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CASE **STUDY**

Old Mansion Foods and Eriez Xtreme® Metal Detectors Maintain Food Safety For Variety of Spices

Whether paprika from Spain, pepper from India and Vietnam or cinnamon from Madagascar, Old Mansion Foods based in Petersburg, Va., has been manufacturing and developing dry spices, seasonings, breading's, dry mixes, coffee and teas since 1877.

Old Mansion imports and processes spices in bulk with extensive packaging options to include private labeling of custom blends for institutional, foodservice, restaurants and chain companies. With its location in central Virginia only a few hours away from Norfolk's port, Old Mansion offers multiple capabilities and warehousing opportunities for its customers' spice, seasoning, breading and dry mix needs.

The company's 137,000 square foot headquarters includes a pristine test kitchen for research and development as well as a quality assurance laboratory to ensure product safety and satisfaction. Old Mansion adheres to FSMA regulations and global food safety standards and enforces strict sanitation practices with Good Manufacturing Processes (GMPs). An essential part of the company's Food Safety Plant includes the Eriez® Xtreme® Metal Detector, which is specially designed to detect small metal contaminants.

The Eriez Xtreme Metal Detectors installed at Old Mansion Foods incorporate Enhanced Platform (EP) technology, a breakthrough method used for the toughest food applications. The most difficult

products for metal detectors to analyze are those that create a significant signal in the balanced field, which is known as product or bulk effect.

These applications include packaged dairy, meat, poultry and dense bags of powdered type product. The Enhanced Platform built into the Xtreme has redefined industry inspection thresholds by eliminating false trips in these types of applications while improving sensitivity up to 300 percent.

Optimizing Product Consistency and Safety

“Having a metal detector in your plant is no longer a luxury, it is critical in operations to eliminate food safety hazards and essential for food safety,” explains Dale Patton, owner of Old Mansion Foods. “We are using six Eriez metal detectors as a part of operations for each of our processing lines.”

According to Patton, the Xtreme Metal Detector is able to locate metal within ingredients such as paprika and black pepper which, because of their agricultural consistency and mineral content, can make it very difficult.

“When you put through bulk product, settling pockets and conglomerated particles, make it more difficult to find contaminants,” he says. “Eriez helped us to identify settings to make setup more effective for those products, meaning fewer false positives and less downtime when the product is being conveyed through the system.”

John Klinge, Eriez Market Manager for Light Industry, explains, “Some products generate signals that cannot be properly recognized by typical metal detectors, causing them to indicate there is

metal where there is none. The Xtreme Metal Detector ignores these signals and is able to detect the smallest of metals in challenging products such as the ones produced at Old Mansion.”

According to Eriez, the Xtreme Metal Detector offers greater sensitivity with its multiple frequency range, vibration immunity and unique ability to statistically regulate product effect. Many configurable inputs and outputs enable easy installation and give customers the ability to add multiple options.

Metal Detection Challenges Solved with Xtreme Technology

Old Mansion was searching for a metal detector that would enable faster set-up, less downtime and be user friendly, according to Laura Palombo, Manager of Quality Assurance. This led to an initial meeting with Eriez technicians and sales representative Drew Harris of Dominion-Carolina Sales.

Old Mansion participated in an online demonstration and product test, watching their own ingredients running through an Xtreme at Eriez’ Central Test Lab in Erie, Pa. They then purchased their first Xtreme Metal Detector and put it into production. Now, more than a million pounds a month of select spices are inspected by the six Xtreme Metal Detectors, according to Palombo.

Palombo said the Old Mansion staff did not require much formal training to operate the metal detector and that installation and set-up was quick and easy. “Eriez used our product types and samples and came back with a properly configured metal detector that was user friendly.”

Palombo explains that she wanted the whole team to feel comfortable operating the metal detector. "While I am a very hands-on person, I did not want to be the only person to monitor the unit. I expected our other staff to operate the metal detector and be able to report any issues," she says.

The Xtreme Metal Detector features a user-friendly interface that is ETL/CSA/CE approved. It incorporates a dedicated reject log and event log, which is essential when Old Mansion runs various ingredients at interval periods through the detector, according to management.

Palombo is pleased with the unit's array of set-up options. "Setting individual passwords enables our production personnel to easily select each ingredient type we are running without changing boundaries or notifications," she says. "EP gives us the ability to have one setting for like packaging of like ingredients."

The Old Mansion quality control staff keeps detailed reports for each production run and retention samples for laboratory evaluation. The quality control team also approves all products prior to shipment. That means the Xtreme Metal Detector is a very critical step in the food safety plan to ensure product release, according to Palombo.

"We're not running just one product each time, so the diversity of the product mix that the Xtreme could handle was definitely an asset," she says. "You can use the EP feature based on a larger or smaller granulation, depending upon the product type we are running. The unique memory lets us store the proper settings for each product type for future runs."

To learn more about how the Xtreme Metal Detector utilizes the Enhanced Platform technology to improve sensitivity, visit <http://erieznews.com/nr397> to download an informative white paper.

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Eriez is recognized as world authority in separation technologies. The company's magnetic lift and separation, metal detection, fluid filtration, flotation, materials feeding, screening, conveying and controlling equipment have application in the process, metalworking, packaging, plastics, rubber, recycling, food, mining, aggregate and textile industries. Eriez manufactures and markets these products through 12 international facilities located on six continents. For more information, call (814) 835-6000. For online users, visit www.eriez.com or send email to eriez@eriez.com. Eriez World Headquarters is located at 2200 Asbury Road, Erie, PA 16506.