

# NEWS & TRENDS



**Gert Schulze**  
Head of Division  
Cheese Production Technology

*Dear customers and business partners,*

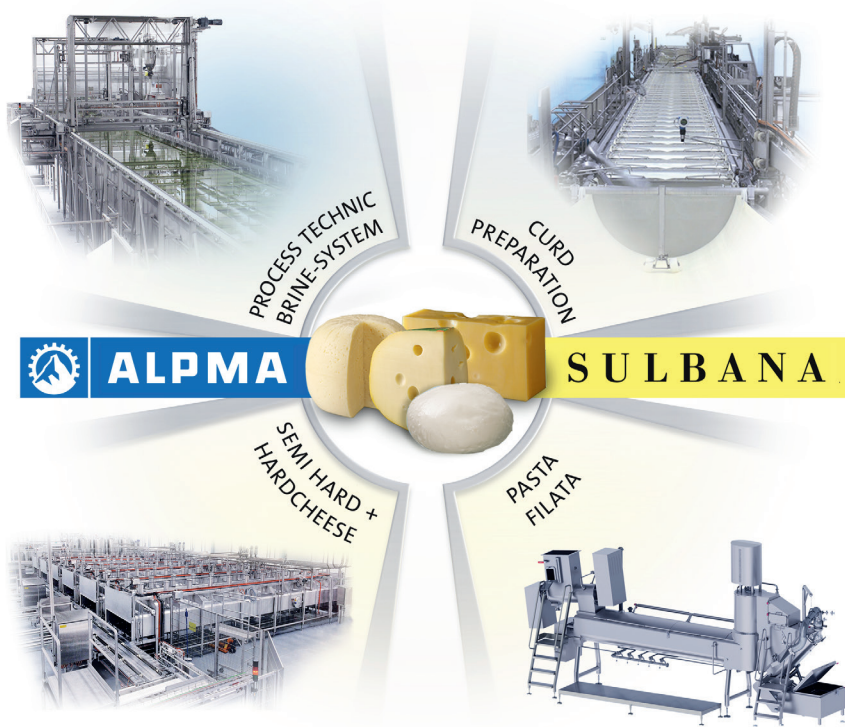
*In recent years, the dairy industry has undergone a major structural change. The number of dairies has decreased, while milk volumes and exports of dairy products have increased.*

*The consequences? Higher requirements in regards to shelf life, quality and hygiene. Flexibility in the manufacturing of various products is more and more important. Public demand for sustainability and a better carbon footprint is also increasing.*

*This structural change is transforming the requirements of our customers, leading to ever new demands in the technological development to boost the efficiency of customer installations.*

*In the latest edition of our News & Trends, we would like to show you just how ALPMA is reacting to these changes.*

Best regards,  
Your



**ALPMA-SULBANA**

## All the strings in one hand

Mozzarella melting on a pizza becomes deliciously stringy. Sometimes, winding those cheesy strings onto your fork and transporting them to your mouth can be a challenge. The situation during the production of mozzarella is similar:

for optimum taste, all those strings have to come together at the right point. For this reason, ALPMA and SULBANA are pooling their cheese production and processing expertise. In January 2019, ALPMA acquired the majority holding in SULBANA, a Swiss-based plant engineering company which specialises in mozzarella and semi-hard cheese.

By pooling their decades of experience in this segment under the brand name ALPMA-SULBANA, the two companies now have the most comprehensive and technologically advanced range of products in the industry. They focus on the entire process: from technological consultation to plant engineering right through to after-sales service and digital information management.

*“The opportunity to take SULBANA forward even more successfully in the future within the ALPMA Group and support our customers within the framework of the ALPMA organisation represents sustained further development for SULBANA”, said Thorsten Kehl, CEO of the SULBANA Group.*

As a full-service supplier, SULBANA offers expertise and competence on the highest technological level – and, as a company specialising in pasta filata and semi-hard cheeses, it is a perfect fit for the ALPMA Group.

With this move, the ALPMA-Group now employs a workforce of over 870 at business locations in Germany, France, the Switzerland, Finland and Italy and offers a global network of sales and service centres.

