

# MARCO transform the weighing and packing process at Eric Wall

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Increased packhouse visibility and control, which is vital in today's highly competitive fresh produce market place.

Chris Wall, Managing Director

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# MARCO®

Productivity Improvement Experts

AN **///ATS** COMPANY

**With multiple varieties and a fragile product, tomato packing often relies on manual dexterity and therefore requires an accurate weighing and packing system which relies on as little human intervention as possible.**

MARCO's Trac-IT® Yield Control Module (YCM) provides this and has been installed within tomato packing facilities around the world. Closer to home, MARCO have installed a comprehensive 34-station packing line for Sussex-based Eric Wall Nurseries at their facility near Chichester.

Established in 1977, Eric Wall Ltd is still a family run business and, with almost 35 acres of greenhouse space, making it one of the UK's largest growers of tomatoes.

The controlled environment of a greenhouse facility allows Eric Wall to produce tomatoes virtually year-round. Therefore the company recognised they needed a packing facility that ensured they would be able to realise their full yield potential for the year.

The accurate, manual packing of tomatoes presents a number of significant challenges, especially varieties that are packed on the vine. MARCO's YCM system has significantly improved productivity in the Sussex pack house.

To simplify the packing process, a simple light array on the MARCO LineMaster® weighing scale shows the operator when the target weight is reached for each pack, without them having to consider the actual weight value.

This improves the packing speed of operators and is proven to reduce training requirements for new workers. Each pack weighed on the MARCO LineMaster® workstation is transmitted and logged on a central PC within the facility.



**This allows managers at Eric Wall to constantly monitor workers' performance as well as overall batch progress.**

**For this installation, Eric Wall Nurseries also invested in a MARCO Trac-IT® Average Weight Module (AWM). The system operates as an off-line 'e' weighing station to ensure pack weights consistently meet EU regulations. The ECM software can be set for specific sample sizes and frequencies relating to the number of packs, which need to be manually checked by quality control operators. Results are presented in an easy-to-understand format in addition to providing essential compliance data. The system can also be configured to provide prompts that allow management to fine tune packing line parameters.**

"We are passionate about the tomatoes we grow. There are five main varieties and we are seeing an increased demand for pre-packed product on the vine.

The MARCO system has brought significant improvements to our packhouse productivity and giveaway has been reduced. This is particularly important with the larger tomato varieties where giveaway can be significant if accurate controls are not implemented.

Operator training is now very simple and we can monitor the performance of individual packers. In parallel the 'e' weighing system simplifies and reduces our statutory QC requirements. Overall this gives us increased packhouse visibility and control, which is vital in today's highly competitive fresh produce market place."

Managing Director, Chris Wall

