

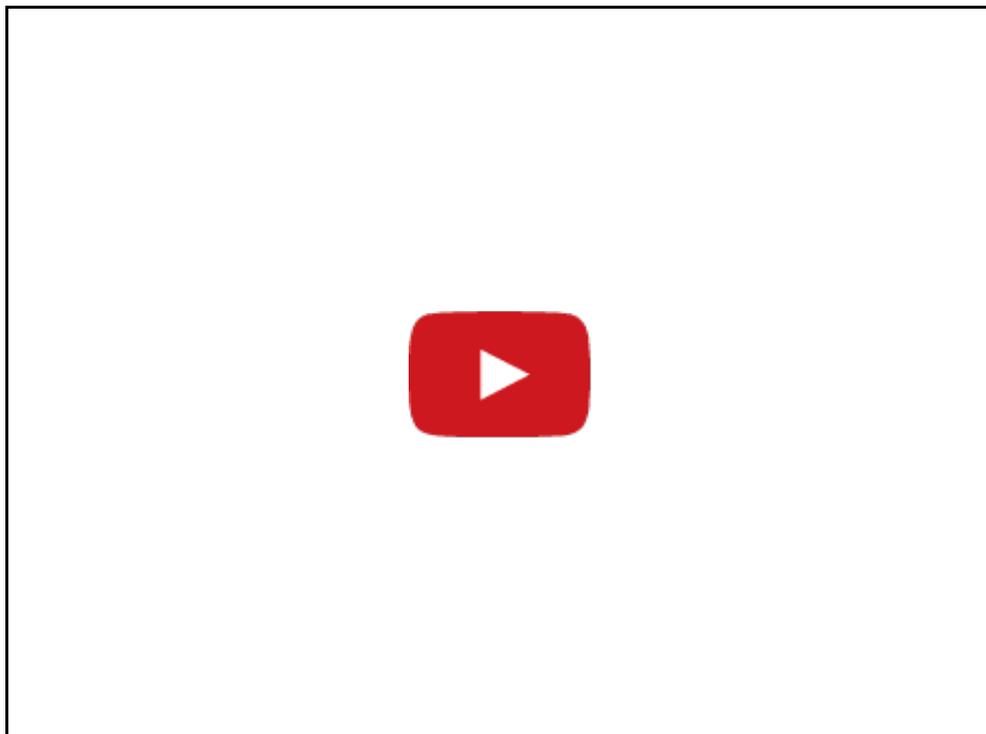
Perforated packaging, extends shelf life of fruit and veg

Extending the shelf life of fruits and vegetables by poking tiny holes in the packaging with lasers. It almost sounds magical, but it's what PerfoTec is now doing to Marks&Spencers' entire fruit and vegetable department. Ivo Hendriks explains how the Respiration Control System combats decay in the fruit and vegetable sector.



Food waste

Combating food waste is not only a trend, but also a financial opportunity for a lot of companies. PerfoTec has developed a way to extend the shelf life of products by adapting the perforation of consumer/bulk packaging according to the products breathing requirements. "Fruit and vegetables products (processed or not) all breath differently, even after harvest," clarifies Ivo Hendriks. "Too much oxygen can cause rotting, but not enough can cause suffocation. In both cases the shelf life is reduced." This is prevented with the PerfoTec Respiration Control System. A respiration metre measures how much oxygen a fruit turns over. Based on these figures, the packaging requirements are foreseen and the optimal amount of micro perforations are applied with a laser. This extends the freshness of a product by multiple days.



PerfoTec "The system"