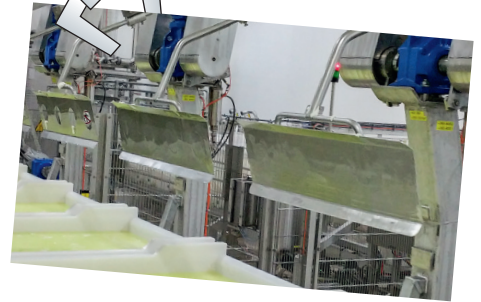
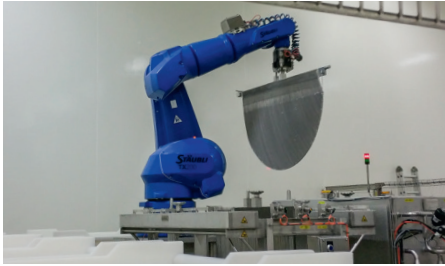
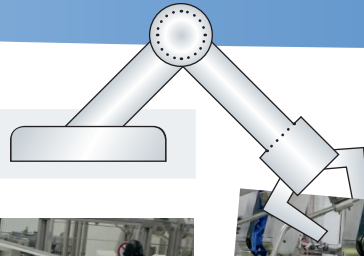
- Process Technology
- Cheese Production Technology
- Cutting Technology
- Packaging Technology



- Mozzarella
- Semi-Hard Cheese
- Hard Cheese

## ROBOTICS

## Unlimited possibilities



A robot is always ready to help, never complains about its workload or long hours. It works precisely and reliably. It never gets ill, it won't go on strike, and it never forgets to wash its hands. This is what makes robotics so interesting.

Robots are used in cheese factories to perform a wide range of tasks, from cutting the curd and transporting production material to parts handling of filled block moulds to the care, storage and packaging of cheese. All good reasons why ALPMA has relied successfully on robot technology for more than ten years.

### When does it make sense to consider the application of robots?

- Whenever you need to increase production volumes and efficiency in the manufacturing process.

- When it is necessary to reduce the number of staff deployed, compensate for a lack of skilled labour or eliminate the human factor as a source of contamination.
- When tasks are dangerous for the operator, difficult to perform manually, or product specifications cannot be met with consistency.
- Moreover, where a robot can perform the functions of several individual machines, this also cuts investment costs.

Manipulators are used in ALPMA-plants in addition to six-axis robots. The manipulators in improved hygienic design developed by ALPMA are made entirely of stainless steel and require less installation space. The decision of whether to integrate industrial robots or manipulators in the

overall plant should be made based on the specific tasks to be performed.

ALPMA engineers are convinced that there are many more possible applications of robotics in the food industry still to be exploited. They believe that robots can be even more robust, even more reliable, even more flexible. Robots will continue to develop new skills and become even more intelligent. Robots of the future will be even easier to programme and will be able to react to voice commands, for all these reasons, robotics will remain an important development strategy for ALPMA.

■ More Infos:

[gert.schulze@alpma.de](mailto:gert.schulze@alpma.de)

## STATCO-DSI

## A strong partner



Membrane filtration for milk and whey is one of ALPMA's core competences and an increasingly decisive factor in the success of the Process Technology division.

Membrane filtration plants are usually integrated into overall milk and whey treatment processes. To date, ALPMA has realised numerous highly sophisticated major projects for well-known dairy companies within Europe – successfully and to the full satisfaction of its customers.

In order to enable it to work the US market fully and realise projects at customer installations effectively and on-the-spot, ALPMA has now concluded a strategic collaboration with a strong partner: **STATCO-DSI**.

Within the framework of this partnership, ALPMA specialists will construct and commission the membrane filtration plants in compliance with the specific requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture. With its local project engineers, STATCO-DSI will be responsible for on-site integration of the membrane plants into the existing customer systems. An ideal combination.

■ More Infos:

[vincent.lease@alpma.com](mailto:vincent.lease@alpma.com),  
[jjordan@statco-dsi.com](mailto:jjordan@statco-dsi.com)

**United expertise in milk and whey processing – Focus on Essentials.**

STATCO-DSI Process Systems and ALPMA to jointly market ALPMA membrane technology to the North American dairy market.

Together, utilizing each other's strengths, North American customers will now have access to ALPMA's full membrane portfolio and STATCO-DSI's extensive integration and service capabilities.

If you have an inquiry, you may contact: [jjordan@statco-dsi.com](mailto:jjordan@statco-dsi.com) and [vincent.lease@alpma.com](mailto:vincent.lease@alpma.com)

[www.statco-dsi.com](http://www.statco-dsi.com), [www.alpma.com](http://www.alpma.com)

Announcement of the collaboration by ads in specialist interest magazines



# Cheese to go



## SNACK LINE

In our "to-go" society, people are constantly on the move, on their way to the next meeting with a customer, the next lecture, the next meeting. It is only logical that small-sized snacks are increasingly popular. The ideal snack to stave off those hunger pangs comes in a handy size and is quickly stowed away. In a school bag, a lunch box, a briefcase – and in your mouth.

