take theory into practical steps to complete their projects. This is their final exam per se. There isn't a written test. Instead, it's a group of industry leaders assessing the student groups' projects and reports.

After graduation, they will likely pursue careers in research and development, quality control and quality assurance and even entrepreneurship. Some past students have taken their ideas to market after completing the program.

"They get the business pieces, they're learning management, business concepts, pricing and developing a budget



Erin Friesen, Food Processing, Safety and Quality Program head sees visits to MULTIVAC as essential to student learning (bottom right).

Canada as a foundational component of the student's future. The program is always looking for additional partnerships to support the up-and-coming workforce.

"There's a lot of networking in this industry as well," he says. "There's quite a community of people and companies who have expertise that can help tackle any challenge.



Sam Nosek, regional sales manager, speaks about what different products can and can't do, while dispelling assumptions students had.

is part of that," says O'Donovan.

Erin Friesen is the Food Processing, Safety and Quality Program head. She considers the visit to MULTIVAC Canada as essential to student learning.

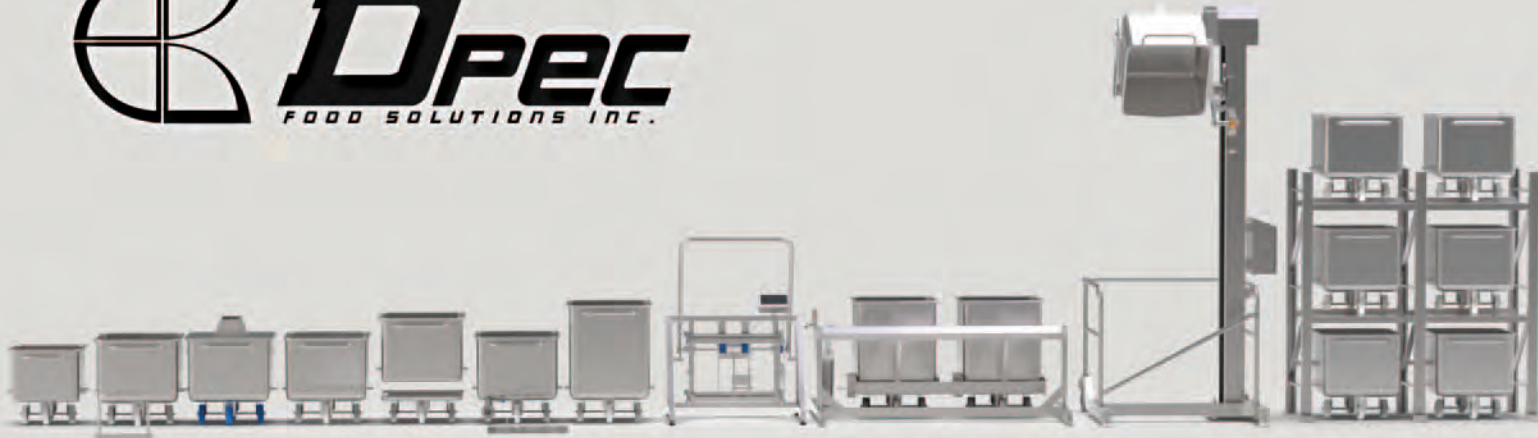
"I teach the packaging component, and it's a very boring lecture," she says. "Actually, seeing the materials and feeling the materials is a very important way to learn."

She also regards BCIT's relationship with MULTIVAC



Have fun with it and solve the problems you encounter by leveraging your network," says Nosek.

Relationships are foundational in any industry, but for those just learning about food processing and packaging, hearing from people who are leading the way brings formal education into focus. With support from companies like MULTIVAC Canada, BCIT's students will be well prepared for their next journey. **WFP**



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Market Report: Beef

By Brennah Doyle



BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEEF-HOLDER

A LOOK INSIDE CANADA'S BEEF INDUSTRY

Last year, Canadian beef production was projected to be 1-2% higher than it was in 2023 but came in on the low end with a 0.6% increase. Although the direction was correct, it was smaller than what had been estimated due to record large carcass weights.



Jamie Kerr,
market analyst, Canfax

"As for fed beef production," says Jamie Kerr, market analyst at Canfax, "the 3.4% increase was right in line with projections of a 3-5% increase." Conversely, non-fed production was down more than projected. CanFax estimated a 7-9% reduction, rather than the 12% reduction that occurred.

In 2024, farm cash receipts from cattle and calves totaled \$16.8 billion, increasing by 11% since 2023. "The receipts of cattle

and calves were the largest single source for the second consecutive year, while the total livestock receipts in 2024 were \$39.9 billion — up 7% from 2023," Kerr noted.

Market Shifts

While Canada is headed towards the consolidation phase of the cattle cycle, with beef cow inventories fluctuating by a modest 1%, the US. Global cattle cycles in Brazil, Australia, Argentina, and Uruguay are also in sync with North America. A smaller supply should be supportive to prices throughout the supply chain.

Kerr added, "Smaller numbers will keep beef prices strong. Beef demand in Canada has held up remarkably well in 2024. A high-quality product and a consistently high eating experience is supporting demand."



Canada exported 495,000 tonnes of beef with a value of \$4.9 billion in 2024.

CanFax acknowledges that although it is weather dependent, they're expecting to reach the bottom of the Canadian cattle cycle in 2027. Cow-calf producers will be watching weather patterns closely. "When the herd finally moves into expansion, calf and feeder prices will increase with tighter supplies (as heifers are retained) before they drop."

As for the Canadian feeder cattle, imports remain strong. For the past nine months, Alberta steer calves,

"Efforts are currently underway to enhance the visibility of Canadian beef and grow mindshare with consumers in international markets."



Canada Beef has been working hard to expand the presence of Canadian beef in key export and high opportunity markets.

weighing between 5-600 lbs, have been at a premium in the North American market. "The feeder import volumes in January and February were 10% higher than in 2024. It doesn't appear that larger imports are having a notable impact on the market," according to Kerr.

About three million head of cattle were slaughtered in federally inspected plants in 2024. This was down 5% from 2023. "Initial projections have Canadian slaughter down another 2% in 2025 to around 2.9 million head. Numbers will get smaller over the next 2-3 years but could be somewhat offset by net feeder trade," says Kerr.

"Canada Beef has been working hard to expand the presence of Canadian beef in key export and high opportu-



Last year, Canadian beef production was projected to be 1-2% higher than it was in 2023.

nity markets and is actively exploring all alternative export markets with potential for further expansion and diversification of Canadian beef exports," says Gina Teel, director and stakeholder communications at Canada Beef. "Efforts are currently underway to enhance the visibility of Canadian beef and grow mindshare with consumers in international markets."

