



## Kalustyan – Quality Systems based on Global Food Safety Initiatives



### **Kalustyan Corporation (USA)**

#### **Product:**

RAYCON

RAPID 4000

RAPID 5000

Customers and federal regulators expect more and more from suppliers in today's increasingly competitive and federally-monitored marketplace. New tools and technologies offer effective ways to meet those needs with easy implementation, reasonable costs, and immediate benefits. In this case study, sweets and spices purveyor Kalustyan, a long-time customer, reports on its experience with Sesotec Inc., including how Sesotec's array of product solutions is fueling growth.

#### **Meeting new market demand**

Federal regulations of the food industry have ramped up significantly in the past several years. In 2011, the Obama administration signed the Food



RAPID 4000

Safety Management Act (FSMA) into law. It's part of a sweeping new focus on prevention of food contamination following years of playing catch-up after a problem is detected.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is charged with enforcing FSMA. FDA's recent warning letters and other communications demonstrated that the agency is taking this responsibility seriously.

In May 2014, the FDA announced it was engaging in the rule-making and guidance development process required to establish the new prevention-oriented standards. FDA's FSMA implementation teams have developed

many ideas as to how the agency can better oversee the food industry, strengthen the global food safety system, and enhance protection of public health. Planning has also begun for the next phase of FSMA implementation, which involves advancing the new public health prevention standards and implementing the strategic and risk-based industry oversight framework that is at the heart of FSMA.



RAPID 5000

### **A closer look: New HACCP demands**

If a new FSMA wasn't enough to contend with, the industry has also had to grapple with revised, and tougher, hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP) requirements. When inspectors visit your food processing facility, they expect to find demonstrable, strong evidence that you can conduct a hazard analysis, identify critical control points (CCP), establish critical limits for each CCP, establish CCP monitoring requirements, and establish corrective actions. Regulated companies also must have procedures in

place for ensuring its HACCP system is working as intended and up to federal standards.

FDA warning letters have tended to focus on corrective and preventive actions (CAPA). The final rule requires a plant's HACCP strategy to identify the corrective action plan it will implement if a critical metric is not met. Corrective actions are intended to ensure that no product launched in the marketplace is injurious to health or otherwise adulterated as a result of any deviation.



### **A closer look: FDA's new FSMA mandate**

FSMA aims to ensure the integrity of the U.S. food supply by shifting to a preventive strategy rather than a reactive one.

FSMA gives FDA a new and very wide public health mandate that puts more pressure on industry. It directs FDA to establish and enforce standards for adoption of modern food safety prevention practices by those who grow, process, transport, and store food. It also gives FDA new mandates, authorities and oversight tools aimed at providing solid assurances that those practices are being carried out by the food industry on a consistent, ongoing basis.

For Kalustyan, a spice and herbs processing company located in New Jersey, the new and revised federal



regulations posed significant new compliance challenges. In addition, its largest customers were demanding assurance that Kalustyan’s products were up to the mark. “Our quality system is based on Global Food Safety Initiatives (GFSI) and is the backbone of our organization,” said Abdul Basit Gaba, director, quality/ food safety. “We have a systematic assessment of each step of our production processes through our HACCP plan and a proactive and preventative control of all raw materials, processing activities, and our processing environment.” To meet its customers’ growing needs, Kalustyan knew it needed to find new solutions.

“Our customers appreciated the fact that we were tackling the new regulatory requirements head on,” said Fernando Porras, Kalustyan’s VP of operations.



But Kalustyan also knew it needed more than a technically superior solution. It had to demand a solution that was easy to understand and operate, known

for reliability, and offered at a reasonable price. “We believe that our success depends on the supply of safe quality products that meet or exceed our customers’ expectations,” said CEO Errol Karakash.

### **A closer look: Kalustyan**

Kalustyan has been in the business of sourcing spices and herbs globally since its founding in 1977. It has a long history of sourcing from places including Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bulgaria, China, Egypt, England, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Holland, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Spain, South Africa, South America, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Vietnam, West Indies, Yugoslavia and many others. The products are characteristically more challenging when it comes to procuring and producing adulteration-free products while also meeting Good Manufacturing Processes (GMP).

