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tna SETS NEW BENCHMARK WITH NIMPL FROZEN MUSSEL PROCESSING SYSTEM

Packaging and processing specialist **tna** has installed a unique integrated system at North Island Mussel Processors Limited (NIMPL) in Tauranga, New Zealand, which can withstand the challenging frozen mussel processing environment. This latest customised distribution solution combines an open, gateless stainless steel design with caustic wash down capabilities to minimise food safety risks.

The new, state of the art NIMPL facility, opened by Prime Minister John Key in June 2010, processes up to 1.6 million individually quick frozen (IQF) half-shell mussels per day. **tna's** installation at the factory comprises an innovative combination of distribution, accumulation and weighing systems.

A key feature of the system is the five **tna** roflo^{®HMW} 3 electromagnetically-driven horizontal motion conveyors. These have been specially constructed to handle aggressive pressure cleaning with caustic solutions without the need to remove any guarding or machine parts. Importantly, the **tna** roflo^{®HMW} 3 is gateless so the risk of contamination is minimised. This hygienic design is particularly important in shellfish applications where microbial pathogens, particularly *Listeria*, are a serious threat.

The rapid, yet gentle linear motion of the **tna** roflo^{®HMW} 3 transports the IQF mussels with no vibration, reducing damage to the shells which can be brittle depending on the season. Steve Wells, general manager at North Island Mussel Processors, comments: "Our mussels are high quality, added value products popular in restaurants across the world. As they are served in the half-shell, presentation is very important – broken shells are not acceptable.

"The **tna** system gently handles this delicate product and has already resulted in a 20 per cent reduction in shell breakages. Importantly, it also meets our stringent cleaning requirements while also maximising productivity and operational efficiency as it significantly reduces downtime for cleaning by up to 60 per cent and cleaning time by 40 per cent compared to conventional conveyors. And with full automated control and

few moving parts, we can see that the ongoing maintenance requirements will be considerably less than mechanical handling systems.”

Paul Daniel, general manager, **tna** New Zealand, adds: “We’re very pleased with the results of our work with NIMPL. This full wash down system is the first of its kind on the market – and it will now become the norm in wet environment applications with stringent and harsh cleaning requirements. The simple, yet flexible open design means there are no hollow sections or bug traps which is a critical concern for the seafood industry.”

ENDS

Editor’s note:

tna is a leading global supplier of integrated food packaging and processing solutions with over 5,000 systems installed across more than 120 countries. The company provides a comprehensive range of products from the industry benchmark **tna** robag[®] vertical form, fill and seal (VFFS) baggers and **tna** roflo[®] product transfer and distribution equipment to seasoning systems, multi-head scales, checkweighers, date coders, metal detectors, case packers, palletisers, fully automated multi-packing and complete processing equipment. **tna**’s unique combination of innovative technologies, extensive project management experience and 24/7 global support ensures customers achieve faster, more reliable and flexible packaged food products at the lowest cost of ownership.

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