

Safeway Fresh Foods Chooses METTLER TOLEDO Product Inspection Group



As a family-owned processor of healthy ready-to-eat snacks and meals, Safeway Fresh Foods goes to market under their Sunnyside Farms brand and customers' private labels. Behind their motto, "Your brand integrity is safe with us," is an unwavering commitment to exceptionally high quality product and food safety at every step of their operation. They rely on equipment from the METTLER TOLEDO Product Inspection Group on all nine of their production lines with eight Safeline metal detectors, a Safeline x-ray inspection system and three Hi-Speed checkweighers.

"During my 40-year career, I've had the opportunity to use metal detectors and checkweighers from many different suppliers. When I landed with METTLER TOLEDO, I decided to stay with them," said Sal Tedesco, co-owner of Safeway Fresh Foods. "Their equipment is very dependable and easy to maintain. We've had great success with them despite our hostile environment. It's cold and wet during production; then we subject these machines to a rigorous sanitation routine that includes a caustic hot water washdown. Despite our challenging environment, this inspection equipment is pain-free."

Safeway uses Signature Touch metal detectors to find ferrous and non-ferrous tramp metal and the most difficult to detect, non-magnetic stainless steel fragments and non-spherical fine wire contaminants. Featuring high frequency advanced detection coil technology and dynamic filtering techniques, these metal detectors maximize detection sensitivity while inspecting Safeway's many products that go to convenience stores, supermarkets, club stores, quick serve restaurants and others.

"It's critical that the metal detectors maintain their high sensitivity despite big changes in the size of the package and the nature of the product. This sensitivity is the difference between finding something and not finding something that could break a tooth or lacerate a mouth," said Tedesco. "Customer safety is our highest priority and the driving force for choosing METTLER TOLEDO's inspection equipment.

To ensure constant detection sensitivity, every metal detector is tested at the beginning of each shift and periodically during every production run. "The dependability of these metal detectors is excellent," noted Tedesco. "I can't remember a single METTLER TOLEDO machine coming offline due to a malfunction."

Safeway installed a Certus x-ray system from METTLER TOLEDO Safeline to inspect 5 lb. bulk packages of protein based salads such as chicken salad, tuna salad, egg salad and more. "We chose METTLER TOLEDO's x-ray system for our bulk salad line instead of a metal detector because we wanted to find bone and gristle in the chicken salad in addition to metal contamination in all products," explained Tedesco. "The x-ray identifies unexpected differences in the product's density and kicks those packages out. We adjust the detection sensitivity to perfectly suit each of the products that run on that line."

To monitor fill levels, Safeway has Beltweigh checkweighers on three of their production lines where detecting underfills and/or overfills has significant value. On two grab-and-go lines that pack fresh fruits and vegetables into 3 to 14 oz. bags, bowls and trays, the Hi-Speed checkweighers reject under-weight packages from the line and record over-weight packages to give Safeway valuable information they use to adjust the fillers and reduce product give-away. On a line where five people each add one fruit to produce mixed-fruit trays and bowls in 2 lb. trays or 3 lb. bowls, the checkweigher is programmed to detect only underweight packages so fruit can be added, if needed, before the package is sealed.

"On a scale of 1 to 10, ease of use is a 10 on all our equipment from METTLER TOLEDO. They clearly did their homework. It's easy to install, easy to set up, easy to use and easy to sanitize," said Tedesco. "The customer service we get from them and our sales rep, Joe Young from Reliant Packaging Systems, is also impeccable."

"This inspection equipment from METTLER TOLEDO protects our consumers. It also protects the owner of the finished product and us, the supplier," concluded Tedesco. "I wouldn't run a production line without it."



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