

LABELLING

Food safety sticks

When it comes to fresh produce, Sinclair Systems International says its hand labellers help meet international food safety standards

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Sinclair Systems International has launched a food safety compliance information pack to help customers meet industry standards when packing and labelling fresh produce.

"We are often contacted by customers, asking to supply information on the food-safe nature of our labels, so we have comprised an array of

retailers are requesting labelled fruit and the food-safe quality of the produce label is important."

Sinclair labels are safe for direct food contact, but to further ensure good practices in label application, the introduction of the Sinclair HLS (Hand Labelling System) has really helped in this regard, according to Mr King.

Packer-shippers are using the new hand labeller to apply food-safe labels on a variety of fruit, from tomatoes in

applying labels than the traditional hand-application method.

"Using the new HLS means there's no human contact with the label, similar to our high-speed or tray-labeling applications," says Mr King. Sinclair,

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compliance documentation that our customers can use as part of their audits," Tracy King, sales and marketing manager for Asiafruit Magazine. "It is extremely important that our customers are assured that the labels we supply are food-safe and FDA and EU-compliant."

As a global company, compliance is at the forefront of Sinclair's commitment to quality and to maintaining the highest level of customer satisfaction, Mr King adds. "It appears that more and more

Guatemala to apples in New Zealand, and most recently, mangoes in Burma.

"The Sinclair HLS enables any fresh produce operation to be able to apply food-safe labels, in even relatively remote areas of the world, and in packing sheds with limited operational capabilities," says Mr King.

The first commercial HLS units became available in November 2010, and since then many packhouses have begun using the convenient hand labeller as a more hygienic approach to



Sinclair labels are FDA and EU compliant

which is dedicated to the fresh produce sector, pioneered the development of automatic fruit labelling systems over 25 years ago, and now operates in 35 countries worldwide.

Sinclair iQ proves its worth

A detailed packhouse evaluation of Sinclair iQ performance on kiwifruit in late 2010 confirmed that Sinclair iQ delivers higher accuracy, faster throughput and higher returns to labour at a lower total unit packing cost, according to a company spokesperson.

The evaluation comprised a single-lane Sinclair iQ system mounted over a high-speed line carrying fruit at 600 cups per minute – as part of a late season/ex-storage repack operation in New Zealand.

Typically, at the repack stage most fruit has to be assessed for firmness prior to shipment. During the evaluation various tests were conducted comparing Sinclair iQ's accuracy, speed and cost to

conventional hand-sorting methods. In summary according to the results, Sinclair iQ was 11 per cent more accurate than hand sorters on a two-way soft/firm banding and 18 per cent more accurate on a three-way soft/firm firmer banding – as measured against post-assessment destructive penetrometer readings. On speed: again Sinclair iQ came out well with a 47 per cent increase in trays processed per 8-hour man-day.

"The acid test of all this," says James Packham, Sinclair sales and marketing manager for the iQ product range, "is whether these results convert into real quality improvements and monetary savings for the packhouse. In our analysis with packhouse management we agreed that, with the

right mechanical infeed in place, per tray repack costs could comfortably be reduced by 30 per cent – and the quality improvement is really self-evident in the accuracy measurements."

"Another key issue on repack fruit is the risk of further damage being caused by hand-squeezing fruit that is no longer hard," Mr Packham adds. Many packers are concerned that handling fruit a second time can cause fruit damage, especially where hand-sorters are not fully trained or consistent in squeezing and sorting. Sinclair iQ systems deploy a low-impact sensor which can determine firmness more consistently than hand sorters at a speed of up to 10 fruits per second, without causing damage to fruit itself.



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HLS HAND LABELLING SYSTEM

- Ergonomic, easy to use and robust
- Ultra-lightweight for operator
- Uses Sinclair food-safe labels
- Quick label application - up to 180 fruit per minute
- Perfect for all fruit sizes



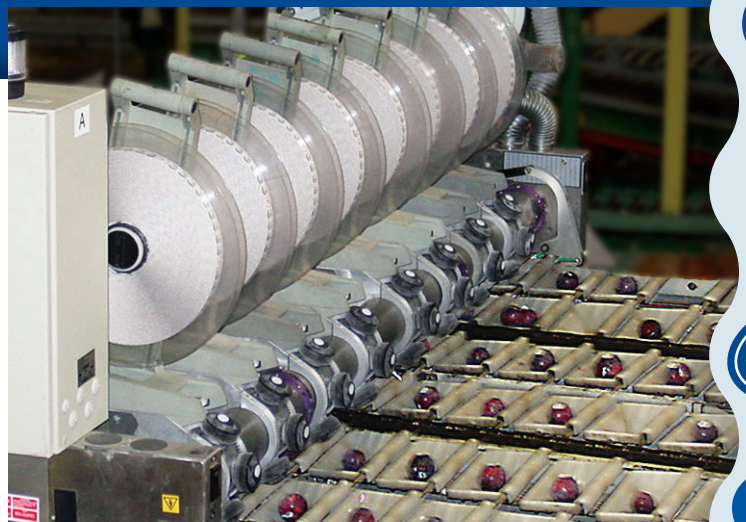
CR4 COMPACT LABELLING

- Mounted over either slower speed singulators and grommeted elevators or 'rapid pack' lines
- Equally suited to labelling over slow speed mechanical and electronic sizers
- Labelling fruit in trays on belt conveyors
- Depending on equipment, 12 to 240 fruits per minute per lane or up to 2.500 trays per hour



RM6 HIGH SPEED LABELLING

- Multi-lane high-speed sizers and singulators
- Selective labelling via system interface to sizer computer
- Ideal for bulk-fill labelling
- 720+ fruit per minute per lane (variable speed)



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