In 2024, Canada exported 495,000 tonnes of beef with a value of \$4.9 billion. Export volumes were down 1% from 2023 with the value down 2%. Meanwhile, live slaughter cattle exports to the U.S. in 2024 were up 29% from 2023. This was driven by the labour strike at the Cargill Guelph packing plant in June and the weak cash basis, which encouraged feedlots to move cattle to US packing plants. In total, beef and cattle exports last year were over \$7 billion, a 6% increase from 2023. "From January to February this year, beef exports are down 9% from the same period last year. Slaughter cattle exports are 25% higher than last year. Fed cattle exports



Gina Teel, director and stakeholder communications, Canada Beef



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for steaks and roasts are up 39% but non-fed exports for ground beef are down 13%,” Kerr shared. Above all, volatility around US tariffs have impacted live cattle trade flows.

Tackling Illness & Tariffs

With issues like New World Screwworm in the US at their southern border, North American feeder supplies are being impacted. As a result, the impact included smaller feedlot inventories in the southern plains between November 2024 and February 2025.

“We’ll continue to monitor avian influenza,” says Kerr. “Bird migration is underway, and migratory routes may see elevated instances of bird flu. At this point, it appears that bird flu viruses don’t significantly impact cattle. Dairy farms have reported flu-like symptoms and reduced milk



Canadian feeder cattle import volumes increased in 2025 compared to 2024.

Labour and succession are still an ongoing discussion. These barriers only caused more difficulties for farmers amidst the rising costs of farming.

production but no fatalities. It’s still worth monitoring.”

And in terms of the ever-changing tariff landscape, Canada escaped the latest round of global tariffs, but it doesn’t mean we’re in the clear. CUSMA is up for review in 2026. Canfax notes that they will be watching for any developments.

Labour and succession are still an ongoing discussion. These barriers only cause more difficulties for farmers amidst

the rising costs of farming consequently, causing doubt for the foreseeable future. When asked about any notable challenges, Kerr states, “Farmers are getting older and the cost to the next generation to take over the farm seems to be rising almost exponentially.” Without meaningful support or intervention, the future of family farming will remain uncertain, leaving many to question whether the next generation will be able- or willing- to carry on the legacy. **WFP**

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Hand Wrapping vs Machine Wrapping

Using Automation to Reduce Repetitive Strain Injury
and Increase Operational Efficiency



Challenges of Hand Wrapping

In hand wrapping, workers repeatedly extend their arms to pull stretch wrap around a product every 10-15 seconds, often for hours at a time. These continuous motions strain the arms, shoulders, and neck and lead to RSI. In addition, the physical effort of handling heavy stretch wrap rolls and the force required to pull the material increase injury risks. Operators may also suffer burns from hand wrapper hot plates.

Hand wrapping systems pose other challenges as well. Operator skill and efficiency can vary, leading to inconsistent product presentation, material waste, or low output.

The Automation Advantage

Automated wrapping systems deliver substantial benefits over hand wrapping:

Production Increase:
A trained operator manually wraps no more than 4-5 packs per minute, whereas machines wrap 15 packs per minute — a 300% increase.

Consistent Quality:
Machines ensure uniform, tight seals, unaffected by operator skill level.

Health and Safety:
Automation minimizes repetitive motion by operators, reducing the risk of RSI. Machine wrapping also eliminates manual lifting and pulling, protecting workers from musculoskeletal disorders such as back and spinal injuries.

Cost Savings:
Consistent material usage by tray size reduces waste compared to variable manual application.

Operational Efficiency:
Machine wrapping eliminates the extra step of using a separate weigh scale to print a label.

Prioritizing worker safety is essential in grocery stores and food processing facilities. Manual tasks like hand wrapping, however, present significant health risks, particularly repetitive strain injury (RSI). This article explores how automation using machine wrapping systems mitigates these risks while enhancing operational efficiency.

Understanding RSI

Repetitive strain injury arises from repeated physical movements which damage muscles, tendons, or nerves. Commonly impacted areas include shoulders, arms, wrists, and hands.

One of Canada’s most common workplace injuries, RSI often necessitates physiotherapy and time off work. In 2023, the Association of Workers’ Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC) reported almost 11,000 lost-time injury claims due to musculoskeletal system and connective tissue disorders.

Transitioning to automated wrapping systems markedly improves worker safety and operational efficiency.



Automated wrapping systems deliver substantial benefits such as, production increase, consistent quality, health and safety, cost savings, and operational efficiency.

The Ideal Solution

The Ishida WM-Nano, the world’s only tabletop automated wrapping system, exemplifies these advantages. It automates film attachment, stretching, sealing, and cutting, enhancing efficiency and avoiding physical strain for employees.

The machine’s compact design reduces space requirements 50 to 70 per cent over competitor models, allowing it to fit seamlessly into various workspaces.

The WM-Nano’s versatility in handling a wide range of products and tray sizes makes it a practical choice for businesses seeking to enhance productivity.



Monica Kolomanski,
bilingual sales &
marketing coordinator,
Ishida Canada

Conclusion

Transitioning to automated wrapping systems markedly improves worker safety and operational efficiency. By reducing RSI and musculoskeletal injuries while boosting productivity and consistency, automation offers a compelling solution for businesses aiming to safeguard their workforce and optimize performance. **WFP**



Packaging & Labelling Equipment

By Malaika Costa-Githongo

Sealing the Deal

Innovations in Food Packaging and Labelling

Packaging and labelling have become crucial elements in today’s fast-paced food production environment for ensuring efficiency, regulatory compliance, and consumer trust. Food processors continuously face growing challenges like regulatory pressures, labour shortages, and increasing demands for sustainability. By integrating automated and in-house packaging and labelling solutions, food processors have a better chance of remaining competitive. These systems not only streamline production queues but ensure that products meet strict industry standards while enhancing operational efficiency.

Industry experts highlight the importance of advanced packaging technologies that support everything from product integrity and traceability to brand consistency.

Whether through tamper-evident packaging, high-resolution labels, or automated systems for faster changeovers, these innovations are transforming the food production landscape. As the market continues to evolve, it’s clear that packaging and labelling will remain central to processors’ efforts to meet both consumer expectations and regulatory requirements.

Technology That Does the Heavy Lifting

One of the biggest advancements is the seamless integration of automated packaging, labelling, and coding systems into production lines. These smart technologies change how food products are packaged, tracked, and verified, delivering both efficiency and peace of mind.



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Up to 35 PPM*



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WM-Nano
World's First Tabletop
Automated Wrapper
Up to 15 PPM*

*Packages Per Minute. Approximate capacity. Actual results will vary depending on various packaging parameters.



By integrating smart labeling, case packing, coding, sealing, and inspection into cohesive production lines.



Warren Boudreau,
sales manager,
Harlund Industries

Warren Boudreau, sales manager at Harlund Industries, says the company works with partners like Hitachi, Matthews, Foxjet, Pouchmark, Nita, and Weigh Right to provide customized automation for Canadian food processors. "With best-in-class equipment and integration, Harlund enables producers to achieve automated, efficient, and compliant operations," he says. This includes rapid changeovers, enhanced traceability, and reduced labour needs.

