somat® quarterly

May 2011

UCONN:

Four years ago, University of Connecticut Dining Services Director Dennis Pierce was strolling the National Restaurant Show in Chicago when he spotted the Somat food waste dehydrators on display. Though he did not purchase it that day, Pierce was intrigued with the equipment. The University bought the machine the next year and has not looked back.

Pictured above is the SP75 pulper

The University, located in Storrs, has 12,000 people on campus. 12,000 people make a lot of waste. The Somat DH100 was purchased for the largest dining hall, South, to help combat that waste and cut costs. The by-product of the machine is a baked, gritty, earthy substance that Pierce said his colleagues can hardly believe was ever smelly food waste. He often brings a plastic bag of the by-product to meetings to show and, at first, many raise their eyebrows at the mystery substance. They are surprised to learn that the end product does not smell nor does it have a mushy, crumbly texture. In the past, the University worked with large farmers in the area to recycle and compost its food waste; yet the process was messy and inconvenient. Food scraps sat in plastic drums awaiting transport to the farms and caused a foul odor during summer months. Then, Connecticut issued a statement explaining that raw food could not be fed to pigs. Suddenly, many facilities were out of a place to deposit food scraps.

Fast-forward to 2011, gone are the days of the problematic compost process. Now, maintenance crews on campus mix the Somat DH100 by-product into the soil and use it for landscaping purposes. In fact, the by-product can't be made fast enough to fulfill the needs of the University landscapers. Luckily, the University hopes to buy another Somat DH100 machine in the next few months. The goal is for all eight dining halls to be outfitted with the product.

Pictured below is the HE-6 extractor

ANoteFromLin:

Hello, Everyone –
Innovation plays a key role in the stories in this month's newsletter, from the University of Connecticut's unique use of the Somat DH100 by-product to the new HE-6-GT application at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital. The Somat team is continuously taking steps to find new, creative ways to solve our clients' problems. This sense of innovation has not bypassed our Lancaster, Pennsylvania office either. Keep an eye out for some new updates on our Web site in the coming months.

Speaking of the Web site, the final touches are being made. The site should launch by mid-year. Also, revised, updated service manuals will be available for download on our Web site by mid-year as well. The manuals will be much more "user-friendly."

This time of the year is also known for the onset of spring cleaning. I have a few tips for the cleaning and upkeep of your Somat machines. First, make sure to keep dehydrator main drive bearings lubricated on at least a bi-monthly schedule. This is very important since the high heat levels inside the unit dry out the lubricant and seals. Also, running ice through a close-coupled pupler is a great way to clean out the plug area of the extractor prior to an extended shutdown.

Finally, if you plan on composting your pulped food waste, be mindful to use chemicals that are "compost friendly." We have new product on the market called Biotech 100 that takes the place of a quaternary disinfectant and is compost friendly. Contact the Parts Department for more information on the product.

Lin Sensenig
General Manager

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Le**Bonheur**Children's**Hospital:**

Le Bonheur Children's Hospital located in Memphis, Tennessee is the test site for Somat's new product, the HE-6-GT. The purpose of the HE-6-GT is to reduce the amount of settle-able solids in the pulper system overflow and, in turn, reduce the frequency and cost of the "routine maintenance" of the grease trap.

Currently, the issue at hand is the impact of pulper wastewater on the grease trap of a large food service facility. The grease trap is a large underground vessel, typically located outside the building that ranges in size from a couple thousand-gallon capacities to tens of thousand-gallon capacity. These vessels receive wastewater from the kitchen, including what is discharged from a Somat pulper.

The phrase "grease trap" is a bit of a misnomer because it does much more than just trap grease. These large vessels allow the velocity of the water to slow down and allow grease particles to float to the top for later collection. Additionally, the low fluid velocities also allow solids to settle to the bottom. As a matter of routine maintenance, these vessels need to be pumped out on a regular basis because of the accumulation of settled solids and floating grease. This "routine maintenance" can get very expensive, upwards of a few thousand dollars per month.

The HE-6-GT works as follows: The model receives the wastewater from the extractor. Then, the solids are collected by the HE-6-GT, which would have otherwise been discharged to the hospital's grease trap.
The true impact of this solids removal is still to be seen, since Le Bonheur is a brand new hospital. However, the simple truth is that after five months of operation at this new facility, maintenance of their grease trap has yet to be required.

Pictured below is the extractor on the right and the HE-6-GT machine

Employeespotlight**:**

Rich Zimmerman
Food Service Sales Coordinator

This month's employee spotlight features **Rich Zimmerman**. He has been with Somat for five years and is in the process of transitioning into a new and exciting role with the company. Currently, he is the Food Service Sales Coordinator, but as of June, he will be moving into the Business Manager of Food Service Segments position.
Zimmerman supervises the progression that occurs when a quote becomes a sale, the push through process, from the date the order is processed to the time of shipment and delivery. He is eager to get into a new role where he can focus more on the long term instead of day-to-day processing.

"I had a desire to take this position, so I could move into a more long-term planning role," Zimmerman said. "Plus, this is interesting to me because I get to learn the food service end of things, since I come from a dewatering background."

When he isn't working, Zimmerman enjoys the outdoors and riding motorcycle.

LehighUniversity**:**

In the summer of 2009, Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania installed the Somat DH100 machine at their Rathbone Dining Hall. Since then, the University has been able to reduce the waste going to landfills by almost half. The composted materials from the machine, though not able to be used immediately for landscaping due to a high nitrogen base from accelerated decomposing, has benefited the University grounds crew. The composted material helps accelerate the decomposition process of the landscaping and foliage debris from the entire campus. "The greatest part of this process is seeing things come full circle," said Lehigh University Executive Chef Joseph Kornafel. "The food waste goes from the dining room to the Somat DH100 and then after six months composting, back to nature."

The installation of the food waste dehydrator on campus has caused both students and staff to really examine where their waste is going. On a personal note, Kornafel says the learning experience of having the Somat DH100 motivated him to purchase a composting system for his home. He now returns over 80 percent of his food waste back to nature.