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KATSOURIS FRESH FOODS CHOOSES PACKAGING AUTOMATION AGAIN

When one of the country's top producers of ready prepared food wanted further new equipment to speed up expanding production it did not hesitate once again in turning to Packaging Automation, the UK's top manufacturer of heat sealing and lidding machinery.

The Greek family-owned concern, which has established a burgeoning reputation for its products with a raft of satisfied clients who include the UK's leading supermarkets, has been a customer of Packaging Automation virtually since it began trading in 1985 and has Packaging Automation equipment in both its factories.

But earlier in the year Katsouris' management decided to explore the marketplace when they wanted machinery for the multi-cavity dips for which they have become renowned.

Director Takis Pishiris confesses he honestly believed one of Packaging Automation's rivals might offer him a better solution and he went for it. But he was let down by the equipment's lack of reliability and inefficiency. So he opted out and turned back to his trusted allies at Packaging Automation.

So when Mr Pishiris needed to upgrade the Katsouris production line which seals convenience foods like ready-for-the-oven filled mini jacket potatoes, or trays of prepared potatoes and other winter vegetables he had no hesitation in this time going straight to Packaging Automation.

The company has supplied and fitted one of its top-selling Vision 182 compact, in-line automatic heat sealing machines to fully automate the previously semi-automatic Katsouris production line which for years had been operating with the reliable PA182 equipment. The upgrade coincided with a switch to new packaging and means faster speeds in sealing clear film over smooth-wall foil trays which can be achieved without base tool heating. Both Mr Pishiris and his factory manager Paul Doherty are delighted with the installation.

So too are Packaging Automation because the success demonstrates how easy and cost-effective it is to upgrade from the semi-automatic 182 to the fully automated Vision 182.

Packaging Automation and Katsouris have virtually grown up together and have had an excellent relationship for years. Since it was formed in 1985 Katsouris has expanded from a company with a workforce of just 20 to have a payroll in excess of 1000.

Its latest Packaging Automation investment is being used to produce a 16-strong range of vegetable products, heat sealed in aluminium foil trays for the supermarket giant Tesco. Mr Doherty says: "They include a number of potato products from chips to croquets and other vegetable products, all ready to cook. You just take the seal off, put the tray in the oven and away you go."

And he forecast that soon the Vision 182 would be showing its versatility by tackling other meals in different forms of container for other supermarket chains.

He said: "We are talking with Packaging Automation about new tooling to allow us to put the machine to other uses and we have no doubt ,they will come up with what we need. One of the plus points with Packaging Automation has always been the versatility of its machine tooling but overall we have always been happy with everything we have got from them.

"And their response to any problem has always been swift and fitted around our schedules. We have had no complaints at all and will always be happy to turn to them again."

ENDS