

Printing in the Egg Industry



Case Study

What is the best way to print and mark on Eggs?

THE BACKGROUND

On the face of it, eggs do not provide the perfect surface for print. They're curved, fragile and have porous shells – in all a nightmare!

So why would you want to print on eggs? There are many reasons why this is now a necessity. From a regulatory point of view, since 2011, all grade A eggs sold in retail outlets and public markets within the EU, must have a code printed on the shell, to enable the eggs to be traced.

Every egg should have a code which details the country of origin, the method of production eg free-range and the actual egg producer site code; this allows complete traceability throughout the food supply chain. Additionally, the egg may have the lion logo printed on, which means the producer is part of the Lion Code of Practice, a system which maintains the highest standards of safety in the UK.

This gives customers the opportunity to track the source of their eggs, something which is becoming more important as consumers are now more discerning about the provenance of their food. It also gives customers confidence in the product they are buying.

It also allows egg producers the opportunity to brand their products, to raise customer awareness and differentiate their eggs from other suppliers.

THE PROBLEM

As previously noted, eggs are not the ideal shape for coding! Because of the shell's porosity, any inks used must be safe for food. It is not permissible, under food law for Grade A eggs to go through any washing process so the ability to print on any egg surface, whether rough or smooth, is extremely important.

The coding process must be gentle, as to not break or crack the eggs and the inks must not rub off, even when the eggs are boiled. Lastly, the printed code must look crisp, professional and legible.

The actual process of coding must work seamlessly with the grading process, to minimise production down-time and costs.

The amount of integration is another important factor to be considered – a newer grader will have a greater level of integration and will be able to control the print function. Older equipment will need to have more manual intervention.



Case Study

What is the Solution?

THE SOLUTION

The Hitachi RX and UX CIJ series of printers are distributed by Allen Coding Systems and offer a complete printing solution to egg graders.

Both are certified compliant for use with Moba's Omnia egg graders; Moba BV is the Netherlands-based market leader in the egg grading industry. They launched their first egg grader in 1948 and have never looked back. Now operating in 60 countries world-wide, they are the recognised market leader in egg grading machinery.

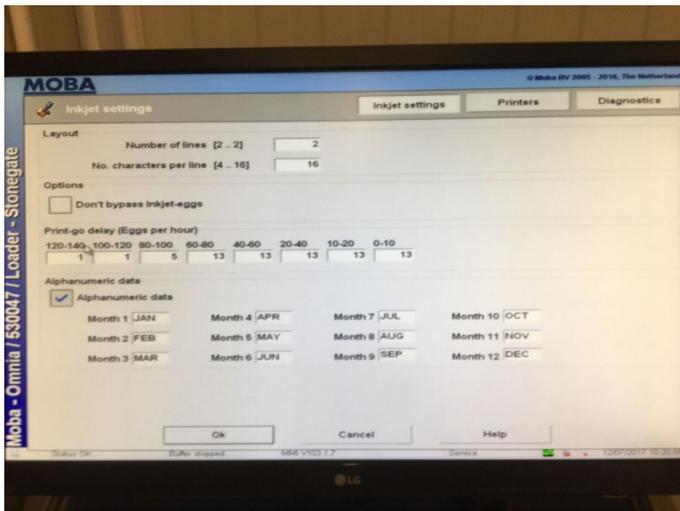
Moba has extremely high standards that must be achieved, in order to fit their selection criteria. With both the RX and the UX printer series, Hitachi has met these standards and have received certification for the egg grading and packing machines for the Moba Omnia.

THE OUTCOME

Print system reliability is a must for use in egg grading operations. Although printing represents a small cog in the whole production process, it plays a vital part and any delays can lead to mounting costs.

It is therefore imperative that the line runs smoothly, and all components operate efficiently.

Since Hitachi is world renowned for their reliability, excellent design and quality, egg graders can have complete confidence in their coding systems and the continued high standard of their accredited CIJ printers.

