

Media Release
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FASTEST IN THE WEST NOW ALSO BIGGEST

Fruit and vegetable sorting technology from Compac Sorting Equipment is being called the best grading equipment in the world. The smart technology is also about to set another record, with the installation later this year of what is believed to be the world's longest sizer and color sorting machine, at Broetje Orchards.

The 87 long metre monster, with 12 lanes and 58 sorting destinations, double the average size of conventional units, is the result of an effective partnership between designers and manufacturers, Compac, and the distributor, Van Doren Sales, fruit handling equipment maestros.

Bret Pittsinger, Van Doren President, says while the company focuses on fruit handling, particularly apples and cherries, they also have a presence in the pear and onion industry.

"We outsource some of the high-tech solutions that would be cost prohibitive for us to develop internally, and that's where our alliance with Compac is paying big dividends for customers."

The Broetje deal has put a further seal of approval on the Compac hardware and software that is on the expansion trail in packhouses across Washington State.

Initially Broetje installed a Compac' brain transplant' (with new electronics and camera technology). "Our brain transplants are a good opportunity for customers to upgrade equipment by replacing outmoded operating systems using Compac's electronics and software, getting quantifiable improvements in grading accuracy and flexibility for a fraction of the cost of a complete new sizer," he says.

"The weight and color grading system can be used in conjunction with most other brands of sorting and sizing machines, so retrofitting Compac "intelligence" onto competitor sizers gives pack houses immediate access to Compac's more advanced systems."

According to David Buys, Compac Sorting Equipment Business Development Manager, Broetje were so delighted with the outcome that the mega-deal was a logical next step.

Van Doren and Compac began their booming relationship over three years ago, starting with the retrofit market. Significant sites include 20 lanes for Larson Fruit, 16 lane units at Broetje and Washington Fruit, and a number of 8 lane installations including Brown & Son, C&M, Matson, McDougal, Douglas and Sundroy. Both Underwood and Diamond are due for retrofits this year, of 16 and 12 lanes respectively. The business has since expanded to include new sizers, including an 8-lane machine for Larson Fruit and with several more installations underway this year.

Bret Pittsinger says the outcome has been a superior product for the customer, and that Compac has done a good job of listening to the needs of the Pacific Northwest.

"With any new products there will be bumps along the way and the task is always to ensure a stable, bug-free operating system in all products. We are both working to minimize these

and are determined to test all new products extensively and make sure that any installations are running exceptionally before going on to further refinements.”

According to Pittsinger, the Compac product provides a competitive solution when considering speed per lane. ”They have the fastest system in the world, but it has to be slowed down for the Northwest Varieties to offer a superior solution,” he says.

Compac Sorting Equipment Ltd was established in 1984 to supply fruit grading equipment to the domestic (New Zealand) kiwifruit industry. Since then, it has grown to become an internationally recognized supplier of leading-edge technology to the fresh produce industry.

The core of Compac Sorting Equipment’s product range is the Compac weight sizer and InVision color and blemish sorter, designed for the post-harvest horticulture industry. Ranging in size from a Single Lane Sizer to 16+ lanes wide, a Compac sizer operates at up to 900 carriers per minute (per lane). This system combines precision weight/optical sizing and color sorting with speed and gentle handling for a wide range of fresh produce including apples, kiwifruit, stone fruit, citrus, tomatoes, onions, white and red potatoes.

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More information:

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About Compac Sorting Equipment:

Manufacturers of high speed, accurate sorting systems for fruit and vegetables, Compac is a world leader in fruit sorting technology, through on-going commitment to research and development.

Visit Compac at www.compacsort.com