Achieving a BRC rating of “A” for the last three years, along with Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (CTPAT) certification, Kalustyan has also deployed a long-standing, positive control-based, quality assurance approach to prevent adulteration and provide safe product to many of the leading manufacturers in the



world. "Over time, we have refined our programs to further guarantee the quality and safety of our products," Abdul added.

Kalustyan has manufacturing operations in three countries so far, and the company takes its commitments to quality work in each location very seriously, Abdul stressed.

### **The search for a solution**

For Kalustyan, the search was relatively easy. After trying out a number of competing solutions, it made a lot of sense to stick with Sesotec Inc. "From a cost perspective, they were about in the middle of the pack, but from a dependability and performance perspective, Sesotec Inc. was at the head of the class," Abdul reported. "Sesotec Inc. delivered the most effective and efficient method to assure the absence of economic adulterants and contaminants in the product." Another critical factor: Kalustyan is already operating more than a dozen Sesotec Inc. metal detectors and x-ray products. "Because some of our products are packaged in foil, we need more than a basic metal detector. We require the extra comfort of x-ray inspection," Abdul added. "Sesotec



Inc. meets or exceeds our requirements every day."

## **A closer look: The Sesotec Solution**

Kalustyan leverages three Sesotec Inc. solutions: RAYCON X-ray Inspection System, and two designs of gravity free-fall metal detectors, the RAPID 4000 and the RAPID 5000.

The RAYCON X-ray Inspection System is very easy to operate and is notable for several unique performance capabilities. These include a full product inspection window without blind corners that assures 100 percent product inspection regardless of product height or placement on the belt, precision-matched x-ray source/detector, combined with Sesotec's unique methodologies for x-ray analysis to provide the highest level of detection of dense foreign materials such as metal, stones, bone, HD plastics and glass. A real-time operating system performs at up to 600ppm with simultaneous inspection of up to four lanes running in different products in parallel.

The RAPID 4000 is used for the inspection of spice and grain materials to detect and reject magnetic and nonmagnetic metal contamination, even when enclosed in the product. It also ensures product quality, prevents customer complaints, and provides a quick return on investment when used to protect against expensive processing machinery failures thus maximizing production uptime efficiency.



The RAPID 5000 operates as an effective metal detector for the inspection of powdery and fine-grained bulk materials. It detects and rejects magnetic and nonmagnetic metal contaminants, with a unique elliptical stainless steel reject flap diverter. The leading hygienic design does not have any corners or niches that can be harborage areas for pathogen growth, making it suitable in applications where high sanitary standards are required.

Finally, all Sesotec Inc. solutions are BRC, IFS and HACCP compliant.

## **Easy implementation**

It was a smooth process, eased by Sesotec Inc.'s simple operation and easy to understand communications. "We knew it would work," Abdul said. "Our track record with Sesotec Inc. made us confident of that." Kalustyan had already installed a new Sesotec X-ray detection device in 2013 and Abdul reported "we are very happy with it and look forward to growing the relationship."

## **New beginnings**

Working with Sesotec Inc., the NJ-based operation continues to import and manufacture products from all corners of the globe in order to meet the specifications of its customers. "It feels good to work with a vendor partner who understands our mission and is helping us to achieve it," Abdul adds. Kalustyan has plans to purchase more equipment from Sesotec Inc. "It's been nothing but a positive experience for us, and we'd like to build on that success," Abdul says. For a spice maker with a historic legacy, the future looks nothing but bright — with a touch of distinctive flavor.

### **Sesotec - an overview**

The Sesotec group is one of the leading manufacturers of machines and systems for contaminant detection and material sorting. Product sales primarily focus on the food, plastics, and recycling industries. Sesotec's global presence includes subsidiaries in Great Britain, Singapore, China, USA, France, Italy (2), India, Canada, Thailand, a representative office in Turkey, and more than 60 partners all over the world.

**[www.sesotec.com](http://www.sesotec.com)**