Neumann Marking Solutions, a Canadian-owned supplier of industrial label printers and coding systems, supports this shift with in-house labelling systems designed for flexibility, scalability, and traceability. According to Clint Moar, sales and marketing representative from Neumann Marking Solutions, "Most of our clients print high-quality labels in roll-to-roll format using a desktop label printer and rewinder, which feeds easily into existing auto-applicators". For operations requiring higher speeds, Neumann recommends inline solutions like the Afinia L901 Series, which offers



Clint Moar, sales and marketing,
Neumann Marking Solutions



Harlund Industries enables food producers to achieve automated, efficient, and compliant operations.

full-colour variable printing at up to 12 inches per second. These solutions integrate smoothly into existing lines, especially for small-to-medium producers looking to scale automation gradually.

Neumann also supplies compact date coders, conveyors, and semi-automated applicators that enable processors to build modular systems tailored to their specific throughput needs.

Adaptable and Sustainable by Design

Speed and compliance are essential, but sustainability has become a top priority. Packaging choices must now balance durability, food safety, and environmental impact.



Randy Belcot, vice-president of sales, Reiser Canada

Innovations increasingly focus on recyclable materials, tamper-evident features, and waste-reducing printing solutions.

Reiser Canada has earned a reputation for delivering user-friendly machinery suited to modern needs. Randy Belcot, vice president of sales, says Reiser's systems are designed to be safe, easy to maintain, and highly adaptable. "We make our machinery functional and safe while exceeding industry standards — without limiting what operators can do," he explains.

Neumann Marking Solutions is also helping processors reduce their environmental footprint in practical ways. "By bringing their label printing in-house, our clients can shift to on-demand production, printing only what they need, when they need it," explains Moar. "This significantly reduces overproduction and spoilage associated with pre-printed label inventories." Neumann is also actively testing and sourcing recyclable and biodegradable label materials, aiming to provide sustainable options that don't compromise on durability or print quality.

Today's supply chains require more than fast packaging — they need intelligent packaging that supports traceability, authentication, and quality control from end to end.

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AI-enhanced vision systems detect mislabelled or damaged products in real time, improving consistency and reducing the need for manual inspection.

AI-Powered Packaging Performance

Artificial Intelligence is making waves in packaging, especially in quality control and predictive maintenance.



Jakob Plauborg, applications engineer, Harpak-ULMA

Jakob Plauborg, applications engineer at Harpak-ULMA, highlights how the company's Automation product line includes fully automated systems for packaging, palletizing, and quality assurance. "These systems reduce labour requirements, minimize product defects, and significantly boost efficiency," says Plauborg.

AI-enhanced vision systems detect mislabelled or damaged products in real time, improving consistency and reducing the need for manual inspection. AI also monitors equipment performance to predict failures, minimizing unplanned downtime and reducing waste. These smart systems help maintain smoother operations while also contributing to sustainability goals by decreasing service calls, energy use, and line stoppages.

Meeting the Demands of a Smarter Supply Chain

Today's supply chains require more than fast packaging — they need intelligent packaging that supports traceability, authentication, and quality control from end to end. Tools like camera verification, barcode grading, and high-resolution labelling are essential for recall readiness and brand protection.

Harlund Industries addresses these needs with high-resolution printers, fast-drying inks, tamper-evident labels, and data-rich coding systems. When integrated with cloud platforms or ERP systems, these tools allow processors to trace products from production line to retail shelf with confidence.

Neumann Marking Solutions plays a key role in helping food processors meet CFIA, GS1, and other regulatory labelling requirements. "We specialize in helping processors take control of their product labeling," Moar shares. "This includes traceability, lot coding, and compliance with food safety guidelines." Neumann's offerings include pigmented

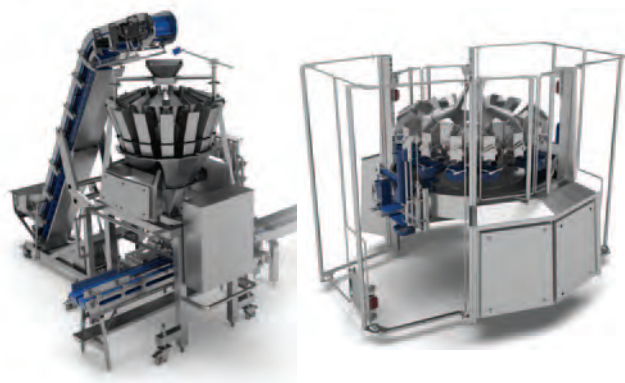
inks and BS 5609-certified materials that hold up under harsh conditions like moisture, abrasion, and saltwater ideal for products being exported or exposed to rugged environments.

Their consultative "try-before-you-buy" approach ensures label performance and durability, giving clients the opportunity to test materials and designs in real-world conditions before committing to equipment or stock.

A Collaborative Future

As automation, sustainability, and consumer expectations reshape the industry, collaboration is becoming a key driver of progress. Companies like Harlund, Reiser, and Neumann are moving beyond equipment sales to co-develop long-term strategies with their clients.

Clint Moar notes that flexibility, durability, and cost-effectiveness are top priorities for many Canadian processors, especially those transitioning to in-house systems. Popular solutions include the Epson ColorWorks C4000 and C6000 series for small-scale operations, and the Afinia L502 Duo or Epson ColorWorks C8000 for higher-volume, colour-critical applications. "Our role isn't just about supplying equipment. We provide test samples, consultative guidance, after-sale support, and ongoing upgrades," Moar says. This hands-on support helps clients stay ahead of compliance and innovation while improving cost control.



With efficient and precise combinatorial weighing and the ability to handle sticky products, Harpak-ULMA's Multihead weigher can easily process complex and demanding tasks.

Looking Ahead

The future of food packaging and labelling lies in integration, intelligence, and adaptability. From AI-driven inspection tools to robotics that enable 24/7 production, today's innovations are unlocking new levels of efficiency and compliance.

For Canadian food processors, success will hinge on building strong relationships with technology partners who understand the nuances of food safety, sustainability, and market dynamics. By working with experts like Harlund Industries, Reiser Canada, and Neumann Marking Solutions, processors can move confidently into a future powered by smart systems, safer food, and sustainable growth. **WFP**

Commentary

By Michael Terry, Content Manager, Harpak-ULMA Packaging

Waste To Wealth

Transforming Automated Precision Into Competitive Edge

Manual methods are costing processors more than they think; explore how integrated weighing and packaging systems reduce overfill, cut labour costs, and boost your bottom line.

Inefficiencies in processing are leaving profits on the scale — sometimes costing producers millions every year. In food manufacturing, where every ounce counts, weighing and portioning can no longer be treated as afterthoughts.

