AutoCoding Systems Improves
Coding and Packaging Reliability at Scotbeef Ltd

AutoCoding Systems, global specialist in packaging line automation, has worked with Scotbeef to eliminate any potential risk of packaging or coding errors at their Queenslie Road and East Kilbride factories.

As a key supplier of beef and lamb products to many of the largest supermarket chains in the UK, Scotbeef Ltd is committed to ensuring all their products are always correctly packaged and date coded. In order to eliminate any potential risk, Scotbeef have installed an AutoCoding solution from AutoCoding Systems across 16 lines in 2 of their factories.

The AutoCoding product controls ICE thermal transfer printers, Markem-Imaje SmartDates and Digi checkweighers, as well as SICK barcode scanners, removing the need for manual set-up. All printed information, such as dates, prices, weights, barcodes and traceability information is managed through the system, with 1D and 2D barcode scanners checking the product packaging.

Scotbeef Technical Manager, explained, "Prior to the AutoCoding system being implemented, all the devices on the packaging lines were set up manually leaving us vulnerable to human error. We were totally reliant on our Supervisors and QC staff carrying out manual checks prior to products leaving the factory. The AutoCoding system has given us peace of mind; with over 300 different products and in excess of 200 label versions, we need to be 100% confident that the correct label is applied with the correct coding information."

As well as eliminating the risk of errors, Scotbeef have experienced a reduction in downtime during product changeovers with many of the manual checks previously required now being redundant as confidence in the accuracy and reliability of the AutoCoding product increases.

As well as the obvious benefits of accurate coding and packaging, plus the reduction in downtime, Scotbeef have found the web-interface reports offered by the AutoCoding system of great assistance.

The Technical Manager stated, "The ability to control and record activities from each production line and product is a significant benefit to us. Having a fully auditable system has improved traceability of our products. In the future we plan to extend our system functionality to include the AutoCoding Paperless QA function which will ultimately reduce the amount of paperwork currently required to maintain full traceability on each packaging line."

Scotbeef considered competitive products and concluded that AutoCoding Systems' solution offered more functionality and flexibility. Operators have found the system user friendly, welcoming the speed, ease and accuracy with which product changeovers and device set-up can be undertaken.

Finally, commenting on the service received from the AutoCoding Systems' team, the Technical Manager said, "The project team and engineers were first class in their knowledge and understanding of our requirements. The installations all went smoothly with the teams working around our production requirements. Any issues were quickly brought to my attention and dealt with in a speedy and professional manner."

Dedicated line terminals set-up and control the coding and scanning equipment on the packaging lines