



Piacentina



FOOD SECTOR

Piacentina Srl

Polo di Podenzano (PC), Italy

>> shrinkwrapper

SMIFLEXI SK 600 T

>> multi-packer

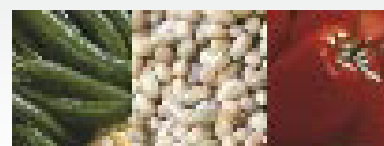
SMIFLEXI MP 300

>> conveyors



■ The advantages of integrated logistics

"Integrated logistics" is playing an increasingly important role in the food processing industry, since it guarantees an extremely flexible approach. All phases of the production process, starting with the supply of raw materials up to consumption of the product by individual purchasers are carefully planned, organised and controlled.



Integrated logistics is the key to success for the company Piacentina Srl, which has optimised all the steps and phases from one operator to the next within its production line.

From storage to transportation...

Piacentina: a leader in integrated logistics

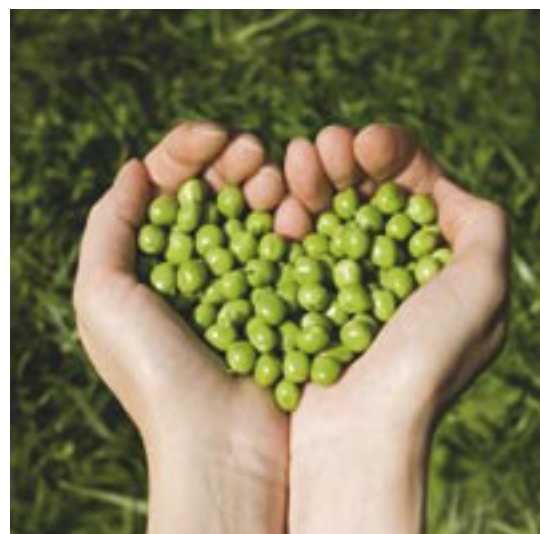
■ Piacentina Srl, based in San Polo di Podenzano (Piacenza), was established in 2003 from the merger of three entities: the San Martino Scrl cooperatives, the Cores Consortium and private investor Cristina Dodici. The company, in just eight years of business, has achieved a leadership position in the "co-packing" sector of canned foods. In the meantime, its workforce has grown from two employees at its inception to its current 43 internal workers and 20 external workers. Piacentina works in the field of agribusiness logistics based in Cortemaggiore and, since the start of its operations, it has managed to offer customers integrated management solutions for the logistics cycle, starting from storing the semi-processed products to transportation of the finished packages, passing through all the intermediary stages of packaging, picking, standardisation and order preparation. The company has grown considerably in recent years and in 2004 began the construction of a new 14,000m² plant



with unique features. Again, with a view to offering the client a "turnkey" service, the Alseno plant has also been expanded for managing storage and order preparation.



Customer Satisfaction as a key priority



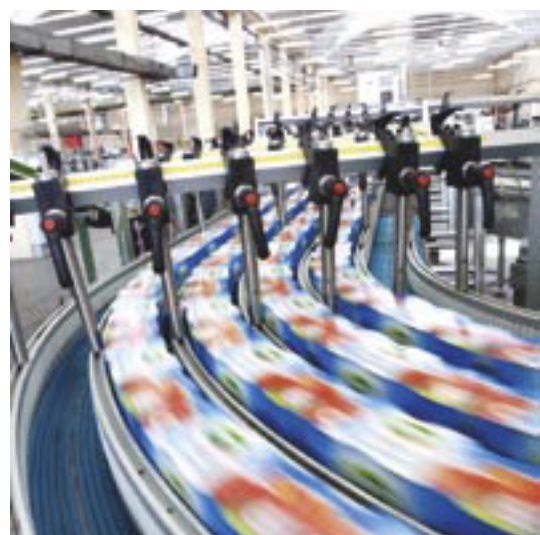
■ Careful consideration of the requirements of the various brackets of its clientele has led the company Piacentina to establish a truly innovative plant which brings together, in one single location, the management of three usually separate activities: storage of the "raw", that is, unlabelled product; secondary packaging; and the preparation and shipment of orders.

To implement this project, Piacentina srl has purchased a new logistics site in the town of S. Polo di Podenzano, with an overall surface area of 70,000m² (35,000m² of which is indoors), warehouses dedicated to processing canned foods and a packaging department made up of four production lines.

The company is as an ideal partner for food manufacturers intending to outsource the secondary packaging stage of their business, providing its customers with a customised and logistically optimised service, thanks to the proximity of the Piacentina plants to the main motorway network.

Operationally, the company's plants are able to cover the entire logistics cycles linked to the stages that follow the primary packing stage: IT management of flows; storage; packaging; movement of goods; transportation and delivery to the end user.

Piacentina's production activity stands out for the great variety of products it handles: not just the different brands (Cirio,



Valfrutta, De Rica, to name just a few) or the different products (peas, sweetcorn, beans, etc.), but above all the different types of containers (glass jars, cans, etc.) which are packaged in many different pack configurations: packets in film only, tray + film, flat pad + film, stacked trays, cardboard blanks with cardboard sleeve. Therefore, the main characteristic of the manufacturing systems is



■ “NEW TS” Tray Stacker

This is a device which stacks plastic, metal or glass containers both clustered in cardboard trays or pads or loose (only for fit-in type cans) on two or more layers, one above the other, with any subsequent packaging in shrink film.



