DMN-WESTINGHOUSE — The Pick of The Crop

DMN-WESTINGHOUSE MLD 400 rotary valves have proved to be the pick of the crop for major vegetable processing plants. Vak Conveying Systems of Marple, Cheshire designed and installed the waste product removal systems for Marshall’s, Lincolnshire Field Products and Exotic Farm Produce all situated in Lincolnshire, the county that produces most of the UK’s high quality vegetables.

Robustness and reliability were the two major factors, which determined Vak’s choice of valves along with the off-set back-up given by DMN-WESTINGHOUSE. Being direct drive the valves do not suffer from failed electric fans and to-date they have not had a single problem with them at any of their installations. The only choices Vak System had to make were whether to use six or nine vane rotors and selecting the running speed.

Vak Systems is a family owned and run firm, with a growing reputation and a blue chip client list. They specialise in the design and installation of pneumatic conveying systems and in this case their specific task was the efficient removal of waste materials from the processing plants. After assessing a range of competing valves they chose the DMN MLD 400 rotary valve as the vital component in their systems.

In the past, waste removal systems had been little more than a belt conveyor, which led to spillage, rotting vegetation and the inevitable smell and fly problems. With Vak’s pneumatic conveying system, the removal is completely enclosed and waste can be dispensed directly into trailers for use in animal feed. The original idea for the design came to Director Steve Wild as he was using a garden blower/vacuum to get rid of leaves on his lawn at home. “Needless to say, our system had to be rather more robust,” he comments. “It has to deal with all types of material including cabbages the size of dinner plates. Even things like chipping knives and pieces of wooden pallet sometimes accidentally get into the line but the MLD 400 has no problem dealing with anything.”

The biggest producer of vegetables in the UK, Marshall Brothers (Butterwick), grow and supply fresh and semi-prepared vegetables to major multiple retailers throughout Europe. Waste from all types of brassicas is conveyed through 10 inch pipes. The first one was installed in June 2003 and has been running perfectly ever since. “Marshall’s are using the MLD 400’s, manufactured from nickel-plated cast iron, to convey waste materials through 10 inch pipes. The valves are manufactured in three dedicated product-handling sites in Lincolnshire and major clients such as Asda, Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury’s. Vak’s vegetable feeding system has been running perfectly ever since. It has given us no problems since it was installed over a year ago - we simply turn it on in the morning, turn it off at night and forget about it in between.”

Three valves are also in use at Lincolnshire Field Products who farm in excess of 12,000 acres, principally focused on the production, procurement, packing and distribution of fresh vegetables for Asda stores. They too, recognise the importance of having a reliable valve at the heart of their system, which is in use 24 hours a day. If the valve fails, the system simply will not run and minimal downtime is critical to Operations Director Steve Bates. “We used to have a belt system, which gave us problems with bearings wearing out, belts ripping and of course it did not look or smell very pleasant. I am very pleased with the new system and the valves in particular. We installed them in August of last year and apart from the benefits of keeping the waste out of sight, we have saved cost by reducing downtime. The valves are virtually maintenance-free and well worth the investment.”

The DMN Westinghouse MLD 400 features compact design and robust construction. It has an easily detachable non-drive side end cover and rotor assembly, is pressure surge proof up to 10 bar g, and has a shaved angle inlet. A large range of options is available, including air purge seals, flame drills to PN 10, ANSI 150 lbs and BS standards. Versions conforming to ATEX 94/9/EC are also available. It has direct Bunglish or SEW drive or optional chain drive and is ideal for investor control.

DMN-WESTINGHOUSE have been asked of it and we are delighted with its performance. It has got its prices right and the quality and construction of the MLD 400 is far superior to anything else on the market. In over two years of operation we have never had to change a bearing and never had a bad rotor. It is extremely reliable. It is small enough to maintain via the side plate. Quite simply they don’t go wrong — they are the pick of the crop.”

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As a special service DMN UK also offer a return program facility for its valves and can return worn equipment to original manufacturer specifications. All refurbished equipment carries the same comprehensive warranty and back up service as the new values.

For full details of the extensive range of rotary, diverter and slide valves offered by DMN or to discuss a specific application, call the DMN UK sales team on +44 1477 680 400 or email them on dmndmuk.com. Alternatively, visit the DMN web site at www.dmndm.info.