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## **RFID-System: New tool dispensing cabinet for automated tool management, clear allocation and traceability**

Quality and safety plus the traceability of tools aren't just a high priority in the food processing industry there are sensitive, valuable tools in other segments as well. It is important to be able to assign tools uniquely to persons and to departments and to be able to provide complete traceability and seamless monitoring under operating conditions.

Friedr. Dick offers a complete system of hardware, software and tools for the seamless and fully automated traceability of the deployed tools and quality guideline documentation. The need for manual marking, testing stages and time-consuming monitoring procedures can thereby be eliminated.

The unmanned tool dispensing system for safe, fast and efficient supply of goods and tool management via an RFID tool dispensing cabinet is new at Friedr. Dick. The tools can be quickly removed via the tool dispensing cabinet, while the automatically opening doors provide quick access. Operation is easy and intuitive. Product dispensing is done following employee authorization via a PIN or an RFID card. With the RFID tool dispensing cabinet, the tools are available to employees at all times. The work process can now be designed in a more efficient manner, thereby lowering processing costs. At the same time, supply security is ensured for the required tools.

For sensitive products, employees can be blocked using the "Knife*inspector*" software. There are now available various connection options for the software to the company network or an ERP system; the software is network compatible. There is constant data matching via the RFID-reader integrated in the dispensing cabinet, so a current shopping cart can always be retrieved.

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With the tool dispensing cabinet, there are no more tool shortages, since even in the event of incorrect removal by the employee, the removed part is booked and assigned to the employee via the RFID-transponder. The tool dispensing cabinet has an individual arrangement of compartments, and so there are various cabinet configurations with a maximum of 16 compartments available. Through a visual sign, the LED-strip beside the removal compartments indicates in addition where the item to be removed is located. One or several tools can be removed, all processes and/or removals, whether correct or incorrect, will always be registered and saved.

High quality tools can often attract pilferers. High quality tools are most likely to be stolen from conventional tool cabinets during work shifts without regular tool dispensing. Generally, a significant expense is incurred by theft and incorrect and/or unnecessary removal of tools. With the automated allocation of the tool upon removal and return, as well as the permanent inventory, these incidents are a preventative problem of the past.

The RFID system from Friedrich. Dick breaks down into 3 components:

**Tool management:** Seamless monitoring and error-free allocation to persons, groups and departments are guaranteed thanks to the integrated RFID-transponder in the tools. An RFID-reader has no problem with the rapid scanning of several tools at the same time. Using "*Knifeinspector*" software, the tasks and assignment of tools to persons is recorded. An inventory overview of tools currently in circulation can be viewed with a click.

**Quality management:** The powerful "*Knifeinspector*" software delivers various statistics and reports and ensures process optimization and

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transparency of operation. Another option is a mobile handheld device that only takes a few seconds on site to determine if only approved tools are in use. Blocking tools and quality documentation is possible at any time.

**Tool tracking:** User-defined checking stations equipped with RFID readers can be deployed on a modular basis. At a glance, the user can see which tools were issued to which employees or departments, as well as which tools were left at the workplace in defined areas at the end of the shift or which may have been swapped.

Employees' awareness levels are raised, pilferage rates are reduced and workplace safety levels increase. Occurrences of damage that can lead to the loss of a complete production run or to equipment damage are reduced to a large extent. Highest degree of safety and complete traceability through controlled and seamless monitoring of individual tools and employees/ departments is thereby constantly guaranteed - without additional personnel expenses.

Further information is available from:

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