

Stevens in Action

Application Report

British Premium Meats

STEVENS
Weighing & Traceability Solutions



Weighing and Traceability System is a cut above the competition

**BRITISH
PREMIUM
MEATS**

Meat Suppliers to the Catering Trade

Read on to find out why so many companies choose to invest in Stevens for their Recipe Formulation and Traceability needs...



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Weighing and Traceability System is a cut above the competition.

A prestigious eleven station Vantage weighing and traceability system installed by Stevens Group is bringing important benefits to British Premium Meats (BPM) at their new purpose built factory in Welwyn Garden City.

Privately owned BPM are established suppliers of specially finished cooked and fresh meats to the catering trade throughout the Home Counties, Midlands and West Country. Their new processing plant at Welwyn, covering over 21000 sq ft, is believed to be one of the most up to date in Europe.

The company's impressive growth over the past 20 years has come from personal recommendation by word of mouth and their professional approach and dedication have recently been rewarded by receiving BRC accreditation for their operation. With customers including leading Michelin Star restaurants, contract caterers, private schools and colleges, innovation, freshness and quality are of paramount importance to their reputation.

“ BPM produce over 600 product ranges including red meats, poultry and their own range of fresh burgers...”

Their customer base dictates that their daily business is made up of a large number of relatively small consignments. BPM produce over 600 product ranges including red meats, poultry and their own range of fresh burgers. Keeping track of the products from start to finish is a complex task, especially given the stringent labelling and traceability requirements now in place across Europe.

Stevens won the contract against stiff competition and as their Commercial Manager, Toby Hawkins explains: “BPM set a number of key goals they wanted to achieve for controlling the process at their new plant.

These included improved meat traceability with a paperless audit trail, increased stock control and efficiency, improved labelling, reduction in administration time and of course minimisation of

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waste and giveaway. In parallel the system needed to be user friendly so that operators would readily adapt to the system without it being too onerous.

One of the overall stipulations by BPM was that our weighing system should operate in harmony with the Sage Line 500 software package in order to provide a fully integrated system incorporating the factory floor and back-office. We were confident the Vantage system could meet all these requirements and I am in no doubt that our key advantage in gaining the order was the extensive experience we have in working with Sage and other third party solution providers.

The installation at Welwyn has been very much a team effort. Throughout the project our engineers have worked closely with Slough based Technology Partners Ltd who are an accredited Sage Business Partner and have implemented the Line 500 package."

To comply with meat production and storage regulations, the factory is essentially divided into three, ensuring that red meats, poultry and cooked meats are processed and stored separately. As a result the system features separate Vantage systems, each split into three main sections

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Toby Hawkins, Commercial Manager, Stevens Group

covering goods-in and stock release, production and finally goods-out. At each station, the Vantage terminals work with a variety of stainless steel legal-for-trade weighing equipment. Drive-through stainless steel floor scales weigh incoming meat consignments while the Vantage production stations incorporate integral scales which can be adjusted for optimum working height.

The Vantage units are far more than just weighing scales and offer the ultimate in flexibility, ease-of-use and reliability for a wide range of food processing applications.

They can be used as standalone self-contained modules or networked as part of a fully integrated system allowing optimum use of the weight data. The fully sealed and waterproof operator

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console can withstand regular wash-down routines making the system ideally suited to the working environments found in modern food manufacturing establishments.

The traceability chain starts as soon as each consignment of meat is booked in and checked against the relevant order on the system. At this stage, consignments are issued with a lot number and bar coded label which contains data including information on the 'use by date', store location and product-specific quality information, as well as delivery vehicle and supplier details.

At this point, the material is classed as raw stock and cannot be used by production until the releasing procedure is followed. When management detail the product requirements for the daily production schedules, a report is sent electronically to stores, listing which stock needs to be released and where it should be taken to. The required raw stock is now scanned and released to the work in process production area with the required labels issued.

Meanwhile the raw stock levels are automatically downgraded and the released stock levels upgraded. At the same time scheduled orders

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are downloaded to the specific processing work station. The PC based Vantage touch screen gives clear instructions to operators guiding them through the order fulfilment. Keeping track on the meats as they are processed can be complex, especially when different cuts are required to fulfil specific works orders.

For instance an order may call for a quantity of chicken breasts. To satisfy this, the system calls up the required quantity of whole chickens. It is clear this process will create other components such as leg and wing portions which may need to go back into stock.

The Sage System keeps track of the different components ensuring an ongoing continuum throughout the traceability chain. Most orders are made up by weight but the system can also handle non-weighed, manually handled items. After the

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“ We operate a rapid turnaround operation serving a large number of customers, each with their own specific requirements. We need to process the orders quickly and accurately, including invoicing. The Stevens system draws real time data from the Sage System giving us a clear picture of what is going on in our plant. We know we are in control of our process and can measure our efficiency, allowing us to implement corrective measures very quickly...”

Rob Hutchinson, Partner, British Premium Meats

fresh meats have been prepared, the wrapped trays are weighed and the work station's printer produces a dedicated barcode label containing all the relevant customer and traceability information on the product. The label design software allows

BPM to create different labels for individual products and customers. Finished product is now booked into finished goods ready for despatch.

When product is booked out from stores via the goodsout Vantage stations, the labels are scanned and the information used to complete the record of product movement. Product can be despatched individually or in trolleys, and the system is configured to recognise labelled trolleys and their contents as units of stock movement. Despatched product is sent to BPM's distribution cold store warehouse in Wembley.

BPM partner Rob Hutchinson is delighted with the overall system and as he concludes: "We operate a rapid turnaround operation serving a large number of customers, each with their own specific requirements.

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Toby Hawkins, Commercial Manager, Stevens Group

provide an outstanding result. We have a virtually paperless environment and can recall electronically stored traceability data on demand. This, together with minimum waste and accurate stock control, brings benefits directly to the bottom line.”

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To find out how Contact Stevens Group - **Leaders in Weighing & Traceability Solutions** - can help you and your business, please contact us for a no obligation consultation:

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