

# Besseling heads east with new Pallet Fresh System

The Dutch firm is looking to take advantage of increased demand for controlled atmosphere technology in eastern European markets

**N**ETHERLANDS-BASED storage technology specialist Besseling Group is working to accommodate growing demand for controlled atmosphere (CA) technology in eastern Europe and among new categories of fresh produce by working on systems to cope with the varying requirements of producers and exporters worldwide.

As well as CA and Ultra Low Oxygen (ULO) storage facilities, the company is now offering the Pallet Fresh System, which maintains

product-specific atmospheres inside plastic bags and is ideally suited to soft fruit such as berries or plums, as well as other types of fresh fruit and vegetable. According to sales manager Eric van der Zwet, the group is pushing ahead with the development of the new system as the need for storage technologies in non-traditional markets increases. "Although apples and pears represent our main market, we are seeing a shift towards exotics and soft fruit," he explains. Under the Pallet Fresh System, products are



chilled to the desired temperature before being sealed in an airtight plastic bag, in which the temperature is kept constant. "As a result, the storage time is extended without loss of moisture or quality," explains Mr Van der Zwet. "When the pallet of fruit or vegetables needs to be shipped, the exporter can choose to send it without the bag or with, that is under modified atmosphere conditions, which again will extend the product's shelf-life."

In order to improve sales of this and other systems in emerging eastern Europe markets, Besseling recently opened a new office in Poland. "As more money becomes available through European funding, we are seeing an

increase in sales to the eastern European market," reveals Mr Van der Zwet. "Furthermore, there are many companies worldwide who want to store their valuable products under stress-free conditions. Demand for Controlled Atmosphere technology has risen due to the fact that the shelf-life of valuable products can be extended without loss of quality. It creates flexibility for growers and exporters to meet demand, and therefore earn money, when their competitors do not have these products."

Developing new technology plays a key role in Besseling's business plan. The recently launched new generation Atmosphere Control Station offers clients the ability to control entire warehouses at a glance, monitoring temperature history, current status and planned settings. Meanwhile, the group's research centre is currently developing a new system for generating ozone, which will be used to prevent mould and rot in environments with and without CA. "We are expanding continuously, and we are also aiming to expand our research facility in order to test a wide variety of produce," confirms Mr Van der Zwet. ■

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