

Snug Harbor Seafoods expedites fish processing with simple inventory tracking

At Snug Harbor Seafoods, a fish processing company in South Central Alaska, tracking the weight and amount of fish delivered each day accurately and efficiently is critical to business. The height of the fishing season in Alaska only lasts a few short months, and during this period numerous captains and crews take to the waters just in time for harvest. All collected salmon, halibut and black cod are placed into bins on the dock according to species and weight, and Snug Harbor Seafoods purchases and processes the fresh Alaskan fish for the company's customers.

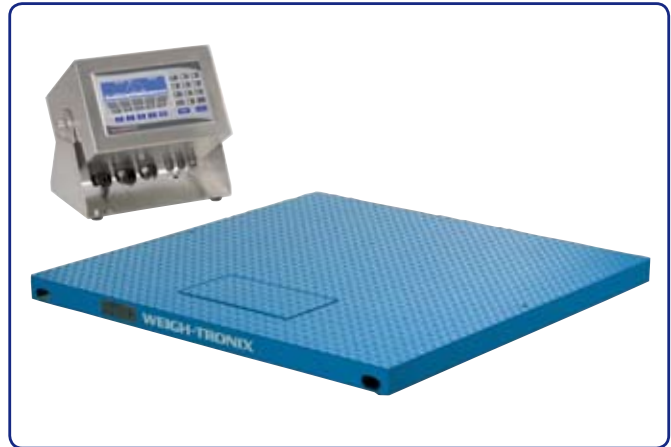
Keeping up with collected inventory, the amount the company needs to pay each captain, and incoming customer orders was an arduous task for Snug Harbor Seafoods under the previous system. This consisted of a dock employee overseeing all the day's operations and manually marking down the number and species of each fish. The employee would then update the company's records accordingly and tally the information. In addition, the fish needed to be weighed and evaluated upon the amount of usable meat each fish contained (subtracting the head, tail and other unusable parts) to determine how much to pay each fisher.

To increase efficiency, track weights and prices more accurately and manage inventory more effectively, Snug Harbor Seafoods implemented a robust, multi-faceted weighing solution from Avery Weigh-Tronix. Using a rugged ProDec floor scale, a sophisticated 1310 indicator and a custom software package, Snug Harbor Seafoods is able to keep real-time records of the fish species, weight and amount placed in each bin, providing them with a simple, reliable solution.

"The ProDec is the most durable scale out there – and you can't afford having a scale malfunction in Alaska, where all the fishing happens at once and during a short period of time," said Chris Chapple, Avery Weigh-Tronix area sales manager. "The 1310 indicator is the brains of the system, automatically counting all the harvested fish and providing Snug Harbor Seafoods' office with real-time updates, allowing them to keep a running total of how much they owe the captain after each catch."

The 1310 indicator is programmed so that when a fish is weighed, a percentage is taken off to account for all miscellaneous parts of the fish that cannot be used, thereby delivering an extremely accurate estimated weight of the usable parts.

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TECHNICAL

ProDec and 1310 indicator

- ProDec scale offers extreme durability and reliable operation in challenging environmental conditions
- 1310 indicator provides comprehensive data collection and real-time updates
- Customized software solution facilitates simple billing and inventory control
- System offers high accuracy weighing and delivers all information in an easy-to-use format



The fish is positioned on the scale, and specially designed LEDs illuminate to indicate in which bin each fish should be placed. Once the bin is full, the operator can press a button on the indicator to print a label detailing the number of fish in the bin as well as the cumulative weight.

“The system allows Snug Harbor Seafoods to know instantly what their current inventory is, so they’ll know whether or not they can fill their current orders,” Chapple said. “The ship operator can also know how much will be paid for each day’s catch, and the receiving department knows how much to pay the fishers and how much revenue the company will make.”

“And we’re just touching the tip of the iceberg with how we’re using the indicator now – it can accommodate virtually any modifications they’ll need,” Chapple added.

In addition, at the Seattle Avery Weigh-Tronix office, Chapple and his colleagues keep copies of all the software programs Snug Harbor Seafoods’ equipment requires, making post-season system maintenance and modifications quick and simple.

Since the new system’s implementation, Snug Harbor Seafoods has appreciated the increased convenience they now experience in their operations. The 1310 indicator easily interfaces with printers, allowing the company and the ship operators to receive immediate printouts of all transactions – including an account of how many fish per weigh division were collected and the overall weight of the fish unloaded – for simple billing and inventory control.

“What we liked about the Avery Weigh-Tronix equipment is that it’s a smarter weighing solution,” said Paul Dale, president of Snug Harbor Seafoods. “This system’s default state tells us the net weight of the packed product, which increases the reliability of our scale readings. A lot of times scales will arrive at the net weight by taking the total weight first and then deducting certain estimated amounts to account for ice, box materials and other extraneous weight. It’s a workable solution, but since it’s less accurate, it can result in either a shortage of weight or overpacked boxes.”

“The Avery Weigh-Tronix equipment yields a more accurate weight for us and our customers,” Dale added. “And we’re able to use these results – actual fish counts, weights, the number of fish we’ve gotten in each category, etc. – for purchasing product at the docks as well as packing product at the plant.”

With the ProDec floor scale and 1310 indicator, Snug Harbor Seafoods has found an efficient weighing solution that can keep up with their busiest time of the year – all while providing the reliable results required for their fast-paced operations.

“We now get a more accurate representation of dock offload, along with real-time updates and convenient printouts through the indicator,” Dale said.

For more information on Snug Harbor Seafoods, visit www.snugharborseafoods.com.