

BEST launches Helius™ 2400 free fall sorter and the Stratus gross defect sorter.

BEST keeps up with the tradition of using the Tabexpo fair to launch new equipment, introducing two revolutionary new sorting solutions for the tobacco processing industry: the Helius™ 2400, a new free fall laser sorter and the Stratus, a big leaf laser sorter.

At BEST, innovation not only means doing research to retrofit our existing equipments according to customer feedback and needs, but also creating new concepts. Maintaining its focus on quality and reliability, as well as constantly striving to develop advanced, innovative and complete solutions for every sorting challenge imaginable are now again showing great results, launching two new sorters for the tobacco industry.

Laser-based sorters detect all Non Tobacco Related Material (NTRM) from a stream of good product. As well as sorting based on product characteristics such as color, structure and size, BEST offers a laser induced fluorescence solution. This technology detects product unique biological characteristics, invisible to the human eye. Upon identification, powerful air guns accurately remove any NTRM within milliseconds.

The Helius™ 2400 is the next generation in this family of free fall sorters. BEST continues to build further on the success and advantages of the free fall system. An optimal spreading of the tobacco product guarantees a highly efficient removal of NTRM combined with low false reject levels.



The sorter is virtually maintenance free as there are no moving and limited wear parts. Its open design allows the processor to constantly observe the product during the sorting process.

The Helius™ 2400 provides an answer to the market needs for sorting tobacco at higher capacities.

The sorter can handle up to eight tons per hour (depending on product and equipment configuration). The 'black-box sorter'-concept comprises of a total integrated solution and ensures an easy fit of the sorter in any existing line. The product spreading equipment, the sorters itself, the accept/reject product conveyors, but also the dual loop reject recycling are part of the arrangement. In and out-feed are customizable to fit the given line design. In addition, the sorter comes with access platforms enabling easy and safe maintenance.



Furthermore, the equipment structures are designed such that they fit standard high cube shipping containers and can be installed as interlocking building blocks, hereby reducing the time needed for its integration.

The first installations in the field are planned. "We see a high demand in the market for this new sorter", explains Steven Van Geel, Sales Manager Tobacco at BEST. "Already a number of customers have been listed for installations throughout the world. First deliveries are scheduled for the second quarter of 2012".

The Helius™ 2400 summarized

- **Based on successful free fall principle**
- **Capacity of 8 tons/ hour**
- **Total integrated sorting solution**
- **Virtually maintenance free**
- **High sorting efficiency**
- **Low false reject (dual loop recycling)**

The Stratus is the second new breakthrough innovation BEST is launching during Tabexpo, providing an answer to the specific sorting demands of Green Leaf Threshing (GLT) operations.

The Stratus is a joint development between GCH Cardwell and BEST. These two strong partners in the GLT-industry, with years of experience and engineering knowledge, have combined their efforts. In accordance with the needs of the market, a new laser-based sorter removing NTRM from a product stream of big-leaf tobacco before threshing, was developed. The collaboration ensures high efficiency, a cost-effective and modular solution, using only proven product conveying and sorting technologies in the GLT's.

The Stratus provides a solution for the detection and removal of larger sized NTRM before being threshed into much smaller particles and contaminating the product even more. The revolutionary sorter is unique in its kind, since until now, no other installation was equipped for sorting these big-leaf type tobaccos.



On the Stratus, an optimally / singulated spread of tobacco, with acceptable, non-acceptable leaves and NTRM is obtained through the combined effect of the different elements within the infeed arrangement. When entering the customized Mini Swan Classifier, a hovering-effect is generated, lifting and accelerating the leaves into a high speed laminar air flow, presenting a mono-layer of big leaf to the scanning area. A variable number of lasers inspect the product and within milliseconds, a rejection device responds, rejecting the undesirable elements.

The Mini Swan Classifier design ensures that heavies (NTRM, but also tobacco pads) are pneumatically classified and removed before entering into the product stream. The optical sorting platform is based upon the industry-proven Helius laser sorting technology.



The Stratus can handle up to four tons of big leaf tobaccos. The concept is modular and customizable, enabling easy integration of multiple units to match the line feed-rate, replacing the typically GLT applied handpicking arrangements.

"In-house testing of this new sorter is currently ongoing. BEST has an agreement with (major) leaf suppliers and vertically integrated cigarette manufacturers for the field evaluation of this sorter on various types of tobaccos", explains Steven Van Geel, Sales Manager Tobacco at BEST. "Commercial release of this sorter is scheduled at the end of the second quarter of 2012".

The Stratus summarized

- **Gross defect sorter**
- **Mono-layer (big) leaf product flow**
- **Sorting before threshing**
- **Capacity of 4 tons/ hour**
- **Modular and scalable installation**
- **Cost-effective solution for GLTs**

About BEST Sorting

BEST (Belgian Electronic Sorting Technology) is an innovative company specialized in manufacturing sorting machinery and solutions for the food and non-food industry (i.e. NTRM sorting in tobacco, recycling,...). With headquarters in Belgium and facilities in the USA (Denver & Sacramento), the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, China and Japan, BEST is a world leader in sorting machinery, using the latest and most innovative optical (laser, camera, Fluo™, Detox™, SWIR, Smart- and Flex-sort, LED and x-ray), sensor based (Induction, NIR) and magnetic based (Eddy current) technologies to achieve the highest efficiency in the detection and removal of unwanted materials.

About GCH Cardwell

Initially founded as Cardwell UK Ltd. in 1954 in England by The Cardwell Machine Company of Richmond Virginia, itself in existence since 1829. This enhanced the engineering and manufacturing capabilities of the group and extended the market reach worldwide. Acquired by Griffin & Company, Inc. in 2001, and renamed GCH Cardwell, its capabilities were further expanded through complementary product lines. Today, the company offers a full range of processing, dust collection and odor control equipment for the food and tobacco industries. With installations in over 100 countries, GCH Cardwell provides its customers with World Class Experience in design, procurement and management of turn key projects of all sizes.

Visit the BEST booth, nr. J-20 to discover these breakthrough innovations and talk to our experts to find a suitable solution for your sorting challenge.