



Fibrous

ViskoTeepak Complaint Approach - Article 4

Does ViskoTeepak receive complaints from our customers? Can we go public with this information?

Yes, we can, and we do. We are not perfect. Most of the time we can detect the root-cause of the reclamations we receive, even when it must be found externally. Accepting a failure is one thing. Addressing a mistake has an even greater importance when it comes to preventing the same issue from happening again in the future. ViskoTeepak can trace back most of the products by its unique traceability system that includes a detailed process data base in combination with seam marks on our casing. Our tech team also has the capability to link the specific casing properties with the customer's requirements. This relation must fit in the first place. If something is wrong, the reason must be nearby, and we'll be able to find it.

Most complaints could be divided into the following groups:

- Customer-related complaints
- ViskoTeepak-related complaints
- Operator's failures
- Co-incidents

We have been describing random issues received over the past decade in a series of four articles in order to raise awareness of various situations and provide the tools and knowledge to prevent future incidents, not to lay the blame at anyone's door. The first issue in this series described customer related complaints. The second focused on systemic corporate dilemmas. The previous issue outlined some examples of failures due to workmanship. This fourth and last article will address random issues, complaints based on reasonable grounds but which are difficult to eradicate due to the complexity of the root cause.

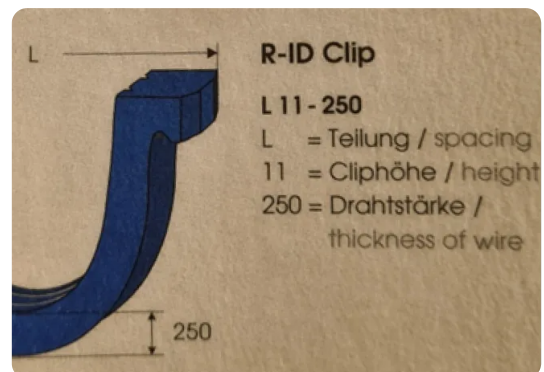


Issue 10 – MOK, the so-called milky aspect of the final product

The term “MOK” is commonly used to describe sausages that have a whitish, glossy appearance caused by casing paper fibers. Neither the curing process nor meat emulsion has an impact on this phenomenon. Most of the time, sausages with MOK result from overstretching of casing paper that causes the microfibers to break and creates the whitish aspect. It is similar to tearing a piece of paper so that its rough filaments are exposed to view. Overstretching can occur when the flat width of the casing is at the lower end of the specs while a very firmly-stuffed casing is stretched during cooking. The internal fibers can also weaken and break if the viscose has failed to impregnate the paper core properly.

Issue 11 – Clips

Applications such as pre-slicing are driving the trend to make longer sausages. To some extent, the idea behind this is to reduce product waste at the top and bottom ends of each sausage, but also to increase throughput during stuffing and to reduce casing and clip costs. Consequently, the top clip is sometimes loaded to the limit, maximizing in turn the tension on the casing and leaving no room for flexibility. When the sausage is eventually cooked, all the forces deriving from its weight and expansion act directly on said clip. This issue came to our attention and gave rise to several reflections: firstly, clip slippage can be avoided by varying the fibrous viscose load. Secondly, a so called anti-slip casing will keep the clip in place. And finally, a proper clip choice or an additional manual knot will limit clip slippage.





Issue 12 – White casing issues

ViskoTeepak is well known for the perfectly white color of its salami casings. This white casing color resists the processing influences from beginning to end.

Moisture flows from the inside to the outside of the sausage when the salami is curing, penetrates the casing membrane and evaporates. However, some moisture components – myoglobin molecules, for example, do not transit the casing but stick to it from the inside. The build-up of these red particles can eventually result in the appearance of dark spots on the casing and form the effect known as “brown mottling”.

Brown spots can become visible even on ViskoTeepak’s white casing if the casing process instructions fail to match the salami processing requirements. Therefore, clear instructions for the casing process are crucial to avoid disappointing results.

Secondly, the effect known as “tension lines” may come into play when dealing with white casing. These longitudinal lines appear on the casing due to a low viscose load. They do not affect the casing’s properties but have a detrimental impact on its appearance. Tension lines should be detected before reeling up, and in most cases only a small quantity of the affected product reaches the end user.

Throughout these four articles, we have learned people aren’t perfect, and we, as a company, are not perfect. Striving for perfection doesn’t allow room for mistakes and will limit you. We learn through our mistakes. That is how we will continue to grow as a company. We can lean on our co-workers to help avoid these issues and solve those that cannot be avoided. Together #WeAreViskoTeepak.

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