The challenges are persistent: product giveaway, labour shortages, inconsistent output, and labeling errors. Traditional, manual methods are increasingly expensive to maintain and too imprecise for today's demands.

The good news? Technology is catching up.

Advanced innovations like automated multihead weighing systems and Smart Connected Human Machine Interfaces (HMI) are helping processors close performance gaps, optimize production, and improve consistency across every shift.

Ending Costly Product Giveaway

In pre-packaging production, product giveaway isn't just waste — it's lost profit. Most processors still accept a 5–6% giveaway as a standard cost of doing business with manual methods.

But how much is that really costing?

According to processing equipment leaders at Cabinplant, giveaway losses start in the hundreds of thousands of dollars and can climb into the millions annually, depending on production volume.

The solution? Multihead weighing systems designed to reduce giveaway to just 1–2%. With these systems integrated with packaging, producers realize meaningful savings and measurable gains in product yield. And with each tray meeting its fixed-weight target, processors save product and build trust with retailers and consumers by delivering consistent results.

Higher Throughput. No Bottlenecks.

Portioning isn't the only pain point. Many operations struggle with disconnected equipment — systems from different vendors that weren't built to work together.



Advanced innovations like automated multihead weighing systems are helping processors close performance gaps, optimize production, and improve consistency across every shift.

Traditionally, this leads to delays, troubleshooting headaches, and unpredictable performance.

That changed in October 2024, when Cabinplant and Harpak-ULMA entered into a strategic partnership to deliver pre-integrated, end-to-end portioning and packaging systems throughout the U.S. and Canada.

From bulk receiving through feeding, weighing, and loading, these custom, unified systems keep product moving with minimal downtime and maximum flow — even for challenging items like marinated meats or seafood.

The result? Faster line speeds, reduced time to market, and a streamlined service model with fewer compatibility concerns or vendor handoffs.

Smarter Systems. Leaner Labour. Higher Savings.

Processing operations are also under pressure to do more with less labour.

Manual labour, once essential, is now one of the biggest bottlenecks. However, by combining automation in key areas

— like feeding, weighing, and portioning—processors cut labour needs by up to 70%.

Automated systems take over repetitive tasks, requiring fewer hands on the line, more uptime, and improved output quality. When paired with equipment that adapts to product shape, texture, and volume, these systems also reduce labeling errors and increase accuracy across the board.

From Manual to Machine Intelligence

Even highly automated plants can struggle with siloed systems that rely too heavily on manual adjustments.

That's where Smart Connected HMI's come in. Developed through the Cabinplant and Harpak-ULMA collaboration, these interfaces allow machines to communicate, adjust, and self-correct — with minimal human input or oversight.

When implemented as part of a connected production line, they provide:

- Real-time data exchange
- Predictive diagnostics
- Centralized control across systems

This level of connectivity means fewer disruptions, smarter decision-making, and a line built for future AI-ready performance.

Automated systems take over repetitive tasks, requiring fewer hands on the line, more uptime, and improved output quality.

Consistency You Can Count On

Retailers now demand fixed-weight, case-ready packaging. Consumers expect uniformity. Consistency is no longer optional — it's a requirement.

In an industry with tight margins and high expectations, processors need more than machinery. They need complete, connected systems that reduce waste, simplify operations, and deliver consistent performance — day in, day out.

Innovative systems from Cabinplant and Harpak-ULMA Packaging ensure that each package meets specs. Overfill is eliminated. Shelf appearance improves. Inventory control becomes more accurate and manageable.

And with a single-source system design, there's no more juggling mismatched machines or troubleshooting across vendors. Everything works together right out of the gate.

Ready to stop losing product, time, and labour? Now's the time to rethink the math and utilize precision for optimal payoff. **WFP**

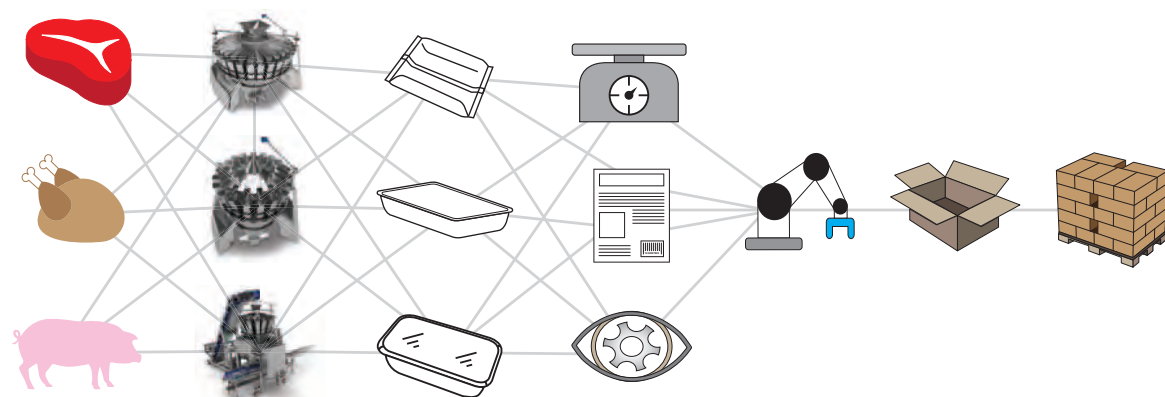
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Gelatin

An Essential Building Block in Food Processing

The Search is on for a Plant-Based Alternative

Gelatin is widely used in the food processing industry as a thickening gelling agent, binder, and stabilizer in a wide variety of culinary applications. Foam stability, texture and chewiness are provided by gelatin in confectionery products, while in dairy foods, the addition of gelatin means stabilization and texturization. In addition, the energy content of food can be reduced by using gelatin as a fat substitute without affecting taste. Used in meat products to reduce purge and fat-binding properties, gelatin also prevents discoloration, rancidity, and microbial spoilage.

As the demand for specialized foods and beverages continues to increase worldwide, gelatin is becoming an even more critical ingredient in the food processing industry even being used to develop biodegradable packaging material.

Derived from partially hydrolysed collagen found in animal byproducts, gelatin is a natural protein that can form a transparent gel-like structure with a versatility of applications from confectionery to food packaging to capsules in the drug industry. Meanwhile, the continued rise of veganism, animal welfare awareness, and the desire for healthier eating through plant-based food alternatives is spurring research in finding a substitution for animal-based gelatin in food production and sustainability across the country.

"The emergence of vegan gelatin presents exciting opportunities for food formulators to innovate and diversify their product offering," stated Ultrus Prospector in May 2024. "By incorporating vegan gelatin into formulations, manufacturers can tap into the growing market of plant-based foods and cater to the evolving preferences of consumers seeking ethical and sustainable alternatives."

Currently, vegan gelatin is sourced from a variety of plant-based ingredients. Agar-agar is a seaweed extract that allows for thermo-reversible gelling (melt upon heating and reset when cooled) used mainly in puddings and desserts. Carrageenan, also extracted from seaweed, has been used as a food additive for centuries to stabilize and thicken dairy and meat products. Pectin, commonly used to help set jams and jellies, comes from fruits and their by-products.

