



FILLING/CAPPING. Bottles are filled and capped at about 180 bottles/min.

Banding system increases packaging efficiencies

Sauce manufacturer boosts line speeds, cuts material costs, and economizes on plant floor space by installing three new tamper-band application units.

Judy Rice, Contributing Editor

TW Garner Food Co., Winston-Salem, NC, is famous in the southeastern U.S. for its line of Texas Pete® sauce products. Texas Pete sauces are marketed primarily east of the Mississippi River, but plans for expanded distribution are underway.

The company runs three packaging lines, producing sauces in a variety of bottle sizes and shapes. Glass bottles for Hot Sauce in 3-, 6-, and 12-oz sizes are supplied by **Vitro** (www.vitro.com). Bottles for the 12-oz Seafood Sauce and Honey Mustard condiments, 32-oz Hot Sauce, and 17.5-oz Wing Sauce are supplied by **Leone Industries** (www.leoneindustries.com). The paper

labels for these bottles are printed by **Smyth** (www.smythco.com) and are glue-applied using Mustang machines from **New Jersey Machine Inc.** (www.njmcli.com). The injection-molded caps are supplied by **Acadiana Plastics Manufacturing, Inc.** (www.acadianaplastics.com). Capping equipment is from **U.S. Bottlers Machinery Co.** (www.usbottlers.com), which also provides the filling equipment.

In 2007, Garner replaced three older tamper-band applicators on these lines with new EZ-100 applicators from **Axon LLC** (www.axoncorp.com). Garner's director of

Continued on page 38



LABELING. Paper labels are automatically glue-applied.

Continued from page 36

operations Stan Carroll says, "We selected Axon because their tamper-band application and setup design is superior to other equipment we evaluated. And they are a North Carolina company to boot."

New banding benefits

Garner uses tamper-bands made of 2-mil, reverse-printed heat-shrink polyvinyl chloride film, supplied by Seal-It, Inc., a division

of **Printpack, Inc.** (www.printpack.com). Carroll notes, "With this new system, we have been able to reduce the thickness and cost of our banding material by approximately 25 percent and also reduce packaging line downtime. Less thickness in the structure is not only good for us cost-wise, but also better for the environment. That's a value-added savings for us. In addition, these new machines have smaller footprints and fewer moving parts, are easier to change over, and allow for faster line speeds."

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T-E BANDING. Tamper-evidencing bands are applied and heat-shrunk to the sauce bottles.

Garner now is packaging about 180 bottles/min on each line. Average banding speeds have increased about 5% to 12%, depending on bottle size and shape being banded.

Floor space savings is estimated to be about six linear feet per line. This is significant because floor space at the plant is limited, and the decreased machine footprints make it easier for plant personnel to physically monitor and operate the lines. With these new banding machines, operators also can more quickly replace film reels, reducing line downtime and material waste.

"The replacement process was easy," remarks Carroll. "Axon technicians installed and set up the equipment and trained our operators. And they visit quarterly to help us with any questions." 