

Inkjet Printer Makes Good Lip Reading



RSI BagJet 1300 in operation at Syngenta's Waterloo, NE facility.

When Syngenta acquired J.C. Robinson Seeds in 2004, the Waterloo, NE seed corn processing facility had one brand of seed in its warehouse: Golden Harvest.

After integration into the Syngenta Seed Supply Chain, the Waterloo facility incorporated Garst, and NK brand seeds into its operation.

Syngenta primarily distributes Golden Harvest seed from the Waterloo facility. The Garst and NK brands are interplanted to other Syngenta Supply Chain sites where they will then be distributed.

Operational Changes

Syngenta has invested considerable dollars into the improvement of the facility. The conditioning tower was split in 2006 to enable simultaneous conditioning and packaging of two separate hybrids.

Currently there is a dryer and bulk storage expansion underway which will increase capacity by 25 percent.

The new brand additions brought a significant increase in the number of seed lots and corresponding seed bag

identification data sets.

Bag Lip Printing

"As Syngenta develops new traits for our product lineup we want to be sure that the hybrid name as well as its respective traits are displayed prominently on the lip print of the bag," says Cheryl Osterloh, plant operations manager at Syngenta's Waterloo facility.

"Clear, easy to read lip prints will overall reduce our delivery-shipping errors ultimately increasing customer satisfaction which is always our primary goal," Osterloh says.

In addition to its required tag with germination test information, each bag has a two-inch lip that becomes a virtual billboard to let customers know precisely what is inside.

Prior to 2007 harvest, Syngenta added a **RSI BagJet 1300 inkjet printer** (RSI Print Systems LLC., Gaithersburg, MD/301-963-8253/www.rsipro.com) behind the stitcher on each packaging line. No modifications of the existing equipment were needed.

The printers have two sets of pinch wheels to stabilize the bag lip and

power it through the printer. The printer is powered by Hewlett Packard (HP) inkjet technology. It covers a two-inch band and can imprint both sides of the lip, if desired.

With a direct connection to the plant's computer database, the BagJet can access necessary information for each lot. Typical lip print information includes hybrid, material, batch number, seed size, kernel count, treatment, weight (lbs and kgs) and the applicable seed treatment logo.

The BagJet can also print a scannable barcode and use color ink.

Right the First Time

"Getting the lip print right the first time with the database capability has been a huge asset," Osterloh says. "The RSI BagJet allows us to produce a high quality lip print that is easy for our customers to read."

According to Osterloh, the new lip print has increased customer satisfaction and decreased shipping errors. "The database capability allows our operators to increase productivity, and minimize printing errors," she concludes.



Syngenta Seeds

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Key Personnel

- Todd Taylor, Plant Manager
- Cheryl Osterloh, Plant Operations Manager

Company Features

- Seed corn conditioning, packaging and distribution
- Garst, Golden Harvest and NK brands
- Annual capacity: 700,000 units