

Advanced packaging cuts fresh green bean waste

22 January 2020 | News | By Manbeena Chawla

StePac automated bulk packaging solutions cut food loss in the foodservice sector



The US foodservice industry is discovering the benefits of receiving fresh green bean supplies in lean, modified atmosphere bulk packaging (MAP) newly developed by sustainable packaging experts at Israel based StePac, Ltd.

The company's advanced solution under the brand name *Xtend*[®] targets food waste in the foodservice supply chain and delivers added benefits of preserving the quality, crispiness, and glossy green color of fresh green beans while maintaining full fresh flavor.

Green beans are grown extensively in South Florida and Tennessee, with peak season from November to May. A large percentage of the green beans are packed and shipped to the foodservice industry. But fresh green beans have a short shelf life of around 8 to 12 days. Dehydration, a common post-harvest problem, causes the pods to shrivel and become limp from progressive weight loss and plastic packaging is often used to reduce this waste.

However, excess moisture generated in standard packaging aggravates decay and russetting — reddish-brown spots that result from chilling injury when beans are stored at 5-7.5°C (41-45°F). Foodservice outlets must discard food supplies that do not meet specifications for appearance and quality and are rendered unfit for consumption.

StePac developed modified atmosphere packaging films inbuilt with ideal water vapor transmission rates (WVTR) that eliminate the excess moisture from fresh green bean packaging, mitigating risk of decay and reducing sensitivity to russetting.

The company's proprietary solution also preserves the crispiness and glossy green color of fresh green beans and prevents excessive weight loss caused by dehydration.