



Customer Story: Fine Food, Turkey

**Bühler gives leading IQF processor
a PolarVision™ edge in global fruit
and vegetable markets**

As a knock-on effect of the worldwide COVID-19 lockdown, consumer demand for shelf-stable foods including frozen fruit and vegetables has soared. One company that has managed to successfully ride the wave of increased product demand is leading European frozen food producer: Fine Food.



The family-owned company based in Turkey has not ceased production or indeed any of its global export operations for a single day so far. The company attributes this resilience to the technological edge that it retains over its competitors, “We are the only business with Bühler’s SORTEX® FA series machines in Turkey and we believe that puts us in a very strong position in the market,” says Mehmet Berk Goztepe, Export Sales Representative at Fine Food.

Established in 1994, Fine Food has over 200 employees working across three factories in the Marmara region of Turkey; a new facility dedicated exclusively to the production of frozen French fries is currently under construction in the Emirdağ district.

The company has a portfolio of approximately 20 individually quick frozen (IQF) fruit and vegetable products, 12 of which are vegetables that are either grown and harvested on Fine Food’s own lands, or by contract farmers around the Yenişehir and Bursa provinces. A total of 70-80 million kilograms of sweetcorn, green beans, peas, spinach, strawberries and cherries are processed by the company every year.

One of the major contributors to Fine Food's advanced sorting infrastructure is its trusted manufacturing partner Bühler.



Traditional yet innovative

Fine Food upholds a strong family-focused ethos with members of the Goztepe family educated and exposed to all aspects of the business from a young age. Yet while the company may be traditional in its values, it is ahead of the curve when it comes to flexibility with urgent orders able to be processed in just one day.

Such flexibility is made possible by Fine Food's use of the latest technologies. Goztepe states, "With 11 sorters in total, our sorter infrastructure is far more advanced than others, something that not many Turkish processors can say."

One of the major contributors to Fine Food's advanced sorting infrastructure is its trusted manufacturing partner Bühler who supplies the majority of the sorters used for the company's IQF products.

A mutual alliance

The company began its relationship with Bühler by adding SORTEX® E1D optical sorting machines to its portfolio. With the E1D machines, Fine Food is able to take advantage of high-resolution cameras and proprietary detection technologies to ensure maximum food safety.

The E1D's double-sided detection of color, shape and size, enables quick and easy removal of subtle to gross color defects, insect damage, blemishes and foreign materials (FM) such as glass, plastic and stones that the company was previously struggling to consistently remove.

“The SORTEX® PolarVision™ technology came as a huge advantage for us for FM removal.”

– Mehmet Berk Goztepe
Export Sales Representative at Fine Food.



Strengthening the relationship

Following the exceptional performance and stability of the E1D machines, Fine Food decided to invest in Bühler's latest technology to meet its growing IQF product capacity needs. With the SORTEX® FA2 machine's FDA approved adjustable 1200-mm chute, Fine Food is now able to process double the amount of product than before: 14 tonnes per hour.

Goztepe notes, "In addition to the higher capacity with the FA2, I also like the improvement of the LED lighting functionality. The lights stay bright throughout their entire lifecycle meaning there is no worry about having to frequently replace them."

Furthermore, the easy adaptability of the machines to suit Fine Food's various IQF commodities allows for greater flexibility and control in the company's day-to-day processing.

The FA2 machines are specially designed to meet stringent Western Europe and USA product safety requirements.

Exports and hygiene

The FA2 machines are specially designed to meet stringent Western Europe and USA product safety requirements. Thus with 70% of their products exported to international markets including Europe, North America, the Balkans, the Middle East and East Asia, Fine Food trusts that its buyers' needs will be satisfied and that a superior quality and consistent final product will always be delivered.

Cleaning the machines is easy thanks to the open and accessible design of the stainless steel frame and sloped surfaces. With virtually no product build-up, there is a very low risk of contamination. This, Goztepe says, "keeps us feeling confident that we're always adhering to the toughest hygiene and food safety standards."

A SORTEX® PolarVision™ edge

The FA2 machines are also equipped with Bühler's renowned SORTEX® PolarVision™ detection system which combines two pioneering technologies for unmatched FM removal: PolarCam™ technology and high definition InGaAsHD cameras. Goztepe says, "The SORTEX® PolarVision™ technology came as a huge advantage for us for FM removal, particularly in the case of snails.

"It has also proved very useful in detecting any extraneous vegetable matter (EVM) and color differences. We now eagerly await the upcoming wet season this year as that is when we expect to find the most EVM in peas, so we'll be able to see the full strength of the SORTEX® PolarVision™ technology!"

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Customer service

Gurhan Nergizoglu, Sales Manager for Bühler's local Turkish sales agent Atomika states, "One of the main reasons Fine Food opted for the FA2 was to be able to detect and remove any snails, black plastics and FM, for this reason our SORTEX® PolarVision™ technology really appealed to them.

"They needed to ensure the best quality within their national and export markets." Goztepe goes on to add, "With Atomika everything runs quickly and smoothly, we never have any issues. Personally and ethically we really enjoy working with them."

He states that Fine Food chose to install its "very easy and straightforward to use" SORTEX® E1D and FA2 machines after the freezing tunnel.

The optical sorters were integrated by Bühler's Service Engineers and now Goztepe is able to say with pride that, "99% of the time our machines only need to sort a batch once." With the E1D and FA2 machines, the company rests assured that its final products will meet the highest international quality standards without the need for multiple sorts, reducing energy consumption and saving time.

The future is bright

Goztepe concludes by mentioning that if the company has scope for future investment it will be returning to Bühler. "We only use the world's best brands. The Fine Food philosophy is that if we are happy with a particular manufacturer or supplier we will preserve that relationship and that is definitely true of our partnership with Bühler."

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