



DREAM FACTORY

The pet food market is progressing rapidly, both in terms of volume and the demand for innovative products. For example, gluten-free dog food and vegetarian cat dishes are doing a roaring trade. The manufacturer Vobra Special Petfoods has a brand new production line in Veghel (The Netherlands), with which it can handle the most diverse recipes. It's a dream factory, and that was also the experience of the suppliers who set up the production line.

Plans for the new production line really got going in 2018, when the Vobra factory in Loosbroek was razed to the ground by a fire. It was a tragic event, but something beautiful did arise from the ashes. This was partly due to the management's courage; operations manager Paul Stoutjesdijk was given free rein to build the ultimate factory. He took this opportunity to assign IVS Dosing Technology a prominent role. The company took care of the steam and liquid installations, provided consultancy services on the options and the construction of the installations, and carried out the entire construction of the installation. Hans den Otter, technical director at IVS: "It's always satisfying to be able to build a completely new installation on a greenfield site. In this case, Vobra also wanted a state-of-the-art production location. One of their main requests was flexibility; more options to vary ingredients and dosages would make it easier to respond to changing market demands. Accuracy was another important requirement, so that parameters such as the moisture content could be precisely regulated".

TRUST

The engineers at IVS elaborated a detailed proposal, with the spacious heated pump room at the heart of everything. "We designed the equipment in a way allowing everything to be reached if a part or a pump has to be replaced, or new equipment has to be tested", says Den Otter. "That saves a lot of time and expenditure on maintenance. In addition, the design allows for possible future expansion". Den Otter is proud of the high-quality dosing system for the liquid installation. An extra weighing mechanism has been incorporated in addition to the flow measurement to guarantee the accuracy of the recipe. He's also pleased with the intake system, which was developed in-house. It reduces the discharge time of liquid by up to 30 percent, but also features advanced laser technology that detects, among other things, whether discharge hoses are connected to the correct discharge point. "But the thing I'm most proud of is that Vobra trusted us to build everything just as we had set out in our proposal. They faithfully followed our advice".

ABOUT VOBRA

Pet food manufacturer Vobra Special Foods produces dog food and cat food. Its own brands, including Impress Your Dog and SANIMED, and private label products, are exported to some 35 countries. The new factory contains 36 raw material silos, an extensive tank park and 84 dosing points, thanks to which the company is increasing its production capacity to 50,000 tonnes per year.



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NATURAL PARTNERS

There are solid grounds behind this confidence; IVS has been involved in the various changes and innovations implemented at all Vobra production locations for more than 30 years. “We’re natural partners”, says Frank Dielissen, director of IVS. “Vobra and IVS are two family businesses from the same region. Gerard van Krieken van Vobra and my father, both now in their 80s but still energetic, know each other well. The collaboration therefore began virtually automatically”. Commercial manager Elze Tutelaers thinks Frank is being too modest in his explanation: “IVS is a very reliable, loyal, and engaged supplier. Customers always come back to us for one simple reason; they know that we will provide them with the best solution for a fair price. We’re also open and honest if we’re unable to meet a request”. “For example, when Vobra had a request about processing fresh meat, we referred them to another installation company”, adds Den Otter. “We have no expertise in that area, but in such a case we do like to share our thoughts about who could provide the best solution”.

COMPLETE PACKAGE

The factory in Veghel is now in the start-up phase, and progressing well. Paul Stoutjesdijk is enthusiastic about the options the new production line has opened up: “The new and automated technology allows us to regulate the size and shape of the kibbles better. We can add more fresh ingredients such as carrots and tomatoes, and process potatoes and rice better. Moisture content is easier to control, and we can finally start supplying products in smaller packaging”. Dielissen compares it to buying a car: “There’s the basic model, and then you can add all kinds of extra options and accessories to it. Vobra provides the complete package, and the beautiful result is a credit to us all.”

TRIOTT’S ROLE

IVS was responsible for:

- a fluid intake station for six fluid tanks
- building and connecting the entire tank park, including the rinsing installation
- the pump room
- the tailor-made liquid weighing unit
- liquid dosing installations on the Dinnissen vacuum coater and the vacuum installation of this coater
- the complete steam and condensate path and liquid dosing on the extruder and conditioner
- the steam boiler and degasser, including connection of the entire boiler house
- the entire water supply system for the whole manufacturing process

As the main builder, Ottevanger was responsible for the engineering and implementation of the new production tower, and the modification of the existing facility section. TSC supplied a silo block with 24 small cells.



(left) Frank Dielissen and Hans den Otter, IVS Dosing Technology

(right) Paul Stoutjesdijk, operations manager, Vobra Special Foods