Agar-agar allows for thermo-reversible gelling used mainly in puddings and desserts.



Gelatin is becoming an even more critical ingredient in the food processing industry even being used to develop biodegradable packaging material.

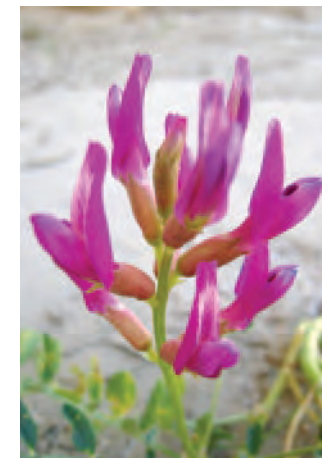
Vegan substitutions for gelatin can enhance texture and binding in plant-based meats, dairy alternatives, yogurts, and desserts, but performance in various applications depends on the raw materials, processing, and the gelling properties of each variable. The fluctuating availability of vegan gelatin sources along with cost considerations in development have meant slow adoption in the food processing industry; however, as demand continues to grow, research is coming into fruition, and as a result accessibility and costs are improving.

Agricultural giant Cargill, has developed several plant-based formulas designed to meet specific diets or preferences. Lygomme PM 600 is an ingredient solution that combines pectin with pea protein to address textural challenges with plant-based confectionery and replace gelatin in jellies and such things as marshmallows.

Geltor, out of San Francisco, has found a way to produce animal-free gelatin using bacteria and yeast in a precision fermentation process. "Biodesigner AI involves inserting the genetic blueprint for collagen into microbes, which then ferment to produce a protein identical to animal-derived gelatin. This biodesigned vegan collagen is being tailored for applications in the food, nutrition, hair and skin care markets." (geltor.com)

Alland & Robert have launched SYNDEO GELLING, a texture agent based on gum acacia mixed with natural hydrocolloids of plant origin that is completely natural and vegan for the substitution of gelling agents in gummies and other sweets. The combined properties provide a compromise between gelatin and pectin for firmer, stickier textures.

In July 2023 Natural Products Canada announced that at the University of Alberta, Dr. Lingyun Chen and her team inadvertently discovered a way to create a powerful plant-based gelatin substitute from pea protein, for which they have a patent pending. "This unique product is not only higher in protein than existing plant-based gelatin substitutes but also has the ability to change easily from liquid to gel and back again."



Astragalus genus, long used as a stabilizer and thickener in traditional foods and pharmaceuticals, produces a sap of certain legumes used to create gum tragacanth.

Academic research and the food processing industry are committed to creating products that meet today's challenges in health, ethics, and sustainability. Collaboration between science and culinary application is leading to the day when plant-based gelatin will be a viable and affordable alternative to animal-sourced gelatin. **WFP**



Pea protein powder is a high-quality protein rich in iron, arginine and branched-chain amino acids.

exploration into the potential of gum tragacanth as a replacement for gelatin in edible film applications. What their findings suggested is that when combined in a specific ratio with gelatin, the sap can successfully replicate the key structural and functional properties of gelatin; however, a complete vegan replacement has yet to be achieved, and the work continues to find a one-to-one gelatin replacement.



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Why Canadian Brands Need More Than Maple Leaves

Stop settling for wallpaper

I was watching a hockey game — peak Canadian moment — when I realized something troubling. One commercial break. Four different ads. Each declaring: “Made in Canada.” “Prepared in Canada.” “Authentically Canadian.” Not one of them said anything real.

It was patriotism without personality. A national echo chamber where brands shouted the same message, but none made a connection.

We're in an era of reactive branding. In response to tariffs and trade tensions, Canadian brands have leaned hard into geography as a strategy. But “Made in Canada” isn't a brand story — it's a stamp. And stamps don't inspire loyalty.

When I spent time in France this winter, I saw the difference. There, local pride isn't driven by politics — it's cultural. Buying French food is instinctive, not defensive. It's emotional. In Canada, we need to move beyond “support local” as a protest and turn it into a point of pride.



Bob Froese, Founder & Chief Creative Officer, Bob's Your Uncle

That means asking deeper questions: What do we actually stand for? What makes us different? And how do we say it in a way that moves people?

Years ago, we worked with Molson Canadian in the U.S. I was struck by how brands like Stella and Heineken were positioned as premium imports — while Molson, despite being the oldest brewery in North America, was treated like a budget domestic. Cleaner water. Pristine environment. Real heritage. None of it mattered — because the brand didn't make it matter.

We see this all the time in our work at Bob's Your Uncle. American founders treat marketing as essential. In Canada, too many see it as optional. We don't lack talent or innovation — we lack confidence in our voice.

And our retail system doesn't help. A few giant players dominate shelf space, forcing small brands to spend just to be seen — leaving little left for the brand-building they desperately need.



courtesy shutterstock.com

Take Old Dutch. They popularized conic flavours like Ketchup, All Dressed and Salt & Vinegar. Yet they've never won Canadian hearts the way Lays or Doritos have. Or Covered Bridge — a craft chip brand from New Brunswick that deserves cult status. But without a bold platform, it stays a best-kept secret.

It's time to do better. Not just wave the flag, but earn the loyalty. Not just sell local — but be loved. Because the future of Canadian brands doesn't belong to the biggest. It belongs to the boldest.

Let's stop settling for wallpaper.

Let's build Canadian brands people would fight to keep — no matter what country they're in. **WFP**

It's time to do better. Not just wave the flag, but earn the loyalty. Not just sell local – but be loved. Because the future of Canadian brands doesn't belong to the biggest. It belongs to the boldest.

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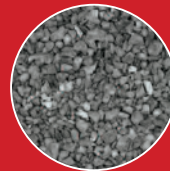
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Raising the Standard in Food Processing

How innovation, training, and transparency are shaping the future of food safety and allergen management

In the world of food production, safety isn't just a priority — it's the backbone of consumer trust and operational success. While much public attention is placed on front-line food handling in restaurants, it's the safety protocols upstream — in processing facilities, packing lines, and distribution channels — that form the first critical line of defense against contamination and costly recalls. For food processors, staying ahead means not only maintaining rigorous internal standards but also ensuring that staff at every level are equipped with the latest certifications and training. In an increasingly regulated and quality-driven market, food safety education isn't optional — it's a competitive and regulatory necessity.

Innovating Safety

Safety protocols form the bedrock of success. The 2025 Food Safety Summit emerged as a key platform for food processors to explore the latest advancements and address emerging challenges in safety. With experts, leaders, and innovators from around the world coming together, the event underscored the importance of continuous learning and collaboration in ensuring food safety across the supply chain.

