

Dairy Crest Group

VESDA is the cost-effective alternative for Dairy Crest's Cold Storage and White-Tile Manufacturing Facilities

Company Name:
Dairy Crest Group

Location: UK

Industry
Dairy Food company

Products used
VESDA LaserCOMPACT
VESDA LaserPLUS

The Challenge

Dairy Crest Group, the largest broadly based dairy food company in the UK, needed a solution that provides early warning smoke detection and thus helps to avoid any business disruption or damage to the sensitive food stock from smoke. Heat from a fire or a rise in temperature due to refrigeration system down time following a fire would result in stock spoilage and hence loss of revenue. Even an incipient fire in this type of environment can lead to significant losses if not detected and managed early. Food stock exposed to low levels of smoke over an extended period of time will become contaminated.

Dairy Crest would have faced substantial costs had it followed its insurer's request to purchase various types of fire protection equipment.

The Solution

Fortunately there was a more cost-effective alternative to managing the business risks using aspirating smoke detection. "We contacted consultants EC Harris to see if a different strategy could be developed allowing us to achieve the same results. Thankfully there was, and at a fraction of the cost. Importantly, our insurers agreed to it", explained James Blair, Risk and Compliance Manager at Dairy Crest.

EC Harris devised a solution focussed on reducing Dairy Crest's fire risk. A key element of the project is VESDA very early warning smoke detection, manufactured by Xtralis. VESDA systems were selected for their global reputation and distinctive capabilities. Phil Perks, Senior Building Services Engineer at EC Harris commented: "We didn't just want a name. We wanted a system that would provide the absolute earliest possible warning of fire, so that it could be controlled before any real damage was done. We also needed good technical back-up service."



The Results

The majority of VESDA products now installed within Dairy Crest sites are LaserCOMPACT detectors. These offer a simple, cost-effective solution for the protection of smaller environments, such as production machinery, ceiling voids and data storage cabinets.

“Our consultants explained that most fire protection technologies which are designed to operate in freezing conditions are not capable of early warning detection and are prone to being damaged by production equipment”, commented Blair.

The low temperatures within the factory and cold store present a challenge for most detection technologies. However, VESDA detectors can be placed outside the protected area; only the sample pipe network being exposed to sub-zero temperatures. With a properly designed system, performance will be reliable and little influenced by condensation or the high airflows caused by blast chillers.

VESDA is not new to Dairy Crest, as detectors have previously been installed in factories, but this is the first large-scale implementation project. Eventually, 16 Dairy Crest facilities across the UK - prioritised in terms of risk - will employ the system. An added benefit for Dairy Crest is VESDA detector’s adaptability to different environments. “All of our factories have different atmospheres so it’s very helpful that the systems can be set to self learn”, commented Blair.



DAIRY CREST



“VESDA solutions are easily maintained from outside the cold store.”

James Blair
Risk and Compliance Manager
Dairy Crest

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