CASE STUDY

Pet Food Manufacturer

Bindicator® in the Pet Food Industry

Today's pet owners are becoming more and more aware of the ingredients that make up their furry friend's kibble. It is now more common for pet owners to have higher standards around the quality of pet food ingredients. Also, specialty ingredients are now in demand such as those supporting weight, allergy or fur ball control. As a result of these new trends, pet food manufacturers are realizing higher costs on more selective dry bulk raw materials making inventory management and control a greater priority than ever before. They are also being challenged to achieve higher production standards in order to meet consumers' quality expectations. These evolving priorities are triggering many pet food manufacturers to add more sophisticated inventory management systems to their plants and upgrade their equipment and sensors to meet food grade standards.

Recently, a well-known pet food manufacturer constructed a new plant in the Midwest. The design and engineering firm assigned to the project understood the priorities of quality and inventory control and therefore selected Bindicator point and continuous level sensors to monitor the dry bulk materials moving through the plant. Bindicator switches and sensors not only met the functional and quality expectations, they were also easy to install and required little maintenance while in operation. This allowed the engineering firm to easily design a robust system that allowed the manufacturer to have better control over their inventory while maintaining high quality standards.

Point level and continuous level sensors from Bindicator® are now being used in this Midwestern pet food plant to monitor dry bulk material inventory in bins and hoppers throughout the production process.

The devices in use are:

- Roto-Bin-Dicator®: A paddle-type point level switch.
- VRF® II: A capacitance-type point level sensor.
- TDR-2000: A continuous level sensor using radar technology.

These point and continuous level sensors are installed in the material handling bins at each stage of the production process. Most of the plant's bins incorporate high level devices such as the Roto-Bin-Dicator® or VRF® II. These are critical devices since bin overflow is always a concern. No one wants valuable raw material spilling onto the production floor. Spills are not only costly, they create potential hazards and are time-consuming to clean-up. Roto-Bin-Dicator® and VRF® II products are also used as low level sensors to prevent material outages which could cause production downtime. These point level sensors protect from these overflow spills and material outage situations by sending a signal to stop filling or emptying once the desired level in the bin is achieved.

In addition to point level products, the TDR-2000 is used in the plant's material handling bins for continuous level monitoring. Continuous level sensing provides the plant with a steady stream of information regarding dry bulk material inventory and consumption. This data is particularly important during the production stage when bins are constantly

feeding one another. The appropriate amount of material must be maintained in each bin to ensure recipe consistency and production up-time.

Bindicator® provides high quality dry bulk inventory management solutions to many industries around the world including food, grain, plastics and aggregates. Durable and reliable point level and continuous level sensors, such as those mentioned in this article, provide consistent dry bulk inventory data for applications from simple storage bins or silos to the more critical applications that involve in-process bins and hoppers.