The Smiflexi NEW TS can be installed on the SK series shrinkwrappers, on WP wrap around casepackers and on the CM series combined machines.



The system is made up of an electronic stacking device operating in continuous motion, with outputs of up to 60 packs per minute depending on the machine model with which it is combined and the type of container being packaged.



Pack formats can vary according to the container shape and size, although the most popular configurations are 4x3 and 6x4.





flexibility, guaranteed by the presence of machines with high technological content such as the Smiflexi SK 600T shrinkwrapper, equipped with tray stacker, and the Smiflexi MP 300 sleeve packer.

The initial machine packs steel cans, cluster packs and various kinds of jars, with a capacity from 150 to 1,000g, in over 50 different configurations. The 4x3 and 3x4 packs are created also on two layers, one upon the other, thanks to the "NEW TS" device.



■ The food processing sector in Italy

The food processing sector in Italy is characterised by the growing attention paid by consumers to product characteristics and production processes, which translates into a strong requirement for "transparency" to ensure the quality and wholesomeness of industrially packaged food and drink. Such a well-developed market requires companies in the "food & beverage" sector to make continuous organisational changes both in relation to production areas and to sales and support activities such as supplying, marketing, packaging, etc.

The company Piacentina Srl operates within this context. It is one of the major Italian companies which are active in the packaging of canned foods for third parties and it has made innovation one of the cornerstones of its "mission". Within the field of investment in new technologies, Piacentina has entrusted to SMI the engineering study of four lines of secondary packaging, within which the following have been installed: 6 Smiflexi packers: an SK 600/T shrinkwrapper equipped with a tray stacker; an SK 800/F shrinkwrapper for shrinkwrapping jars of various sizes in the 3x1 format at a speed of around 200 ppm; a 45 ppm shrinkwrapper; a TF 450 trayformer; two MP series cardboard sleeve packers and all the conveyors which move the loose containers and finished packs.

Maximum flexibility is also guaranteed by the Smiflexi MP 300 packer, which creates the packaging in cardboard sleeves.

The Smiflexi packers of the MP series can pack bottles, cans, cartons and plastic, metal and glass jars in various types of pack: multiple layers; with the bottle neck inside or outside the packaging; with built-in handles; with strengthening side flaps.

The Smiflexi MP 300 packer installed in the Piacentina plants is able to meet production requirements up to 30,000 bottles per hour and is dedicated to packaging of steel cans in 1x2, 1x3, 2x2 and 2x3 formats in Over The Top (OTT) formations".

■ ...Focus on canned foods

Canned foods are made up of all varieties of vegetable which are preserved so that they can be consumed even out of season. In ancient times, housewives would prepare the foods at home and would then preserve them using methods in place at that time so that they could be eaten during the seasons when fresh products were not available. With the advent of the food industry, from the mid-nineteenth century, canned food preparation switched from kitchens to factories. Tomatoes were the first vegetables to be industrially treated for producing purees, peeled tomatoes and tomato concentrates. Attention then passed to fruit preserves (jams) and then to all types of foodstuffs, preserved in oil or in brine. Today, canned foods are among the most widespread food products and are expected to become even more so by virtue of the strong demand for long-life foodstuffs from countries in the developing world.



PIACENTINA

- THE WORD TO THE CUSTOMER - Interview with Cristina Dodici, Managing Director of Piacentina Srl.



Piacentina is a leader in the co-packing sector for canned foods. How important is it for a company operating in integrated logistics to have flexible and technologically innovative machinery?

“Our company has always focused upon guaranteeing a high quality service, without losing sight of the financial aspect. For this reason, Piacentina has made great investments in technological innovation, continuously searching

What are the main trends that are emerging in the food market?

“Data obtained from recent trade shows, such as the latest edition of MARCA held in Bologna on 19th and 20th January 2011, has confirmed that there has been sustained growth of “private labels” also in 2010, with an increase of 6.5% compared to the previous year.

It is therefore clear that the market is rewarding an offer of convenience which

is meeting the approval of purchasers who have less disposable income.

Despite this, a very important fact is emerging: the commercial brands with higher trends of growth were the premium brands, which recorded an increase of around 33%.

It seems clear that the consumer has found a balance point: in future they will perhaps consume less, but better quality, trying to locate, as much as possible, a quality product.”





for the best solutions the market has to offer; this is in order to guarantee excellent quality standards, without losing sight of a competitive and extremely interesting commercial target.”

What characteristics must a supplier have to meet Piacentina's quality standards?

“Suppliers are not allowed in Piacentina but only and exclusively commercial partners!!

We require maximum dedication and professionalism from our collaborators, and we can confirm with concrete certainty that, from a technological point of view, this is what we have found in our commercial partners up to now.”



Spurred on by the overwhelming development it has achieved in just eight years of

business, Piacentina Srl continues to invest with the aim of completely satisfying the customer. What do you expect from your partners in the packaging sector?

“Planting seeds today means reaping abundant harvests in the near future. We ask our partners to work with care and dedication for a fruitful harvest.”