

CASE STUDY

Animal feed manufacturer gets an NFPA compliance boost



THE PROBLEM: Piling grain dust poses an explosion hazard and slows productivity in multiple facilities owned by a manufacturer of animal nutrition products.

OUR SOLUTION: Robust central vacuum systems boost NFPA compliance in several plants while minimizing interruptions in the production process.



When you're an animal feed manufacturer, big messes are part of the business. Piles of grain and accumulating dust make it difficult for employees to access equipment, requiring them to spend hours of downtime cleaning. The dust is also a fire and explosion hazard by NFPA definitions.

In 2019, Trouw Nutrition became the North American division of Nutreco, a Dutch animal nutrition manufacturer with more than 100

facilities around the world. The company produces everything from fish to livestock feed.

Trouw Nutrition's broad portfolio and global presence means each one of its facilities has unique maintenance needs based on its layout, geographic location and the materials it processes. As it expanded operations and opened new facilities, the company sought reliable industrial vacuums to keep facilities clean, productive and NFPA compliant.

DuroVac stepped up to provide a fleet of tough, user-friendly vacuum systems configured for the individual needs of each plant.

A brief timeline of Nutreco & DuroVac

The two companies have worked together for five years at the time of writing. As the DuroVac systems proved themselves in early facilities, Nutreco and Trouw Nutrition continued to inquire about new vacuums to accommodate their steadily expanding operations.

“DuroVac made it easy to get the vacuum set up, and the prices were fair and competitive.”

Nicolas Gratien, Trouw Nutrition Canada

Nutreco first reached out to DuroVac in 2015, when a plant manager in Moncton, NB requested a quote for a central vacuum system. He was looking for the right system to equip his brand-new facilities, which turned out to be model facilities.

In 2016, Nutreco made the corporate decision to standardize NFPA-compliant central vacuum systems throughout several of their facilities across Canada. Six plants met the requirements, five of which were feed mills and one of which produced micronutrients.

An EPCM company reached on Nutreco's behalf in 2017, which was intent on building a brand-new facility in Sainte-Hyacinthe, QC. They specified the use of a DuroVac industrial central vacuum system.

Representatives from Nutreco and DuroVac met again in 2018, when they held a post-mortem meeting to evaluate the feed manufacturer's satisfaction with the vacuum systems and installation. Overall, the Nutreco representatives were satisfied and impressed with the robustness of DuroVac systems.

In 2019, Nutreco's North American division became Trouw Nutrition, and they returned to DuroVac for two large projects in Sainte-Hyacinthe, QC. The first is a micronutrients plant and the second is a mill, which is currently in the process of installing its newly acquired central vacuum system.

A boost to productivity and compliance

In all that time, Trouw Nutrition has never had to change a single filter on its DuroVac systems, which are known for lasting years without the need for maintenance. Workers and their managers praised the vacuums' tough build and ease of use.

"Previously, it would take too much time for

operators to clean each level of the plant," says Nicolas Gratien, Project Manager at Trouw Nutrition Canada. "Operators are happy to finally focus on production instead of cleaning."

Because DuroVac will always recommend NFPA compliance features when it's needed, Trouw Nutrition's new central vacuum systems are fully equipped to handle combustible dust. The vacuum manufacturer's expertise in the NFPA sphere was an asset in the process of configuring and installing the system.

"The DuroVac personnel was knowledgeable and provided reliable service," says Gratien. "They made it easy to get the vacuum set up, and the DuroVac representative was fast and responsive. The prices were also fair and competitive."

Nutreco's General Manager for North American operations also praised the vacuums for their "European" build – in other words, the indoor systems' slick look and feel, as well as the high-quality finish, put them a class above the rest in quality.

More industrial vacuums on the horizon

The process of configuring vacuums and improving compliance was a collaborative effort between the two companies. DuroVac considered Trouw Nutrition's corporate requirements, analyzed the geography and layout of each facility, and customized each central vacuum system to meet the needs of its respective facility.

DuroVac now has a strong presence in the company's factories. As they continue to expand and improve operations, Trouw Nutrition plans to keep up its NFPA compliance efforts and install more vacuum systems in new and existing plants.