

CHEESE BECOMES FAST FOOD FOR FRENCH SUPPLIER

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Based in Dijon, Tippagral S.A. is a leading cheese supplier for the wholesale and food manufacturing markets in France and central Europe. The company uses a bespoke cheese cutting machine from Northwood Food Machinery of Stoke-on-Trent for portioning blocks of cheese weighing up to 85kg.

THE CHALLENGE

Director of Tippagral SA, Neil McAuley, explained, "We portion some 7,000 tonnes of cheese per year, mainly Emmental, but also Cheddar, Gouda, Edam and Mozzarella. Some 75% of our throughput is grated, but many customers, particularly wholesalers and manufacturers of pizza and sandwich/baguette producers, require the cheese to be cut into specific sizes and shapes, e.g. 9x9cm, 7.2x7cm and 12x5cm. This machine will dramatically streamline this aspect of our operation and cut our labour costs."

THE SOLUTION

"We were faced with the task of stopping these huge blocks of cheese instantly," reported Northwood Food Machinery Director Mike Southwick. "A lack of friction in the gearboxes meant the blocks were over-running the target position by some 100 mm. We brought in Control Techniques, who were confident that they could give the degree of position control required, using the smallest of their general industrial drives, the Commander SK. On the first trial, these drives stopped the motors on target - and without any additional cost of braking resistors!"

THE BENEFITS

The Commander SK AC drives provide a level of control and movement accuracy that dramatically reduces the time the task takes and provides accurate and repeatable results. Featuring integral dynamic braking, the Commander SK drive is able to absorb the energy created by fast stops, while giving very smooth, precise control of off-the-shelf motors. The drives on the cheese cutting machine are hard-wired into the PLC controller to give a fast digital link and are programmed to give smooth acceleration and instant STOP, when they individually receive instructions to do so.

“We are delighted with the results, the Commander SK drives have exceeded our expectations. We simply could not have achieved these results with any other drive - and we’re very pleased with the support we’ve received from Control Techniques, who helped us set it up and provided us with the programming.”

Mike Southwick, Northwood Food Machinery Director



KEY BENEFITS

- **HIGHLY ACCURATE**
- **LOWER LABOUR COSTS**
- **EXCELLENT SUPPORT**
- **INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY**

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