

Quick Changeover

Vitamin maker counts on electronic filler

Steady sales growth at Jamieson Laboratories made it obvious that a new vitamin packaging line was needed. Electronic tablet counting brings big benefits.

by Pat Reynolds, Features Editor
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Unscrambling is first

Bottles filled on Jamieson's new line are either high-density polyethylene (primarily for contract customers) or polyethylene terephthalate. They enter the line by way of an Omni-line Model 350 unscrambler supplied by Pace (Fairfield, NJ).

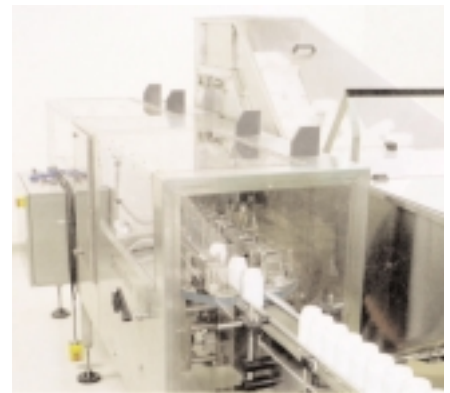
As bottles reach the tabletop conveyor that carries them through electronic filling, a diverter sends them down one side or the other of a lane divider. This permits the Cremer to fill two-up.

The smallest bottle filled on the line has an internal volume of 60 cc, the largest 375. Products include geleaps, tablets and two-piece capsules. All product is fed into the line through a bulk bin that holds the contents of seven 20-L pails. Once this hopper is full, an operator hits a switch to elevate the hopper up to two overhead hoppers that feed directly into the Cremer machine. Cook says the floor-level bin is a welcome improvement over the method used on the old line. "It's nice not having to run up and down manually filling an overhead hopper," he says.

Each side of the twin-fill Cremer machine has three 12-channel vibrating pans. As tablets drop from the hopper into the first pan, they're essentially in a bulk flow. By the time they're vibrated to the second pan, they begin to separate from each other. By the third pan, the tablets are neatly aligned end to end in their channels. All that remains is for the tablet to be counted as it drops out of its channel and passes the counting sensor.

"Once the correct number of tablets has been counted into the delivery chute, memory flaps are shut above the chute so that the product for the next bottle can begin being counted immediately," says Cook.

Exiting the filler, bottles are conveyed to a cottoner and then a capper, both from NJM/CLI. Each cap has a foil liner that's induction-sealed, shortly after the capper, by an Enercon (Menomonee Falls, WI) system. "It produces a nice, clean seal, and it's easy to run," says Cook.



Bottles are placed directly onto the customers conveyor by way of Pace's Omni-line Model 350 unscrambler.

More information is available from:
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