

Better flow at Unilever Tetra Pak and ABB work together to reduce wastage and improve traceability



Unilever in Helsingborg produces margarine, soft cheese and cream, amongst other things dairy products. Margarine production is a complicated process with an oil and a water phase. In this process, vegetable oils are mixed with water, salts and citric acids. A control system is necessary for keeping track of the process.

“The system is connected to Unilever’s SAP business system where all product recipes are stored,” says Jonas Westergren from Unilever. “We program the recipe depending on the type of margarine we will be producing and everything is then handled automatically.”

Three companies were represented around the table – Unilever, Tetra Pak and ABB.

“Unilever stands for knowledge of the product, Tetra Pak knows the processes and we from ABB provides specialist knowledge for control and monitoring,” says Magnus Högstedt, responsible for the food and beverage branch at ABB. “All three of us have been collaborating for many years.”

Relacing old spare parts got expensive

Three years ago, the old control system was approaching the end of its life cycle.

“It’s worked fine, year in and year out, even if it’s now beginning to show its age,” says Jonas Ekenberg, who is a technical operator at Unilever and has worked with the system for many years. “But spare parts were getting expensive and difficult to find. The keyboards alone cost SEK 30,000 to replace, and we found the last one in Brazil. The system wasn’t just worn out but it was also small, which entailed few opportunities for changes and expansion.”