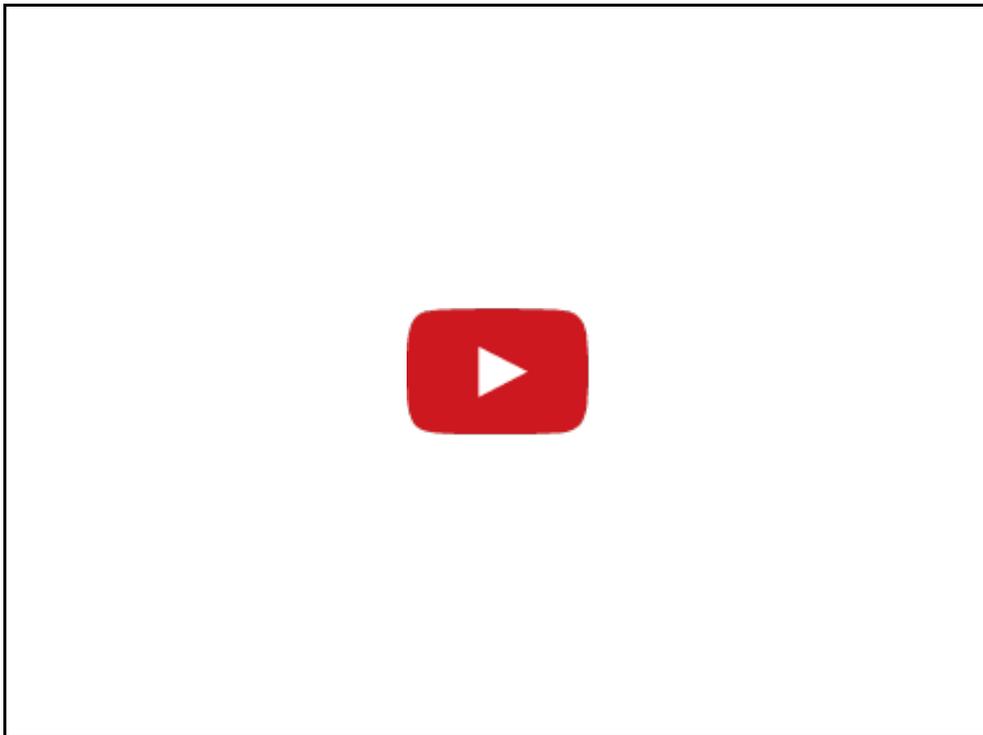
Possibilities of longer shelf life

The products' longer shelf life offers opportunities to the fruit and vegetable sector. The action radius of suppliers is extended, for instance. "Due to the longer shelf life you can transport the product further, or choose a cheaper form of transport." It is also possible to keep a bigger supply.

Storage and weight loss

Due to PerfoTec's technique the chain can also be better controlled. "You are reducing food waste, you are raising your reliability. All the ways to define yourself in the market as a supplier. But you are also simply increasing your profit because you don't have to throw out as much product," says Hendriks. "It's much easier to play into the market." There is also hardly any weight loss with a PerfoTec packaging. "With our new bulk packaging you only have to send 5.1 kg, instead of 5.5 kg, to get 5 kg to your customers. That's the quickest profit."

Perforation has no influence on the speed of packaging. However, it is a good idea to put a sample in the respiration metre regularly, every day. "The breathing of your product differs by season, but also by variety and cultivation location. This means you sometimes have to adapt the perforation. And with the information from the respiration metre, you get to know your product better."



PerfoTec at Emmet / Spinach and cauliflower supplier

Global users

PerfoTec's system has now been around for almost ten years and more and more companies are choosing it. The cutters Hessing and Vezet are starting it, Smits Uien already has it. The British market also knows the company. Manor Fresh and Drysdales, among others, have found the company. At the end of January a laser system will be put on the packaging line at Sunberry International. In South Africa suppliers of soft and stonefruit are interested and in Morocco they are working with perforated bean packaging. "From potatoes to raspberries," confirms Hendriks. "This is another challenge. Potatoes go green, sprouts go brown. But celeriac is a completely different story."

This year another new challenge for the company has started. Together with soft fruit growers, PerfoTec was already supplying soft fruit packaging for Marks&Spencers. As of this year the retailer has sent the entire fresh department to company. "In strawberries and raspberries the decay dropped by 50%. Thanks to the improved quality the sales increased. This is why it's a logical step that they want to review the rest of their fresh assortment."

Maintaining quality and pushing back decay has priority in retail now more than ever. Saving costs and raising sales is of huge importance now that the margins are tight. And, besides this, it is a way to define yourself with the best fresh assortment.

Visit Perfotec at the Fruit Logistica: Hall 4.1 Stand C-16

For more information:

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