

Customer Case Story

Efficient shipping of houseplants

Erect and seal cartons: Bunnik Plants automates two packaging lines



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Introduction

Optimum transport protection and an efficient packaging process are decisive competitive factors when shipping houseplants. The Dutch plant cultivation company Bunnik Plants wanted to increase output, save costs and create capacity for growth. At the same time, better working conditions were required for staff. With the help of several packaging solutions from Lantech, the shipping cartons are now erected and sealed automatically.

Bunnik Plants, based in Bleiswijk near Rotterdam, has been supplying houseplants to international retailers and florists since 1985. The company faces the challenge of providing houseplants in scalable quantities and competitive delivery quality for further processing. Until recently, the shipping cartons were erected, filled and sealed on two manual packaging lines. An internal review process revealed that automating these systems promised the greatest possible return on investment (ROI) and would increase employee satisfaction in the long term.



Manual packaging as a bottleneck

Manual packing was slow and physically demanding for the employees. In order to be able to deliver the orders without delay, an enormous amount of manpower was required. Time and again, Bunnik Plants had to use additional temporary labour. In view of the growing production volume, automation of the packaging lines was therefore a top priority. “We were looking for systems that could process 800,000+ cases a year,” says Fabian Koller, Production Manager at Bunnik Plants. “The challenge was to achieve a constant increase in output, to be able to cope with production peaks and to improve the ergonomic conditions for the employees.” The company procured automatic carton processing systems, but these often caused downtime due to malfunctions. In this situation, they turned to Lantech because Fabian Koller had already had positive experiences with this manufacturer’s packaging systems. During an on-site visit, the Lantech experts inspected the production facilities and then designed customised solutions for both packaging lines.

Sturdy cartons with high speed

The new automatic Lantech systems were installed at the beginning of 2023. One line now integrates a case erector and a case sealer, although filling is still carried out manually due to the varying plant sizes. The C-2000 Tape case erector can process many types and dimensions of carton and produces perfectly square cases. The 90-degree angles on all sides are a prerequisite for ensuring that the cases are optimally suited for the logistics chain, have maximum stability and do not lead to machine jams. A special pick-up frame pulls the carton blanks out of the magazine on two sides and forces them into an open and rectangular position. The bottom flaps are folded before further transport, making the cases rigid and keeping them square.



After manual filling with houseplants, the CS-1000 Tape case sealer reliably seals the shipping packaging with adhesive tape. The machine is optimised for the upstream case erector. Bunnik Plants now achieves an output of 13 cases per minute on the packaging line, the operating flow is constant and system stops are very rare. On this line alone, three employees could be saved and made available for other tasks.

Personnel costs reduced by over 50 per cent

The second packaging line was also equipped with a C-2000 Tape case erector and a CS-1000 case sealer. A TE-A100 tray erector was also added, which produces rectangular trays that offer the houseplants additional protection against damage. For example, they increase the stacking strength of the cartons during transport. The trays filled with plants are packed into the cartons provided by the case erector before being sealed with adhesive tape - all automatically. This packaging line now also has an output of 16 shipping cases per minute and the number of employees on the line has been reduced with more than 40%.



Ready for the future

Bunnik Plants benefits from the automation of carton packaging. It can now process as many as 900,000 cartons a year and the systems offer further growth capacity for the future. The Lantech machines work smoothly and at high speed, so that even production peaks do not cause any problems. In addition, personnel costs were significantly reduced and the working conditions for staff on the lines improved. Amortisation is expected within one year.



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About Lantech

Lantech is recognized worldwide as a leader in robust and efficient case and tray handling machines and stretch wrapping technology. Our mission is to dramatically reduce the billions of euros of damage that happens in transit, making sure products get from the factory floor to the retailer's door in pristine condition. For more information about the different machine types, please visit our website.

For more information about the different machine types, request a quote.

[See our Case Erectors](#)

[See our Case Sealers](#)

[See our Tray Erectors](#)

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