



turning knowledge into solutions

The Faraday solves a spiky issue

Leading high street chocolate makers Thorntons have seen an end to their hand finished chocolate problems thanks to the intervention of Food Processing Faraday.

Thorntons luxury range includes some chocolates that required the tops decorating by hand. Though they employed 17 operatives to carry out this task, they were only manufacturing these products for one day per week. Thorntons, therefore, needed a solution that was not only financially viable but also preserved the chocolate's unique appearance.

David Walklate, Innovation Consultant at the Faraday, had previously worked with Sapcote Engineering, and knowing that they specialise in innovative and bespoke solutions for the food industry, called upon them to find an appropriate solution.

Sapcote Engineering set to work developing an idea that would be simple, financially viable and produced the same results as manual decorating.

After successful trials were completed, the design of a 'wheel in' novel decorator was approved. It is based on the humble 'artex' ceiling brush principle, and travels at the exact line pace, touching and spiking each row of chocolates in turn.

By designing and having a quantity of brushes made that are quick release the entire rotation mechanism mounting can be made to turn through 180 degrees. This means whilst the lower brushes are spiking the chocolate, the upper brushes can be removed, cleaned and replaced to ensure continuous operation.

Customer criteria, including the finished product appearance, has been matched through all the trials and the payback period for the labour saving alone has been calculated as less than 17 weeks.

'We are very thankful to the Faraday for their work in this project and for linking us with a new, innovative engineering company' said Ian Clay of Thorntons.

David Walklate said 'This project is a wonderful example of looking for simple, innovative solutions that don't try to imitate the operative's actions robotically but deliver the solution in a novel way.'

N.B This development was carried out as part of Food Processing Faraday's Championing Innovation between the Engineering and Food Sector (CHIEFS) programme. This is funded by emda and is designed to catalyse innovation between the food and engineering sectors.



To know more about how your company can benefit through innovation support from Food Processing Faraday contact enquiries@fpfaraday.com or telephone 01664 420066

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