

Wipe-on labeling system for clamshell packaging

Fresh produce marketer installs label applicator that improves placement accuracies and reduces labor costs.

Judy Rice, Contributing Editor

Andrew & Williamson Fresh Produce Co., San Diego, packages a range of whole fresh produce, including tomatoes, cucumbers, and strawberries for wholesale, retail, and foodservice customers. For their retail packages, the company uses clear plastic clamshells in sizes ranging from 12 to 16-oz and pressure-sensitive labels, both sourced from various packaging suppliers.

The company wanted to upgrade its manual retail clamshell labeling system to provide more precise label placement and improve speed and flexibility. In Autumn 2008, Andrew & Williamson installed a Model 3015ND wipe-on label applicator system from **Label-Aire** (www.label-aire.com), obtained via Label-Aire's largest West Coast distributor Taylor Made Labels (www.taylormadelabels.com). The microprocessor-controlled system features a user-friendly control panel, automated monitoring of labeling accuracy, and a stepper-motor drive for precise starting/stopping and a wider operating-speed range.



SPEEDIER APPLICATION. Pressure-sensitive labels are applied to the tops of the clamshells at approximately 50/min.

“The customer service from Label-Aire has been outstanding. They are considerate, understanding, and willing to answer questions anytime. We are very pleased with their level of service.”

Bonghi concludes, “The benefits have been astounding. There is less labor cost obviously. And application is more precise. Our customers have responded in a positive manner. And we now have the ability to quickly adapt to different custom-pack labeling jobs.”

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Manager for packaging and retail support Robert Bonghi notes, “We chose the Label-Aire applicator because it appeared to be the most user-friendly. We now can custom-pack for any need. We also installed a Sato (www.satoamerica.com) thermal printer to accommodate the wipe-on applicator. We appreciate the fact that we now can custom label, lot, and code-date labels to order. We now average 45 to 50 units per minute with our new labeling equipment at our San Diego facility, increasing output by 15 to 20 trays per minute.



550 Burning Tree Rd. • Fullerton, CA 92833
 Phone: 714/449-5155 • Fax: 714/526-0300
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Label-Aire, Inc.
550 Burning Tree Rd.
Fullerton, CA 92833 USA
866.384.0700
714.526.0300 fax
info@label-aire.com

www.label-aire.com

