

Providing unparalleled yield in high speed inline organ harvesting

Shenandoah Valley Organic (SVO), located in Virginia, United States, started their success story with a renovated facility featuring used equipment. Their plan was to increase automation, yield, and speed and to anticipate the high market value of organic giblets. The 100% organic plant teamed up with poultry processing partner Meyn.

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Meyn offered SVO the opportunity to take part in the pilot of their latest solution in high-speed inline organ harvesting: the Maestro Plus. This appeared to be a golden opportunity with unprecedented results.

Founded in 2013, SVO kicked off their plant in a renovated facility with used equipment at a speed of 70 birds per minute on a single-line system. The family-owned chicken company provides 100% organic chicken products.

Farmer focus business model

Founder and CEO, Corwin Heatwole, wanted to break away from traditional contracts between integrators and farmers and followed through with his vision of the farmer focus business model. Not only does this unique type of relationship allow farmers to have a vested partnership by owning their chickens



but it also requires less working capital for SVO. Currently, the company has partnered with 44 farmers and a waiting list of growers who have migrated over from other competitors with conditional contracts.

The growing numbers of associated farmers and the vision of Corwin initiated the plan to increase production capacity by upgrading their current facility.

SVO teamed up with Meyn to initiate a modernisation project which involved the test run with the then-still-to-be-launched Maestro Plus; a very promising successor of the earlier established Maestro.

"Already in the test phase, the Maestro Plus solution saved us a significant amount of labour and increased our capacity on a single shift. The eviscerator helped us grow while utilising the labour market that we had," Bob Bahr, VP of Operations, Shenandoah Valley Organic, explained.

Whilst rebuilding the plant, an increase in efficiency was a top priority. SVO did not lose sight of their vision to develop sustainable business relationships with the farming community as well as providing high quality products to their customers.

Meyn's latest technology combined with superior customer experience made Meyn the perfect partner in processing equipment for SVO.

"With Meyn, we are able to have uniformity and one single-source

supplier who facilitates us in bringing the best possible product to the market. We feel like it fits with our work size, short-term and long-term goals, and is a good fit with what we're trying to accomplish," Bob explains.

At the end of the test phase, the new evisceration system had upgraded the plant from a semi-automatic giblet harvesting to fully automated with a >90% giblet harvesting result and an astonishing >99% evisceration result at a speed of 105 birds per minute.

Other facilities around the world joined the trial of the Maestro Plus. After reaching consistent success rates with the Maestro Plus, Meyn launched the Maestro Plus in Latin and North America at the IPPE 2020.

"We are now very excited to let

the Maestro Plus achieve SVO's success rates in high speed inline organ harvesting with poultry processors globally," added Pete van Poorten, product manager at Meyn.

The story behind the Meyn Maestro Plus

This latest evisceration solution from Meyn is designed and built for an unprecedented yield in high speed inline organ harvesting. Minimum waste, maximum profit.

The Maestro Plus transfers the viscera pack to an organ shackle, followed by veterinarian inspection. The viscera pack then goes through the intestine and gall remover (IGR). Here the intestines and gall bladder are removed.

Next, the liver harvester (LH) scrapes the liver from the gizzard to be cleaned in a liver drum washer and presented on a liver inspection belt. The remaining heart with lungs and gizzard are separated into two streams by the heart and gizzard separator (HGS):

- The first stream goes to the heart and lung separator.
- The second stream presents the gizzards for further processing, either manually or automatically.

The record high yield of the Maestro eviscerator technology combined with new organ harvesting modules has resulted in a solution with unprecedented yield in the market. ■