The 2025 Food Safety Summit brought together over 4,700 professionals to discuss the latest innovations and challenges in food safety. Held in Rosemont, Illinois, from

May 11 – 15, the hybrid event welcomed both in-person and virtual attendees, highlighting the industry’s growing commitment to accessible, forward-thinking collaboration.

With a 28% increase in exhibitors compared to the previous year, the expanded trade show floor showcased cutting-edge technologies and solutions aimed at bolstering safety and efficiency in food processing operations. From smarter sanitation systems to AI-driven quality control tools, the expo served as a key platform for food processors seeking to enhance their safety protocols and stay ahead of regulatory shifts.

One of the summit’s standout moments was a keynote address focused on leadership during complex times. The speaker emphasized the importance of cultivating high-performing, accountable teams — a message especially relevant to food processing environments where safety is tightly linked to team coordination and culture. By reinforcing a collaborative and engaged workforce, processors can better navigate the evolving landscape of food safety regulations and consumer expectations.

The final day of the summit featured a high-level town hall with representatives from major federal agencies, including the FDA, USDA, and CDC. Discussions centered on the critical role of inter-agency cooperation, science-driven policy, and industry engagement in safeguarding public health — reinforcing the notion that food safety is a shared responsibility across the entire supply chain.

Educational sessions throughout the week addressed timely topics for food processors, such as allergen management, chemical safety, outbreak response, and the integration of artificial intelligence. Sessions also explored how processors can align with global sustainability goals without compromising safety or efficiency.

For food processors, the summit underscored a clear message: the future of food safety lies in innovation, communication, and a unified industry approach.



The 2025 Food Safety Summit brought together over 4,700 professionals to discuss the latest innovations and challenges in food safety.

Simplifying Allergen Safety

Building on the need for innovation and collaboration in food safety, one area where food processors face increasing scrutiny is allergen management and labeling. As consumer demand for allergen-free products continues to grow, food manufacturers must ensure not only the accuracy of their ingredient lists but also the integrity of their processes to prevent cross-contact. MenuTrinfo, a pioneering company in the field of allergen safety, is working to close the gap between food safety standards and consumer confidence in allergen labeling.

MenuTrinfo, a company specializing in ensuring food safety services through allergen and nutritional information, is the first of its kind in the United States. The company ensures dining experiences are as safe as possible for individuals living with allergies or dietary restrictions, all while enhancing transparency within the foodservice industry. Betsy Craig, founder and CEO, says the most critical training areas food manufacturers often overlook regarding allergens is accurate labelling in the final production stage. “The number 1 reason for food allergen recalls is mislabelling. Number 2 is all about cleaning to prevent cross contact at changeover,” adds Craig.



Betsy Craig, Founder and CEO, MenuTrinfo

Clear allergen labelling and risks associated with cross-contact in processing plants begins with the incoming ingredient information, according to Craig, which is then carried on to product labels that make their way out the door. “Our Certified Free From allergen labelling program allows for items that are free from allergens to be much easier to understand and track, providing an extra layer of confidence. But, barring that, a great SOP must be in place,” says Craig. She goes on to emphasize how vital the process of checking and rechecking of ingredients, from

The most critical training areas food manufacturers often overlook regarding allergens is accurate labelling in the final production stage.



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start to finish, is and how it's the only way to assure end-package labelling is infallible.

With a growing demand for “free from” or allergen-sensitive foods, the importance of alignment between processors and internal practices is crucial. MenuTrinfo's ISO17056 accredited Certification (Certified Free From™ any or all top 9 allergens) brings quality and measure for free from and allergen-sensitive foods. “Being a new seal and mark for packages makes it still unknown, but we have seen many retailers fall in love with our way of having manufacturers ‘substantiate their claims’ on [the] pack to make it safer, clearer, accurate, and transparent for the food allergic shopper,” says Craig.



The Certified Free From allergen labelling program allows for items that are free from allergens to be much easier to understand and track.

At the beginning of this year, the FDA decided to implement a new rule for food processors — “no one can keep using a free claim and a Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) statement on the same package the landscape has changed,” according to Craig. There is an increasing demand for consumer confidence in what they're purchasing, hence the stern stance taken by the FDA regarding total transparency between food processors and food allergic shoppers. “Yes, brand manufacturers need to have great GMPs (Good Manufacturing Practices), but also ACPs (Allergen Control plans) to match the industry,” adds Craig. In the past, simple indicators that a product was made within a facility that processes some allergens was a



There is an increasing demand for consumer confidence in what they're purchasing, hence the FDA's stance on ingredient transparency.

way to not make allergen free products. Craig compares this to claiming a facility is not capable of keeping folks safe due to some uncleanness within a facility.

“Clean, test, prove, then make amazing food... Consumers have been trying to understand PAL statements for decades and put false hope and trust when there is none on a package. I believe that we should, as an industry, put on a package what is in there. Period. And if it is not in there and we are worried as we have it in the building, be amazing manufacturers, have SOPs that work, test and deliver great food for all,” Craig concludes. **WFP**

The U.S. is Ditching Food Dyes. Will Canada follow?

With the U.S. banning synthetic food dyes over child health risks, pressure grows on Health Canada to respond

The Trump administration is making headlines again, this time for targeting synthetic food dyes in American products.

Under the leadership of Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a long-time health activist and now the controversial U.S. secretary of health and human services, U.S. President Donald Trump is preparing to phase out several petroleum-based dyes, including Red Dye No. 40, Citrus Red No. 2 and Orange B, citing links to cancer and behavioural issues in children. Some dyes are expected to be pulled from shelves within months, while Red Dye No. 40 is set to disappear by the end of next year.

These dyes are commonly found in foods like candy, fruit-flavoured drinks, cereals and snack products — items especially popular with children. Though used in small amounts, they've been a staple in North American processed foods since the 1970s.



These dyes are commonly found in foods like candy, fruit-flavoured drinks, cereals and snack products — items especially popular with children.

The U.S. policy shift builds on action by the Biden administration earlier this year, when the Food and Drug Administration moved to revoke authorization for Red Dye No. 3.

In Canada, Citrus Red No. 2 and Orange B are already banned, but Red Dyes No. 3 and 40 remain permitted, with stricter usage thresholds than in the United States.

Health Canada sets the acceptable daily intake of Red Dye No. 40 at seven milligrams per kilogram of body weight. For a 77-kilogram adult (about 170 pounds), that's roughly 500 milligrams per day — an amount considered safe over a lifetime of use.

However, scientific views are evolving. A systematic review published in Environmental Health pointed to a possible link between synthetic dyes and negative behavioural effects in children. While not conclusive, the study suggested that existing safety limits may not fully protect vulnerable populations.

Natural alternatives, such as curcumin, carotenes, paprika extract, anthocyanins and beet juice, can replace synthetic dyes. But they come with trade-offs: less vibrancy, greater sensitivity to heat and light, and higher costs.

These properties reduce shelf life and complicate distribution, raising expenses for manufacturers and retailers.



