

**SYSTECH HELPS WHITWORTHS
MAINTAIN THE QUALITY OF A
MILLION PACKS OF DRIED
FRUIT EVERY WEEK**

In the UK, Whitworths produces around a million packs of dried fruit and fruit snacks each week using modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) to ensure long product shelf life. Sample packs are tested every hour using a Systech Mapcheck analyser to confirm that the package is reliably sealed and the inert atmosphere is within specification.



Although best known for its range of dried fruit, Whitworths was originally a flour milling business founded by three brothers in 1886. It was not until the 1950's that the operation was expanded to include cereals, rice, speciality sugars and the famous dried fruits. The key to Whitworths' success was the development of a washing and drying process for dried fruit using equipment converted from the flour mill. Now the largest processor and packer of dried fruit in the UK, the Whitworth brand is a familiar sight on retailer's shelves and many "own label" products will have been supplied by Whitworths.

Since the 1950's, Whitworths has maintained its market leading position by making full use of the latest processing and packaging technology. Today, the shelf life of most products, both Whitworths and own label, is maximised by Modified Atmosphere Packaging (MAP) using inert nitrogen to replace most of the oxygen, one of the causes of product deterioration. Typically, dried fruit is packed in an atmosphere containing less than 10% oxygen, instant mashed potatoes less than 7% and nuts less than 5%. With production running at an average of almost one million packs each week, ensuring that the packs are reliably sealed and that the atmosphere is within specification is a major operation. Whitworths' quality control laboratory uses a Systech Mapcheck oxygen headspace gas analyser to monitor packs taken from the production line every hour and at each product change-over.

According to Quality Controller, Karen Ward, the Systech Mapcheck is the ideal instrument for the job as the test is simply a matter of inserting the probe into the pack and pressing a button. The result is then shown on the LED display as percentage of oxygen in less than five seconds. Calibration and programming are both very simple and the self-diagnostics and inbuilt sample pump and flowmeter virtually eliminate sampling errors.

As a member of the Campden Laboratories Accreditation Scheme (CLAS), Whitworths needs to maintain its quality assurance to the highest standards. Easy to use, fast and reliable, the Systech Mapcheck oxygen headspace analyser ensures that its modified atmosphere packaging is always within specification.

Systech Instruments Ltd
17 Thame Park Business Centre,
Thame
OXON
UK
OX9 3XA

www.systech.co.uk
email advice@systech.co.uk
Fax +44 1844 217 220
Tel +44 1844 216 838