Food Filter

Sweet Success for Chocolates

Much has changed since Gertrude Hawk began making chocolates in the family kitchen almost 70 years ago. Today Gertrude Hawk Chocolates, based in Dunmore, PA, is a family run business with three shifts working 24/7. The operation depends on critical equipment to meet high-volume demand while producing consistently high quality results. The right equipment must not only minimize downtime and deliver required throughput but also meet strict hygiene and safety standards.
"While in production, we need to run as much as we can, as fast as we can, as long as we can," says Bill Alfano, maintenance foreman and lead mechanic. "Even a single filter element clogging can disrupt production, requiring re-assignment of up to 30 employees to other tasks. And quality, of course, can never be compromised."
To achieve the right premium taste and texture for its chocolates, the company uses filtration on anything related to a chocolate coating, which involves about 70 percent of the product line. Traditional wire filter baskets used to handle most chocolate coatings filtration, but they required production downtime when cleaned every other day and increased pump maintenance. "When a filter would block, the chocolate pump would seize, costing us about three hours of production," says Alfano.
In search of a better solution, the company turned to the self-cleaning Eco Filter system from Russell Finex of Pineville, NC. It integrates directly into the pipeline and eliminates the need to clean filtration baskets or change filter bags. By means of a unique spiral wiper design, the filter element is kept continuously clean, ensuring optimum filtration efficiency. Because of this self-cleaning design, cleaning the filter between batch runs means minimal disruption during production changeovers.
"The main attraction of the Eco Filter was how it cleans itself so we don't have to shut down production," says Alfano. "Twice a week, we just open a valve, and the oversized material pushes out the bottom while it continues filtering. There's no production stoppage or slowing."
The company uses four Eco Filters in its production. They have a unique Q-Tap valve that allows the sampling of freshly filtered material so that the quality of chocolate coatings can be monitored on the fly without interrupting production.Information on filters: www.russellfinexusa.com

Source URL (retrieved on *07/10/2014 - 8:35pm*):
http://www.chem.info/news/2006/08/food-filter