What is Red Dye No. 40?

Red Dye No. 40 is a synthetic food colouring made from petroleum. It's used to give a bright red hue to candies, cereals, drinks and snack foods.

Though approved by Health Canada, it has been linked to possible behavioural effects in children and is now being phased out in the U.S.



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Because Canada's food supply is closely tied to the U.S., with many brands and ingredients crossing the border, any regulatory change south of the line will have ripple effects.

Because Canada's food supply is closely tied to the U.S., with many brands and ingredients crossing the border, any regulatory change south of the line will have ripple effects.

Canadian manufacturers exporting to the U.S. may be forced to comply with new standards, and maintaining separate formulations for different markets is both inefficient and expensive. In many cases, switching to a single, dye-free formulation for the continent will simply make more economic sense.

The timing of the U.S. announcement, just days after Easter when North American children consume large quantities of dyed candy, was likely deliberate. The White House may have postponed the news to avoid disrupting holiday sales or raising awkward questions from parents.

Now, all eyes turn to Health Canada. Regulators maintain that synthetic dyes used within approved limits pose no significant risk. But in today's risk-averse climate, public perception often outweighs scientific consensus, especially when it involves children's health.

Whether Ottawa chooses to act proactively or wait for pressure to build, this shift in U.S. policy is likely to influence Canadian regulation. If officials remain silent, growing consumer awareness could drive the change from below.

"Make America Healthy Again" may soon be more than a political slogan. It could mark the beginning of a new era of food dye reform across the continent. And if it does, Canada's food industry — and its regulators — will need to be ready. **WFP**

Dr. Sylvain Charlebois is a Canadian professor and researcher in food distribution and policy. He is senior director of the Agri-Food Analytics Lab at Dalhousie University and co-host of The Food Professor Podcast. He is frequently cited in the media for his insights on food prices, agricultural trends, and the global food supply chain.



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Sidel Presents EvoFILL Can Compact

The launch of EvoFILL Can Compact addresses the growing demand for flexibility, efficiency, and adaptability in the beer and carbonated soft drink sectors especially, within the low-to-medium speed production market (up to 40,000 cans per hour).

Global beverage production volumes are expected to rise, with the alcoholic beverage market reaching 492.1 billion units by 2028, and non-alcoholic beverage packaging volumes projected to hit 1.3 trillion units by the same year.

Metal packaging remains a key material in both markets, with increasing consumer preference for smaller, portable cans that offer convenience and recyclability. As sku proliferation continues to shape the industry, it's clear the need for filling systems capable of managing diverse product lines has become more critical.

"EvoFILL Can Compact extends the range of the well-known EvoFILL Can, offering a highly compact and efficient solution that meets the demands of low volume premium beverages market," comments Tommaso Tegoni, product manager – filling at Sidel. "Its ability to accommodate frequent changeovers with minimal downtime, coupled with advanced automation and modular design, ensures reliable, top-tier performance across both carbonated and non-carbonated beverages — including hot fill products — while maintaining speed and precision."

This innovative system is designed to meet the growing need for high-quality, flexible filling solutions in the expanding beverage market.

The system features a 'plug and play' design, ensuring easy installation, operation, and handling. Its compact design combines the seamer and process unit into a single, space-efficient block, minimising its footprint to



overcome space constraints and optimise total cost of ownership (TCO). With a high-precision filling accuracy of +/- 1ml standard deviation, up to 500ml format, the machine offers exceptional accuracy and minimal product losses (less than 0.1%). It is also highly versatile, supporting both CSD and hot fill applications. The EvoFILL Can Compact offers ambient temperature filling for carbonated soft drinks with limited CO2 losses (less than or equal to 0.2 Vol).

Similarly, this latest can filling machine achieves an impressive 98.5% monoblock efficiency, ensuring seamless operation with minimal downtime. Designed for reliability and precision, it optimises productivity while maintaining superior quality in beverage canning.

Groundbreaking Innovation for Liquid Sachet Packaging

In recent years, small sachet formats have received a lot of attention in the media for the environmental challenges that they present. These small plastic envelopes are widely used to dispense condiments, sauces, personal care creams and many other liquid products.

While they are convenient for the consumers, they are often highlighted for the issues that they create at the end of their life. Estimates suggest that approximately



855 billion sachets were used globally in 2018. Most of these packs are produced with complex multi-layered packaging that can withstand the nature of the ingredients and preserve the products during the supply chain for their required shelf life. They are usually produced from 3-layer structures including layers of

polyolefin, aluminium and often polyester, making the packs extremely difficult to recycle as the components of the laminate structure are incompatible for recycling and not easily separated. Their very small size and the fact that they often remain contaminated by foodstuff, further add to the difficulties in recycling.

Compostable film producer Futamura, flexible packaging converter Repaq and machine producer GK Sondermaschinenbau have worked together to produce a compostable solution for this market segment. This has been a difficult challenge to resolve, one that has been taken many attempts to perfect.

Together, they have launched a fully compostable solution based on NatureFlex technology for this application, capable of wrapping ingredients such as ketchup or mustard, cooking sauces or hand cream. The new compostable laminate includes a barrier cellulose film layer from Futamura as well as another biofilm to provide hermetic seals. The structures have been certified as compostable, both in an industrial and home settings.

The new compostable packaging structures have been proven to make effective sachet solutions, when produced on newly designed GK Sondermaschinenbau machinery. The demonstration packs delivered have confirmed the required shelf life and protection for a range of sauces. The machineability of the new liquid sachet packs have been repeatedly proven, at scale, by the first brands implementing the compostable structure. There was no difference in efficiency when using this structure compared to a conventional one. That has been reported for all GKS machinery, whether small, medium or large size.

The first commercial sachets will enter the market shortly.



Replaceable Sprocket Tips Cut Maintenance Cost of Tubular Cable Conveyor By 90%

The drive and tensioner wheels of FLEXI-DISC® Tubular Cable Conveyors are now equipped as standard with patented sprocket tips that can be replaced at up to 90 per cent lower cost than one-piece sprockets, it was announced by David Boger, president of Flexicon Corp.

Each replaceable tip consists of two halves that bolt onto each spoke without the need to remove the sprocket, reducing downtime during maintenance. The tips also form a pick-up face having greater surface area and seating stability than the contact patch of one-piece sprockets, significantly extending cable life by reducing contact pressure between the slug and the spoke.

Further, a wear indicator molded into the sprocket tip enables operators to determine when the tips are due for replacement, averting wheel damage and resulting damage to the cable-disc assembly.

Friction between the discs and relatively small number of sprocket spokes can result in spoke damage that, in turn, damages the costly cable-disc assembly. Both issues can now be avoided through preventative sprocket tip replacements at roughly 10 per cent of one-piece sprocket replacement costs.

