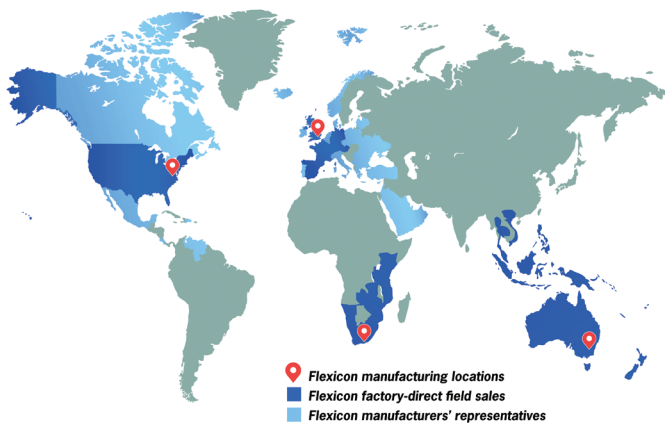




Adjustable fill head raises and lowers to suit a range of bag heights. An oversized filling spout accommodates open-top bags.

Bulk Bag Filler Boosts Pale Ale Malt Packing Output with Reduced Labour

EE-0957



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Bulk Bag Filler Boosts Pale Ale Malt Packing Output with Reduced Labour

CASTLEFORD, WEST YORKSHIRE, UK — Thomas Fawcett & Sons Ltd required a more efficient system to pack pale ale malt into 350 kg (772 lb) to 1,000 kg (2,205 lb) bulk bags, sold across the UK and internationally.

Most of the company's malt was previously supplied in 25 tonne (27.5 ton) bulk lorry loads and 25 kg (55 lb) sacks. When the company first supplied malt in bulk bags, members of the malting staff transferred batches of malt from pre-weighed 50 kg (110 lb) sacks into bulk bags by wheeling the sacks on a sack truck on the upper floor and tipping them into a bulk bag held on a fork lift truck on the floor below. This was a three person job: one filling sacks, one tipping sacks, and one operating the forklift truck.

Bulk bag filling no longer labour intensive

Installation of a Flexicon TWIN-CENTREPOST™ Bulk Bag Filler and flexible screw conveyor in the packing room area has created a more flexible packing operation and saved operators from double handling of the malt. Brian Hickman, Thomas Fawcett & Sons, Malting Manager, says "By installing the bulk bag filler, we save between six to eight hours of operator time each week."

Flexible screw conveyor transports malt to bulk bag filler

A bulk storage silo was fitted with a charging adapter for connection to a Flexicon horizontally-oriented flexible screw conveyor 7.5 m (25 ft) long and 168 mm (6.6 in.) in diameter. From the conveyor's discharge housing, malt flows through downspouting to the bulk bag filler inlet.

How bulk bags are now filled

The bulk bag filler is equipped with an adjustable fill head that can be raised or lowered to suit all popular bag heights, and secured in place with two quick-release pins. An oversized filling spout accommodates open-top bulk bags. Mounted on load cells, the unit can weigh-fill 350 to 1,000 kg (772 to 2,205 lb) of malt into bulk bags. To fill a bag, the operator positions a 1200 x 1000 mm (47 x 39 in.) pallet on the filler deck and attaches the bag loops to each of four retractable bag hooks on the fill head.

The operator secures the bag inlet to the downspouting. The system's PLC runs the flexible screw conveyor at a high feed rate, reducing the



Operator attaches bag loops to the four retractable bag hooks on the fill head.



Bag spout is connected before malt is transferred from a silo through a horizontal flexible screw conveyor and downspouting into the bulk bag filler inlet.



With the bag inlet secured to the downspouting, the automated weigh-filling cycle is initiated.

feed rate to trickle before stopping the conveyor when the accurate target weight has been loaded into the bag. The bag and pallet are removed by pallet jack.

"Individual customer orders are typically 24 one-tonne bulk bags of malt," says Brian Hickman.

Upgrade saves time, increases production

"The system works well and we are pleased with the reliable operation it provides to our malting facility," says Brian Hickman, adding, "The Bulk Bag Filler and flexible screw conveyor operate separately from our 25 kg (55 lb) sack filling system, providing another advantage as we can now do both operations simultaneously, saving time and increasing production. We fill the bulk malt outload silo in the evening when the 25 kg (55 lb) sack line is not running, and then we can pack simultaneously during the day."

Thomas Fawcett & Sons Ltd is a seventh generation family business that has been manufacturing quality malts for over 200 years on its original site in Castleford, West Yorkshire. The company supports and assists brewers of all traditions and sizes and its customers range from multi-national brewers to the latest start-up micro-breweries.



Bulk bags containing malt are shipped to brewers throughout the UK and abroad.



Fawcetts also packages its malt in 25 kg (55 lb) sacks. The Bulk Bag Filler increases production as both filling operations can take place simultaneously.

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