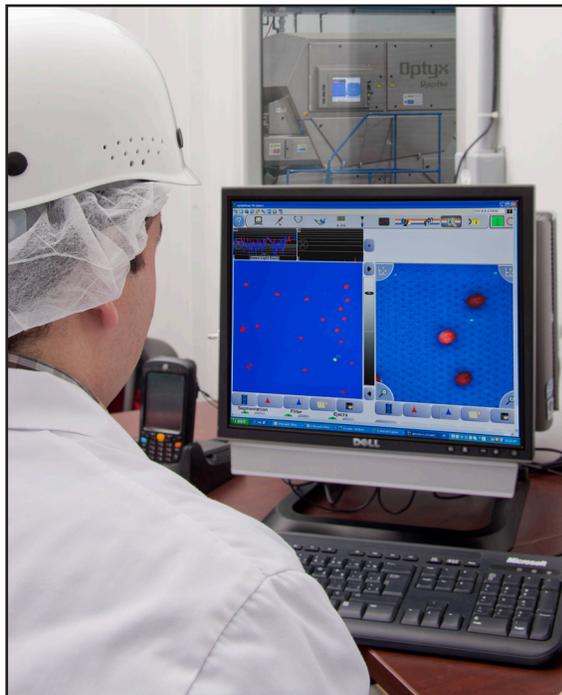




L&S Cranberry Packs Quality Fresh Fruit

L&S Cranberry farms and packs an average of 8 million pounds of fresh cranberries every year, primarily for Ocean Spray Cranberries. With such a large marquee customer, L&S Cranberry takes great care to provide the highest quality product that is safe and free of foreign material to protect consumers as well as Ocean Spray's brand. In 2008, L&S Cranberry installed Key Technology's Optyx® 6000 series sorter to inspect the fruit and automatically remove foreign material and defects. In 2011, they added RemoteMD®, a real-time condition analysis tool for the sorter that helps maximize product quality and productivity.

"Before 2008, we shipped fresh cranberries in bulk from our farm in Quebec to an Ocean Spray packing plant in Massachusetts, which had Optyx sorters on the line. When we grew big enough to justify having our own packing facility, the success of Optyx at Ocean Spray influenced our decision to install the same sorter here," said Kevin Connolly, Product and Development Manager. "As we grew, we went from packing one shift per day to two shifts per day, six days per week during the season. We added RemoteMD to allow the sorter to be monitored and accessed from anywhere. It's absolutely awesome."



RemoteMD takes the concept of remote monitoring and diagnostics, which has historically been reactive in nature, and made it proactive. With this capability enabled, Key Technology's RemoteMD technology continuously monitors L&S Cranberry's Optyx sorter through a secure portal, looking for conditions that may require corrective action. The system automatically alerts the customer and Key technicians of a condition change and, if circumstances warrant, Key can remotely log in and fix it.

"It gives us peace of mind, knowing that Key is monitoring our sorter and can see problems and provide support. It also gives me freedom because it allows me to connect and see what's going on from my office and from home, which is especially valuable during the night shift," noted Connolly. "We've used RemoteMD every day since it was installed and every day, it's worked perfectly. It helps us maximize our product quality and our productivity."

L&S Cranberry packs 10,000 to 12,000 pounds of fresh cranberries per hour during their season from September to December. Every cranberry is sorted by Optyx using a combination of color cameras and laser technology. The color cameras inspect each object's size, shape and color, and the lasers detect differences in the objects' structural properties, enabling Optyx to identify foreign material, defects and soft berries called "poppers."



"Since cranberries are harvested in water, much like wet lands, we find all kinds of water creatures. Optyx removes frogs and lizards as well as branches and rocks. Obviously, it's important to remove all of this foreign material," explained Connolly. "It's also important to remove 'poppers' because they spoil rapidly and affect other berries in the bag."

"It's hard to find people to work only a portion of the year. We usually have to start every year with new people. Optyx reduces our reliance on labor and RemoteMD gives us the flexibility to not have to have the most fully trained person there at all times," said Connolly.

Through Key's PROliance™ protection plan that covers Optyx, L&S Cranberry has access to Key's online training program in addition to RemoteMD. "Last year, we took on the responsibility to train more people, including our maintenance staff," noted Connolly. This online training program offers an interactive, self-paced multimedia curriculum designed to improve the effectiveness and consistency of training. With modules that cover hardware, software and user interface topics, it helps L&S Cranberry operate their sorter at peak performance, which optimizes product quality and maximizes equipment uptime while reducing training costs.

"Key's online training program frees me up from having to train everybody myself. When employees are better trained, they lean on me less to step in and get involved in the operation," explained Connolly. "Having more people that know the sorter is a good thing. And we don't need to pay thousands of dollars to bring in technicians to do the training. This is especially valuable given our high turnover."

"We work hard to produce and pack the highest quality fresh cranberries. Given our short season, it's very important that we hit 100 percent accuracy from the moment we start up in September. Online training helps us to be prepared and RemoteMD is like having an insurance policy," concluded Connolly. "Optyx helps us achieve our high quality standards."

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