

Laser Sorter Delivers For Mariani Packing

For four generations, Mariani Packing Company has grown, dried, processed and packaged the finest dried fruit from around the world. Since quality is key to Mariani, they constantly search for innovative technology to help assure that their customers receive only premium product. Mariani was the first to install Key Technology's [Optyx® 6000 Series Sorter with Raptor Laser Technology](#).

"We get the most consistent product quality because Optyx with Raptor marries two superior processes – color cameras and laser technology – in one sorter," explained Mark Krause, Plant Operations Manager at Mariani's Marysville, California facility. "The laser is ideal for removing foreign material like sticks, rocks and leaves. The cameras are ideal for removing defects like growth cracks, skin blemishes and mold based on the object's size, shape and color."

Optyx 6000 with Raptor, a wide-belt laser sorter that maintains the high resolution of narrow-belt laser sorters, was installed at Mariani in August 2006. The sorter inspects dried plums, handling up to 20,000 pounds of product per hour.



To remove foreign material and defects, Mariani relies on Optyx with Raptor.

"We measure the success of Raptor on the foreign material removed. With our old monochromatic sorter, we removed 60 to 70% of the foreign material before 15 hand sorters removed the rest. With Raptor, we're achieving 90% foreign material removal and that's enabled us to reduce our hand sorters to four," reported Krause.

Optyx 6000 with Raptor features a 48-inch wide scan area and state-of-the-art electronics that deliver the ultra-high resolution. Raptor's all-digital architecture delivers data that drives the most advanced algorithms for complex sort decisions. With the highest spatial resolution laser scanner in food sorting, Raptor detects the smallest defects and foreign material.

"Before we selected Raptor, we looked at other technology," noted Krause. "We chose Raptor because the marriage of the laser with the cameras was superior to anything else we saw. Key's customer service was also a main selling point. We've worked with the same person at Key for 12 years. They understand the

issues of sorting prunes. There was a faster learning curve for Key than other suppliers. Also, Raptor was easier to use than other sorters we considered."



Mark Krause, Plant Operations Manager at Mariani's Marysville, California USA facility, is focused on producing the highest product quality.

Depending on the needs of the application, Optyx can be equipped with multiple cameras and sensors, including color, Vis/IR (visible infrared) and monochromatic cameras as well as Raptor Laser Technology and Key's newest [FluoRaptor™](#) fluorescence-sensing laser technology. The sorter can be configured for either single-side or two-side scanning. For Mariani's challenging product, one top-mounted color camera and one bottom-mounted color camera detect defects, while the top-mounted Raptor laser detects foreign material.

"Quality is the number one reason we selected Raptor. Foreign material removal is extremely important to food safety. The Mariani family name is on the product so we want the customer to open the package and be delighted. When you're focused on producing the highest quality product, you need to have the highest quality technology," Krause concluded.



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