When it comes to cheese, there is a trend towards so-called mini-portions. For this reason, ALPMA has developed solutions, which produce portions of widely varying sizes, shapes and weights on a single machine. The Snack Line is highly flexible, hygienic and can be changed in size without tools. Depending on the type of snack, the Snack Line delivers up to 600 portions per minute with

weight accuracy. In order to achieve this speed, the line travels in two lanes and can therefore handle up to 300 portions per lane and minute. The Snack Line then transfers the mini-portions in synchronised operation to the downstream flow wrapping machine.

■ More Infos:

stefan.leitner@alpma.de

## CHEESE INSPECTION

# The electronic eagle-eye



Lifting the cheese out of the case, removing the foil, hefting the cheese onto the machine. Working with Euroblocks in a cheese factory is an endless round of back-breaking work. The good news:

There are now ALPMA machines which lift Euroblocks from the case and remove the foil fully automatically. However, increasing automation also gives rise to new risks. Formerly, operating personnel would notice any mould or pieces of film still adhering to the cheese after unpacking. Nowadays, the operator's eagle-eye is missing –

making it easier for mould or fragments of film to end up on the production line. Given the undeniable advantages of full automation, returning to the era of hard manual labour is not an option. It is also a fact that even the most vigilant operator tires and even the sharp-est eyes may miss a fault.

The solution: an inspection device which automatically checks cheese blocks – and detects almost every flaw. Does this exist? **Yes, it does!**

Following years of research, ALPMA has developed an inspection device which reliably detects mould and pieces of film and raises the alarm. In phase one, ALPMA design engineers engaged in research together with scientists and partner companies. In phase two, they built a test installation for scanning cheese blocks. With the help of state-of-the-art

camera technology and an algorithm analysis developed in-house, ALPMA achieved amazing results. In large-scale tests, the ALPMA inspection device examined more than 1,500 cheese surfaces. Success rate? 100 percent. False alarms? None.

Inspired by these results, the ALPMA design engineers are now working on an inspection device which will soon be capable of inspecting all six sides of a cheese block. ALPMA will be bringing this electronic eagle-eye to market at the end of 2019.



■ Mehr Infos:

franz.glas@alpma.de





Visit us at the **FachPack**  
in Nuremberg from  
**24.09.2019 – 26.09.2019**  
hall 1, booth 341



# ALPMA



# ALPMA

PUBLISHER:

ALPMA  
Alpenland Maschinenbau GmbH  
Alpenstraße 39-43  
83543 Rott am Inn  
Germany

RESPONSIBLE:

Gisbert Strohn

EDITORIAL:

Agnes Betzl  
and all employees  
of the departments

DESIGN:

Ulrich Roppel

SCAN INFO:



FOCUS-MONEY-STUDY

## Leading the field



ALPMA sets benchmarks in training – and not only in the region or within the Free State of Bavaria.

In a Germany-wide study carried out by Deutschland Test, Focus Money and the University of Hamburg, ALPMA took first place in the mechanical engineering sector in the competition “Germany’s Best Training Companies.”

The study evaluates the 20,000 largest employers in 93 industries. ALPMA scores points with a high training quota, outstanding results in final exams and additional programmes for trainees.



“We have an excellent reputation as a training company,” said Manfred Knauer, Head of Training for technical-commercial professions at ALPMA.

“What our trainees appreciate is the personal support we offer. And of course, word of this gets around. We support our trainees, who come from different school types, individually, and we place great value on team spirit and solidarity.”

■ More Infos: [manfred.knauer@alpma.de](mailto:manfred.knauer@alpma.de)

SERVICE ALPMA

## On the test bench

Since summer 2018, ALPMA has had its own test bench which assembles robots prior to delivery and tests them at full load – putting them through their paces, independent of the manufacturer, type and size.

The test bench makes it possible to optimise complex functional sequences. All necessary mechanical and functional adjustments are carried out during in-house commissioning. The test bench creates a platform for the direct exchange of information between all design engineers and commissioning personnel involved.



A further advantage: testing of the interface to the PLC.

ALPMA carried out the first in-house commissioning, for a French customer, in November 2018.

Workflows and cycle times were tested at the intended operation site prior to installation and optimised, thus saving time and cutting costs during commissioning.

One thing is already clear:

*Both ALPMA, as the manufacturer, and ALPMA customers will profit from the new test bench.*

■ More Infos: [michael.weber@alpma.de](mailto:michael.weber@alpma.de)