

ANCRA FACTSHEET

Completed:	2005
Location:	Middenmeer, The Netherlands
Industry:	FMCG
End user:	Hiemstra BV
Logistic Service Provider:	Hiemstra BV
Type of system:	Skate System
Dock systems:	2
Trailer systems:	0
Products transported:	Vegetables, iceberg lettuce



Hiemstra BV is an innovative vegetable grower of among others iceberg lettuce. Hiemstra is a partner of Agriport A7, a promising alliance in the area of vegetable culture, logistics, and renewable energies. Two skate systems (a.k.a. loadrunner) are put in to ensure optimum freshness and shelf life of the iceberg lettuce.



During harvest time the farm trailers circulate between the tilled land –connected to an advanced harvester- and the distribution centre. The distribution centre is equipped with two skate systems mounted on shuttle cars, serving two docks and four chain conveyors. After docking, four aluminium skates (forks) enter the farm trailer (secured using a drive away prevention system) and lift the slave pallets pneumatically. Loading and unloading speed is 0.1 m/s. Harvesting being a seasonal industry, the absence of trailer systems by using skates was preferred, preventing wear and tear during downtime in winter. One of the chain conveyors served by the skate system feeds the entrance to a vacuum cooling autoclave. In a vacuum the boiling point of water is lowered causing evaporation which extracts heat from the product. This process increases shelf-life.

Because the autoclave needs air-tightness, an automatic bridge system (see video) lowers between the conveyors in- and outside the autoclave. The outline checking device prevents damage prior to loading the autoclave. The chain conveyors are equipped with four fork-lift truck stops where pallets with lettuce can be picked or empty packaging (for shipment to the tilled lands) can be loaded. All kinds of pallet sizes (CHEP, Euro etc.) can be loaded. Due to the loading/unloading solution provided by Ancra Systems the logistics process and freshness of the vintage is improved which enables Hiemstra to serve an extensive sales area. Additionally, Anton Hiemstra received the Logistics Manager of the Year 2007 Award for amongst others the innovative utilization of loading/unloading systems.

