



CASE STUDY

H.H. DOBBINS

APPLE SORTING SOLUTION



Apple Sorting Solution

Western New York based company H.H. Dobbins has been a trusted fruit handler, manager and marketer in the US since 1905. Over the years the company has grown to include short and long-term storage, and recently invested in a state-of-the-art apple packhouse facility.

They represent some of the finest growers in the world, taking great care to manage their fruit in a way that will optimize their investment, while maximizing returns to their growers. Shipping all over the world, delivering consistent quality produce is important in maintaining their brand reputation.

H.H. Dobbins sorts, packs and distributes apples on a global scale. Technology has enabled them to make better use of the labor they have at hand, which is particularly important due to the limited labor available in the area. Since implementing their Spectrim sorting technology, the labor per unit cost has gone down and the units per man hour have gone up by approximately 15% with efficiency up 16%.

Ward Dobbins describes using Spectrim as being like “day and night” when compared to how they sorted by hand before. They were previously using 6-10 people sorting on the line, whereas now they are only using 2 people and one person operating Spectrim. In his words “it’s like coming into the 21st century from the stone age.”

When looking for a technology provider to partner with, H.H. Dobbins was looking for the very best available – they could see how valuable technology was going to be for their growers, as well as increasing pack-out, and to give customers the accuracy and consistency that they expect.

Since installing Spectrim in the middle of 2017, they have seen that their pack-outs are up 3% from last year and their rejection rate went from 1% to 0.5%. The increased consistency and decrease in rejections is a win for customers, growers and the company.

CLIENT

H.H. Dobbins

LOCATION

Western New York, USA

COMMODITY

Apples

PROJECT TYPE

Apple Sorting Solution - Spectrim & Inspectra

INSTALLED

Mid-2017

WEBSITE

unitedapplesales.com





“SPECTRIM HAS MET OUR EXPECTATIONS AND WE’RE STILL RELATIVELY NEW TO IT, SO THERE’S A LOT TO LEARN WHICH IS EXCITING TO US BECAUSE WE’RE PRETTY SATISFIED WITH WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED ALREADY.”

Ward Dobbins, CEO, H.H. Dobbins



Spectrim has exceeded their rate of return in terms of investment, right from day one. Their operators have found the software very easy to use, and can accomplish what they set out to every day in their production plan.

Inspectra is their technology choice for sorting internal qualities that are common to apples in their area. Inspectra gives them the capability to separate based on internal properties and make sure each apple meets the customers expectations. Inspectra gives them the ability to separate and send

apples to various consumers based on their needs, reducing risk and food waste.

Investing in Spectrim and Inspectra technology has enabled H.H. Dobbins to create a more efficient packhouse, allowing them to sort more in less time which benefits customers and growers.

H.H. Dobbins continues to grow, and is confident Compac is the partner that will help them continue to deliver world-class produce and stay competitive.

Solution Overview



BIN TIP AND CLEAN

A robotic rolover dumper empties bins and transfers the fruit into water flumes for gentle transportation. Fruit is then transported on a roller conveyor through a pressure washer for safe and effective removal of contaminants and pests.



TREATMENT

A brush conveyor rinses, waxes, buffs, and dries fruit to ensure the fruit is in the best and brightest condition in the pack.



SORTING

The Compac Multilane Sorter (MLS) sorts each fruit based on data from the external grading system - Spectrim, and the precise weigh bridge. The long singulation section, roller carrier and brush outlets ensure high throughput and delicate handling.



INSPECTION

Spectrim, the industry leading external grading platform with a proprietary lighting system, uses color and two infrared wavelengths to grade fruit accurately at high speed.



BIN FILLER

Compac's Rotofiller ensures gentle bin filling of even delicate fruit. The installed automated solution detects when the bin is full and moves on to the next. Furthermore, high throughput units onsite feature a fully automated bin feed.



TRAY FILLERS

Compac's tray fillers efficiently and gently convey produce from the sorters' cross-belt into trays increasing throughput and decreasing cost per pack.



BAG FILLERS

A downstream single lane sorter (SLS) is used for flexible and accurate bag filling. Here semi-automatic baggers on the sorter's packtables enable multiple bag fillers to be operated by one person, reducing cost per pack. Unique optimizer software (EPWO) reduces product giveaway better by up to 3%.



AUTOMATIC BAGGING INTEGRATION

Custom fruit conveyors were provided to seamlessly integrate the new Compac line with the existing automatic and manual bagging equipment to improve ROI.



LINE CONTROL AND ELECTRICAL DESIGN

With full system control and automation the entire line can be controlled easily from an HMI for efficient and easy operation