For more information: www.flexicon.com



Pulpac's Dry Molded Fiber Portfolio Approaching +400 Granted Patents

Since the start of 2025, Pulpac's patent portfolio has expanded significantly and now includes 67 patent families with nearly +400 granted patents across 58 countries, covering various aspects of the dry molded fibre technology. With many patent families still in early stages, the full potential of the portfolio is projected to reach between 1,000 and 1,500 granted patents in the coming years.

Among the most recent developments, two European patents set to be granted by the EPO are particularly notable. One broadly covers Pulpac's SCALA machine platform, while the other relates to the use of a steel line cutting tool — both reflecting core innovations within Pulpac's proprietary method.

"By strategically expanding IP derived from both our internal R&D and from our key partners, we continuously broaden solution options, unlock new markets, and foster a knowledge-based ecosystem dedicated to replacing single-use plastics with more responsible, fibre-based alternatives," says Peter Ekwall, chief



Peter Ekwall

intellectual property officer at Pulpac. "One example is PA consulting, whose innovations have contributed to nine of the patent families within the portfolio", he adds. Pulpac's patent portfolio spans multiple areas of fibre application manufacturing. At its core is a novel method for creating three-dimensional cellulose products from an air formed web or air formed blanks-using heat and pressure. This foundational IP supports a continuously evolving technology platform — enhanced by new patents, partner innovations, and trade secrets — all shared with licensees. The technology enables the production of fibre-based packaging that is low-carbon, resource-efficient, energy-efficient, and cost-effective.

Learn more at www.pulpac.com

Klöckner Pentaplast (kp), 100% Tray2Tray Wins 'Best Packaging Solution' at World Catering Technology Awards 2025

Klöckner Pentaplast (kp), a global leader in rigid and flexible packaging and specialty film solutions, has secured top honours at the World Catering Technology Awards 2025, with its revolutionary 100% kp Tray2Tray innovation taking home the 'Best Packaging Solution' award.

The solution represents the first-ever food packaging trays made entirely from recycled PET (rPET) derived exclusively from recovered trays and was recognised for elevating the landscape of tray packaging in the catering and foodservice sectors.

"Winning this award validates our vision of what truly circular packaging can be," said Cecilia Guardado, marketing director, trays at kp. "For too long, the industry has accepted that valuable PET tray material is downcycled or lost from the food packaging recycling loop. With 100% kp Tray2Tray, we've proven that complete circularity is not just theoretically possible - it's commercially viable today."

The technology addresses a critical industry gap, as approximately 750,000 tonnes of PET tray material is wasted annually across Europe. By developing an advanced supply chain that includes specialised sorting, recycling, and delamination processes, kp has created a solution that maintains material value throughout the entire recycling journey.

An element that captured considerable attention was kp's open-market approach to the innovation. Rather than keeping the technology proprietary, kp has developed a model that can be replicated by others in the industry, recognising that widespread adoption is essential to prove tray recyclability at scale.

"This award isn't just recognition of our innovation — it's acknowledgment that kp is successfully rewriting the rulebook on tray recycling," added Cecilia. "Our 100% kp Tray2Tray solution demonstrates our 'Packaging with Integrity' ethos in action, creating a practical pathway to keep valuable food-grade material in the packaging loop. We're not just talking about circularity; we're delivering it in a way that maintains the highest performance standards while offering meaningful sustainability benefits to our customers."

The 100% kp Tray2Tray solution offers compelling advantages beyond sustainability, including a reduced carbon footprint, lightweight design, excellent on-shelf appearance, and compatibility with high-speed packaging machines. The RecyClass-certified supply chain ensures complete traceability, quality, and safety of the post-consumer recycled packaging.

For more information visit <https://www.kpfilms.com/en/food-packaging/>



Adam Equipment Brings a Smart, Connected Touch to Precision Weighing with New Touch-Screen Scales

Adam Equipment, a trusted global leader in the manufacturing of professional scales and balances, is putting precision at your fingertips with the launch of its new touch-screen label printing scales and weighing indicators.

The innovative BTT bench and floor scales and AE 505 indicator represent an evolution for Adam products, offering innovative stock and inventory control features previously found only in more costly warehouse management and inventory control systems. They combine user-friendly touch-screen controls with advanced weighing technology, offering users enhanced accuracy, built-in connectivity and all-in-one label printing convenience.

"We're excited to show our customers how intuitive and agile the new Adam touch-screen products are to use," said Richard Storey, Adam Equipment's CEO. "We have listened to our customers and gained an understanding of how difficult and labor-intensive inventory control is and used our knowledge of weighing and counting to develop a solution for the entire process, not just a few individual steps."

The new BTT range incorporates a touch-screen AE 505 indicator, coupled with a robust scale platform. The AE 505 weighing indicator can also be purchased individually and used with a variety of Adam platform scales.

BTT bench scales offer capacities from 16lb/8kg to 130lb/60kg (readabilities from 0.0002lb/0.1g to 0.005lb/2g) with a generously sized 15.7" x 11.8" / 400 x 300mm stainless steel pan, while BTT floor scales offer capacities from 165lb/75kg to 660lb/300kg (readabilities from 0.01lb / 5g to 0.05lb / 20g) with an even larger pan size of 19.7"x15.7" / 500x400mm.

The integrated label printer prints to standard 2" x 1.2"/50 x 30mm labels, though labels with a height of up to 2.4" / 60mm can be used. Users can easily customize their label designs to include weighing results, data for traceability (such as date and time), logos, QR codes and bar codes.

Features include:

- **Simplified operations with an 8-inch touch-screen interface (including a pop-up QWERTY keyboard to enter more than 1,000 PLU numbers and descriptions) and a port to connect a bar code scanner**
- **Improved traceability with user sign-in and data export options: reports can be exported as Microsoft Excel-compatible spreadsheets and saved to a flash drive for a portable solution or transmitted to a PC**
- **Easy connectivity to PCs and printers via integrated RS232 and USB ports, as well as optional Bluetooth, Wi-Fi or RJ45 Ethernet modules**
- **Built-in printer to output customized labels (created with Adam's easy-to-use label design software) and internal memory for fast recall of up to 10 label designs**

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"Understanding why you have variances in stock levels is one of the most time-consuming parts of a stock take, with rework often needing to be done at the end of the day when everyone is suffering from fatigue," Storey added. "With BTT and AE 505, an operator can immediately see that something is wrong and investigate."

For inventory, an operator can simply enter a part number using the touch-screen or a barcode reader, weigh a sample of the product to get its reference weight, then put on the remainder of pieces to get a complete count. When using a standard tote or container, the tare weight may be stored or entered manually. Another option would be to upload data on up to 1,006 samples into the AE 505's memory and the expected quantity, then compare the total with the resulting quantity.

"BTT and AE 505 take the Adam industrial scale range to the next level," Storey said. "We can now offer businesses much greater control over accuracy and traceability in weighing processes and inventory management."

For more information: AdamEquipment.com

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