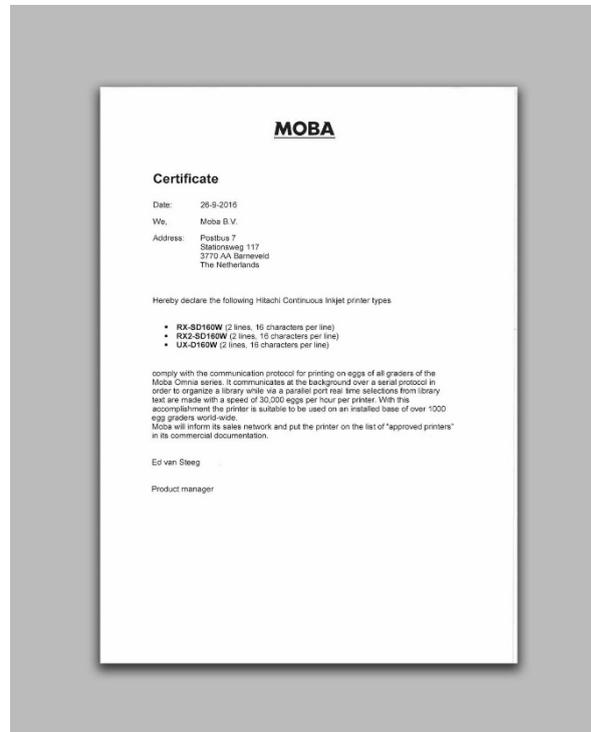


The touch screen is easy to use

The printer system uses the continuous inkjet principle which produces electrostatically charged ink droplets.

The CIJ printer systems offer such benefits as:

- **An easy to use interface.** It is very simple and quick to change marks, numbers and text.
- **Economical use of solvent** and very cost-effective.
- **Easy and quick to maintain**
- **Robust and reliable** – performs very well in challenging environments (IP class).



Hitachi RX and UX printer Moba Certificate

CUSTOMERS WITH MOBA GRADERS IN SPAIN

The first Moba systems with Hitachi Europe's RX-S Ink Jet printer systems went into service early in 2013 in two production units in Spain. The smaller facility has two printer systems, printing 30,000 eggs per hour. The larger unit which uses a total of six Hitachi printers can print 180,000 eggs per hour.

IN THE UK

The third biggest egg packer in the UK, also uses Hitachi RX ink jets to code their eggs. The system integrates with their Moba system seamlessly and uses 12 machines for their lines; these are supplied by Allen Coding Systems Ltd.

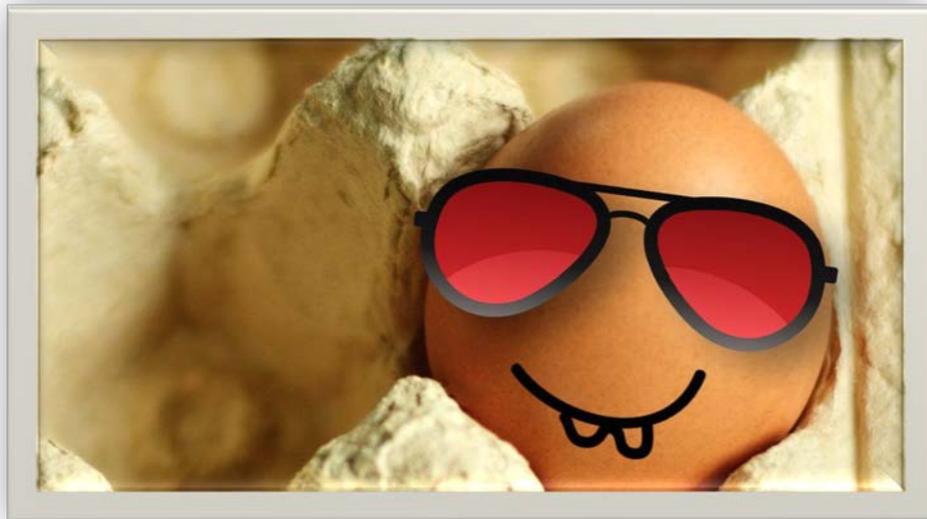
About Allen Coding Systems

What we can do to help you

We've been providing expert advice, exceptional customer care and servicing for over 40 years. Our customers come from a wide range of sectors – from food to construction products and they know we won't let them or their production line down.

As an independent distributor of Hitachi CIJ systems, our core values reflect theirs: reliability and total commitment to the customer.

That's enough about us – what about you? Do you have problems or need advice on printing or marking? Why not come and talk to us?



Allen Coding – Being Different



ALLEN CODING

A DIVISION OF ITW

ITW

Unit 9, Gateway 1000, Whittle Way

Arlington Business Park, Stevenage

Hertfordshire

SG1 2FP

Tel: +44 (0)1438 347770

Fax: +44 (0)1438 347771

info@allencoding.co.uk

www.allencoding.com