



A Meat Processing Operation Protects Against Deadly E-coli Bacteria

Situation

The quality department in the Meat Plant operations of a large grocery chain in the southwest requested a replacement for the antiquated chart recording system in use at the plant. This company puts quality and safety very high on its priority list. The QA department vigorously monitors, tests and measures its products and the manufacturing environment to that high standard.

The requirements were given to the engineering department to increase the sensing locations throughout the processing and storage areas in the plant. The QA department also wanted the ability to get this information in a more automatic if not real-time process. Initially, however, the engineering department could not find a cost-effective solution. Wired sensor systems were well outside the budget.

Freshloc Application

Freshloc had the perfect solution: a wireless sensor array installed throughout the plant collects temperature, humidity and equipment operating information in an automatic, continuous fashion. Using FreshLoc software, the QA department would automatically receive e-mails listing all the temperatures in the covered areas four times per day. They would also have access to historical data through an Internet Browser or a local charting program. And, for immediate response close to any problem, the plant manager and engineering manager receive the same data via e-mail.

The installation covers over 250,000 square feet and used only three readers (receivers) with numerous sensors to achieve full coverage.

Result

The constant flow of information about temperatures in the plant has allowed the customer to maintain very tight control over the whole operation.

Last summer the plant was involved in a product recall. However, because of the detailed temperature records automatically kept by Freshloc, the meat plant was not only held blameless but commended by the USDA and local health departments for its handling of the challenge.

The Freshloc system has since been installed in the corporate laboratory and the Perishables Distribution Center and is being expanded into other warehouse operations.