**Expertise Fosters Quality Improvements in Chocolate Production**

[lead]

Hanover, Germany – Forbo Movement Systems sponsored a Fraunhofer Institute project to investigate the impact of release properties of various types of chocolate from conveyor belts.

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The project’s goal was to prevent chocolate bloom (or a whitish coating on the surface of the chocolate). This problem can occur from incorrect storage, fingerprints during production or exposure of the confectionery to heat. These issues make the chocolate’s shelf life shorter. Apart from the storage temperature of the chocolate, migration of belt constituents to its surface and other factors can also impair the release of the chocolate from the cooling line belt and trigger fat bloom crystals growing on the chocolate’s surface later on. Our Transilon belts offer a variety of surface finishes. To examine the link between the conveyor belt, product release, damage to the surface of the confectionery and triggering of chocolate bloom, the tests were based on three belt types with different surface finishes. The belt types were chosen to reflect typical processes in the chocolate industry. A cooling line simulated the highly complex cooling process where various types of liquid chocolate are cooled down to 15 degrees Celsius. Lab technicians recorded when the chocolate concerned crystallized and contracted slightly, causing it to detach itself from the conveyor belt automatically. It transpired that Transilon belts with exceptionally smooth surfaces were best suited to the process. As an innovation leader, Forbo Movement Systems collaborated on this project and applied its expertise to play a key role in investigating how to improve quality in chocolate production.

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