

control bacteria now."

Ten years ago, ozone studies were targeted toward the elimination of silver scurf but today the use of ozone has been utilized for myriads of problems, including the destruction of *erwinia* bacterias that cause pink rot and soft rot.

O3Co went to war against the bacteria found in potatoes and over the last few years has convinced many potato growers to at least give it a try. Most of the non-believers get hooked after they see the results.

"We have had farmers try it (the ozone machine) and they've had good results but they are just not quite convinced, thinking that maybe something else caused their good results," says Simpson. "They'll try something else but then the next year they come back to us because they realize that they just can't get as good a result with anything else."

The amount of ozone needed changes depending on use. At .01 parts per million (PPM) ozone is breathable. Traveling down O3Co's patented ozone tunnel, potatoes are hit with 300 to 500 PPM in the approximately 20 seconds they travel down the conveyor belt. Then ozone is applied on the potatoes in storage at 2.5 PPM. This two-step system has

proven lethal to even the hardest of bacteria.

"We've found that a quick and powerful burst of ozone is much more effective than longer doses that aren't quite so powerful," Simpson explained. "Once the potatoes travel through the conveyor belt at normal speed they are close to being sterile. Then we apply ozone while they are in storage so that any residual disease can't spread."

Another use they have found with the potatoes is that the ozone tends to dry up secondary infections rather than spreading them, such as some water-based carriers might do.

"Ozone takes away the transport system," Simpson said. "It won't repair a bad potato but it will keep it from spreading. If you have hot spots growers apply chemicals in a water base hoping to correct the problem. With bacteria, water is the worst thing you can use. With ozone, you might have a bad potato, but the nearby potatoes aren't going to be infected."

An important consideration when looking at the addition of ozone is the cost versus effectiveness of the program. Producers have been pleased with the results that ozone is bringing in.

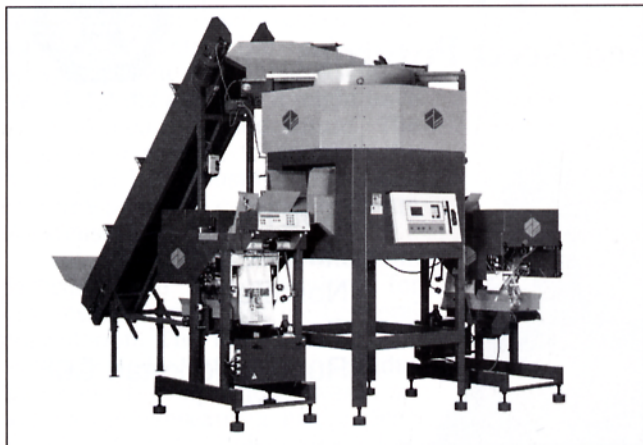
"We had some potatoes going into storage with pink rot. In just a short time using ozone the rotten potatoes dried up," said Darren Bradley, farm manager with Larsen Farms in Idaho. "It saved us thousands of dollars this year. I believe it is a great investment."

Seed potatoes can also benefit from exposure to ozone. What better way to ensure the safety of the upcoming season than by treating the problem before growing a crop.

"I bought my ozone system after the harvest season in 2001," said Greg Nickel, Idaho seed potato farmer. "I hooked up a generator on a cellar with reoccurring pithium, and when I took the potatoes out, I was amazed at the outcome. They've taken pretty good care of us. It is drying up the rots and we are able to store our potatoes more comfortably and then when we open up the cellar we don't have any nasty surprises."

At O3Co they've found a way to harness Mother Nature's power and put it to good use. It looks like the wave of the future has arrived. ■

Your Bagging/Packaging Headquarters



DAUMAR

Depicted here is the PA-25/D weighing machine with 2 CB-34 wicket baggers. This is a compact and easy to use bagging line for potatoes. This setup is capable of delivering 45 bags per minute at 5 pounds or 38 bags per minute at 10 pounds, with very precise weights.

If higher production is what you are looking for, we offer the PA-38 weigher with 3 CB-34 poly wicket baggers. This setup is capable of 60 bags per minute at 5 pounds. This setup is also capable of running different weights on different baggers, all at the same time.



N6775 5th Ave. • Plainfield, WI 54966
(715) 335-6646 • Toll Free (866) 755-1792
After Hours parts (715) 498-8955

