

Sanitary Scale Design Standards

Pet Food Processing Industry



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What Is the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)?

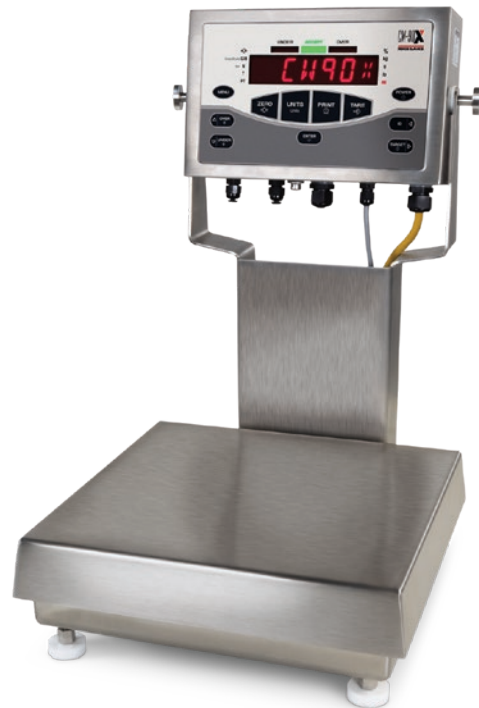
Although the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was passed in 2011, it was not enforced on pet food companies until 2017. Good Manufacturing Practice (cGMP) compliance requirements were set to be met in 2016 and, like many consumer-facing companies, pet food has long been subject to the 1938 Federal Drug and Cosmetic Act. However, the production of the food itself has been fairly self-regulated historically. But as people grow increasingly mindful of how their food is made, the same focus has turned to their pet's food. Pet food is just as susceptible to dangerous bacteria as human food and as a result, demands the same tough, yet easy-to-clean equipment to meet consumer satisfaction and industry best practices.

Pet Food Processing Sanitary Best Practices

Similar to companies that produce food for human consumption, a vital part of safe manufacturing for pet food processors is using sanitary equipment. To ensure bacteria does not become a safety issue, equipment used in pet food processing should be fully and easily cleaned, sanitized and maintained. Equipment designed to withstand thorough, regular cleaning intervals will often be constructed of stainless steel.

In addition to equipment construction, placement must be considered as well. Pet food processing equipment should be elevated off the floor and kept away from the wall to prevent buildup of product and potentially harmful bacteria. Pet food companies should keep this in mind when installing hygienic, stainless steel equipment to fulfill sanitation requirements in processing environments.

A crucial piece of equipment used by human food and pet food processors alike is the weighing scale. In food processing environments, scales are used to capture valuable weight data and ensure product quality. Pet food processors should choose an easy-to-clean, stainless steel scale to ensure company compliance with FSMA and cGMP safety standards.



As consumers begin to change purchasing habits for their pet's food, manufacturers must adapt their processing plants to meet these demands. Pet owners are buying smaller, premeasured packages and refrigerated foods to ensure pet wellness. There is a greater awareness of pet food ingredients, such as the ratio of meat to grain products, and dietary restrictions for pets, meaning producers must assure their customers there is no risk of cross contamination in their pet's food.



Sanitary Design Standards for Scales

1. Made of stainless steel

Stainless steel equipment allows for easy cleaning, preventing the growth of bacteria. Able to withstand denting, shock and abrasion, stainless steel resists warping and chemical washdowns. Stainless steel also meets FDA hygiene requirements, as it is corrosion-resistant and composed of smoothly bonded seams.

2. Accessible for inspection, maintenance and cleaning

Frequent inspection and maintenance must take place to ensure any contaminants present are detected and removed. Processors should clean equipment using the necessary time, mechanical action, temperature, and a chemical capable of breaking up fats and proteins.

3. Hermetically sealed with no niches

Frames and rollers should be eliminated where possible or permanently sealed. External parts must be welded, rather than drilled, to the equipment's surface. Equipment should not have pits, cracks or protruding ledges. Welds must be continuous.

4. Legal for Trade

When products such as pet food are sold based on weight, Legal for Trade scales are required. Legal for Trade scales are certified to confirm the products made and packaged at processing plants are accurately weighed, allowing them to be sold by weight.



Added Benefits of Sanitary Equipment

Using sanitary equipment such as a stainless steel washdown scale allows companies to comply with regulations such as FSMA and cGMP and protects the safety of our furry friends and family pets.

Complying with sanitary equipment regulations also deters cross-contaminated harm to humans. Excessive bacteria in raw pet food can be potent enough to put humans at risk in addition to animals. By incorporating sanitary equipment into animal food processing procedures, processors are able to keep pets, employees and families safe.

Rice Lake Weighing Systems offers sanitary, built-to-last weighing equipment that meets the high demands of pet food processing companies. Including the MotoWeigh® in-motion checkweigher and CW-90X washdown static checkweighing bench scale, and the RoughDeck® QC-X quick clean extreme floor scale, Rice Lake's food processing weighing equipment is designed to help companies meet FSMA standards—and safely feed beloved pets.



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