

MODERNIZING BATCHING FOR A MORE RESILIENT BAKERY

Commercial baking has seen wave after wave of technological advancement, but batching has largely stood still. Ingredients are still weighed and delivered to the mixer much as they always have been, through manual processes guided by operator experience and judgment. It's a system that has worked for generations, and it's one that dominates bakeries to this day.

However, the operating environment has changed. Rising ingredient costs, persistent labor shortages, expanding SKU counts, and higher expectations around consistency and food safety are placing new demands on batching practices.

Even the smallest differences in weighing technique, timing, sequencing or interpretation of formulations can influence dough behavior, throughput and finished product quality. Over time, this variability becomes harder for bakery leaders to absorb and more costly to correct.

Labor and safety considerations are also reshaping the conversation. Manual batching places physical demands on operators through repetitive lifting, dust exposure and frequent ingredient handling.

These pressures help explain the growing interest in automated batching.

Manual Batching May Feel Like the Safest Choice

Still, hesitation remains. Some processors question whether their production volumes justify automation, and others cite concerns around process flexibility, total cost of ownership or the time required to transition from existing batch operations.

Flexibility is the most commonly cited reason for manual batching, followed by lower upfront capital investment. Additional reasons include the ability to stop and start processes easily, a perception of lower product loss when disruptions occur, and a sense of control and adaptability, particularly in operations with frequent changeovers, smaller batch sizes or variable production schedules.



Automation Without the Scale Barrier

Automated batching isn't just for large, high-volume operations. Modern approaches increasingly support shorter runs and frequent changeovers.

Rather than removing flexibility, automation shifts control to the system level. Recipes and tolerances are executed consistently, reducing dependence on individual judgment while maintaining adaptability where it matters most.

At the same time, labor constraints and workplace safety are forcing many bakeries to rethink how batching gets done. Automation batching can reduce employee safety risks and allow available labor to focus on quality oversight and process monitoring.

It can also improve visibility. Digital records of ingredient usage, recipe execution, lot tracking support traceability and audit readiness allow for faster troubleshooting should an issue arise.



Viewing Batching as a System, Not a Task

Manual batching will continue playing a role in many commercial bakeries, and automation is not a one-size-fits-all solution. However, as variability becomes more costly and labor remains hard to secure, more operations are reevaluating batching through a systems lens.

Treating batching as a coordinated, controllable process rather than a series of isolated tasks can unlock improvements in consistency, efficiency, safety and long-term resilience. While

batching happens at the beginning of production, its impact extends throughout the entire bakery operation.

Each of Kubota Brabender Technologie's automated batching systems help maintain product quality and consistency, reduce labor costs, increase employee safety and boost efficiency.

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