

frozen europe food

the magazine for the frozen food industry

March/April 2020 - volume 32 issue 2



THE SECRET INGREDIENT



11 ITALIAN TRADITIONAL RECIPES



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NEW PACK

6 PACKS OF 500 g PER CARTON

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> Cooked & Pre-Cooked IQF Products

> German Market

> Technology: Peeling, Dicing, Cutting

FINDING GREATER FAVOR

FROZEN FOOD IS MORE POPULAR THAN EVER

EUROPE GETS THE LARGEST MARKET SLICE



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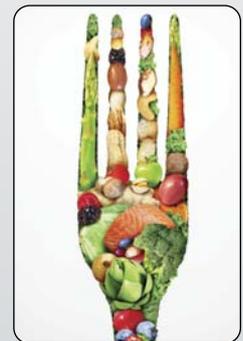
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“CUSTOMERS WANT BETTER YIELDS AND PERFECT CUTS”



Photos: Urschel

*In this exclusive interview with **Mike Jacko, VP of Applications & New Product Innovation at Urschel**, I wanted to find out which current innovative equipment pieces help frozen food manufacturers achieve better performance.*

What are the most widely used equipment for cutting in the frozen food industry?

There are very few machines and manufacturers out there that can truly cut, peel, slice foodstuffs when fully frozen. Customers cut these products when fresh, cooked, or frozen tempered to a temperature that has say stiffened or crust froze a chicken breast, hardened a strawberry or soft cheese, so a slicer/dicer with sharp knives can cut without damaging the knives or other parts. The products may then get fully frozen. Tempering requires the customer to have good systems for controlled freezing, warming-up slowly to specific temperatures maybe as accurate as +/- 1° C on some products.

There are some machines made to cut hard frozen products, but the knives are more like woodchippers, heavy duty guillotines more for precutting before tempering for high quality slicing or dicing on an Urschel machine. Most frozen foodstuffs are processed, size reduced first, and then frozen. Urschel machines fit the job with the DiversaCut 2110A® Dicer (DCA) for veggies, fruits, and certain meats as the favorite/best-selling for dicing. The Sprint 2® Dicer (SPR2), Urschel's lower capacity version of the DCA, offers cutting solutions for smaller processors. The E TranSlicer® Cutter (ETRS) is the answer when slicing carrots, celery, leek, or green beans at frozen vegetable processors. For frozen tempered meats,

bacon, or cheese, processors rely on the Affinity® Dicer (AFF) the premium USDA Dairy accepted machine, or the smaller Affinity Integra® Dicer (Integra) in lower capacity applications. For fresh and frozen-tempered chicken breast, pork skin, or leafy green products, a popular choice for many is the Urschel® Model M6 belt-fed dicer



Belgium is the European market leader and the largest exporter of frozen vegetables in the world. 100% of the vegetables are cut fresh, then frozen.



CUTTING EDGE SOLUTIONS to Meet All of Your Food Processing Needs

Urschel designs and manufactures over 50 different models of **high capacity, precision food cutting machinery designed for rugged production environments**. Sanitary and dependable in design. Rely on Urschel cutting solutions to effectively process all types of products.

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which produces two-dimensional cuts. Customers the world over turn to Urschel to tap into the vast knowledge and unmatched experience in this area. For example, in vegetable cutting applications in Belgium, Urschel outsells the nearest competitor virtually 9 to 1.



Which are some of the innovations in this area?

Frozen foods, a large, well established sector, covers many products; some with very large capacities where efficiencies and yields become important. Again, much of the product frozen is size reduced beforehand. Customers look for higher capacity machines, better yields, and less scrap while maintaining perfect cuts. The above Urschel machines provide all of this. Some customers are always looking for something new/different and with the wide array of machines offered, customers rely on Urschel, and know we will work with them to identify the right machine and cut setup, or will work with the customer to develop new cutting methods – whatever is needed to meet their goal. Urschel partners with companies around the world and maintains strict confidentiality agreements. Urschel Engineers work directly with customers. Having the entire manufacturing process under one roof, from CAD drawings, to foundries, knife development, large and small components, quality checks; Urschel is a rare company to be able to be so responsive to customer needs. Being responsive to customer needs before and after the sale includes the largest direct support network, so Urschel

technicians can be dispatched anywhere in the world where foods are commercially processed.

Please provide details about the cutting process itself, in the case of frozen foodstuffs.

Urschel remains the global leader in food cutting technology. As a person walks through the frozen grocery store aisles, there are almost endless choices: carrots, beans, broccoli, French fries, frozen meals, pizzas, ice cream, desserts, etc. The vast majority of all of these products employ some type of reduction accomplished on an Urschel machine; such as the slicing of carrots, pepperoni for pizzas on the ETRS. The DCA or SPR2 dices/strips the carrots, broccoli, French fries, peppers, onions for pizza, bits and pieces in ice cream, apples in pies, etc. Other examples include beef and poultry pieces in pot pies and TV dinners are made on the M6. Cheese shreds or dices, bacon bits on pizzas are made on our CC Shredder or Affinity Dicer. Every ingredient is reduced in order to feed the world we live in, and Urschel is proud to be the leader in the cutting industry in every continent, including Europe.

What role do cutting systems play in the overall food safety aspect of frozen food processing?

On top of customers looking for high capacity, higher yields, less scrap, and perfect cuts, many look for machines that are easier and less expensive to maintain, and more sanitary, easier to clean machines. Urschel has designed the DCA, SPR2, ETRS, Affinity, Integra, CCX-D, and CC-DL to meet the highest sanitary standards, while being cost-effective to operate, in order to maximize customer profitability.

What are some of the main challenges associated with this type of equipment?

Because the frozen food sector is so diverse there are a number of challenges, but the one that stands out to me is getting the customer to understand that different products need

to be processed at different temperatures to obtain the best results. With that, the customer may need to refine the tempering process he has in place. This may require substantial investment in freezers, coolers, and dwell time. For example, a chicken breast should be optimally tempered to -2°C for quality strip cutting of fajita strips. One uncontrolled, more deeply frozen breast could potentially break knives and crash a machine. The challenge is identifying product characteristics, determining the required end-result, and working within the necessary, consistent temperature range, in many cases.

Geographically speaking, which areas of the world are using the most advanced cutting machineries for frozen foodstuffs?

When I think of companies that have made great strides in the area of frozen vegetables, I think of the production in Belgium, West Vlaanderen, as examples of companies that have made strong advancements in processing. Within this area, Urschel cutting machinery dominates with approximately 90% market share. We are proud to be the leading supplier of frozen vegetable reduction equipment in Europe, and in Belgium especially. Belgium is the European market leader and the largest exporter of frozen vegetables in the world. 100% of the vegetables are cut fresh, then frozen. 90% of frozen vegetables produced are exported to feed the world. Quality of their product is unsurpassed. The commitment these companies have to delivering the best, and developing the most innovative methods of processing, and implementing superb quality control is truly amazing. With over 200 machines in operation, Urschel has strong relationships in this region built on dependability and partnering with these companies to discover the best cutting solutions to support their efforts. The market growth is strong, on average 10% per year. ■

“ Urschel machines fit the job with the DiversaCut 2110A® Dicer (DCA) for veggies, fruits, and certain meats as the favorite/best-selling for dicing. The Sprint 2® Dicer (SPR2), Urschel’s lower capacity version of the DCA, offers cutting solutions for smaller processors. ”