

Toledo Section ISA November 16, 2011 Program Report

The section tour was of the J.M. Smucker plant which produces products under the Pillsbury, Hungry Jack and Martha White labels. This plant uses more than 100 million pounds of flour per year in production of its products. The tour was led by Andy Benko who was assisted by three other JM Smucker employees. After everyone was given the safety equipment and hair nets, the attendees were divided in four groups for the tour.

The oil storage and pumping area handles the three types of oils (cake, frosting and pancake) used in the products produced. The oils are heated to make them easier to pump and all operate in a circulating system. Product quality is monitored by a QC Lab which tests for water content, salt, sugar along with many other process variables. Samples of products were available for tasting in the lab.

We then saw the flour and sugar storage and transport area. The plant uses four flour types in there products which includes bagged flour. All of the flour is processed by sifters to remove any clumps that the transport system can not handle. The flour and sugar are transported both vacuum and pressurized air systems with a combination of both where necessary.

Raw materials (flour and sugar) are received by both truck and rail. The rail unloading system is in an enclosed area protected from the weather. The rail cars are unloaded by using air handling systems. Leaks of flour and sugar dust are of great concern because of the potential for the creation of explosive conditions.

Raw materials are mixed in batches and the batches are placed into blenders which feed the filling system. The batching systems were not included in the tour. Three types of products were being produced on the lines we saw. First was horizontal filler which was filling plastic pouch size muffin mix. The pouch was formed from a preprinted roll of material which was folded, sealed and cut, prior to filling. Once it was filled, the top was sealed and a date code was printed on it. The package then was weighted, and passed thru a metal detector prior to being grouped into groups of twelve. The group was then inserted into a box which was sealed and printed with a date code and other information. The box was then transmitted to an automatic palletizer.

The other two packaging lines we saw were for frosting and for cake mix. Both of these lines had vertical fillers. Frosting is filled into plastic containers to which a foil closure is applied, followed by label application and then a plastic cap. There are various types of inspections for insuring quality, and product safety. The cake mix filling was similar to the muffin mix with changes for the amount of product in each package and the number of packages is a carton.

After the tour dinner was held at Ahmed's Steak House.