

# FOOD TECHNICAL SERVICES

TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR THE FOOD INDUSTRY

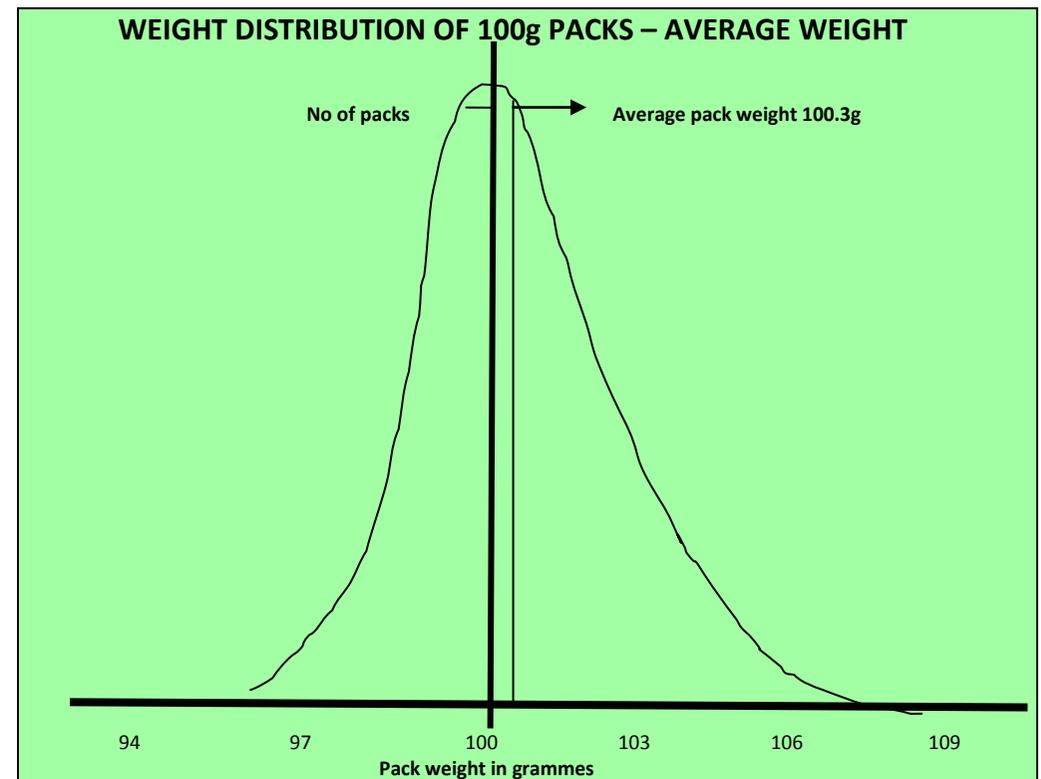
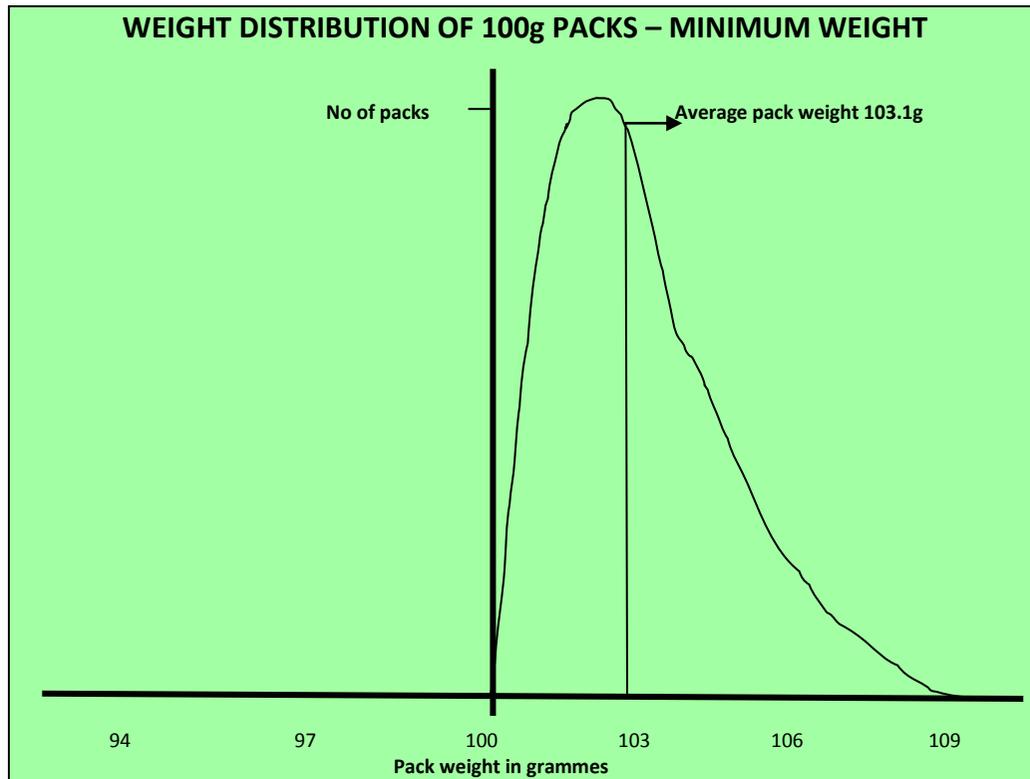
## Average weight system brief

A surprising number of small to medium scale food businesses selling retail packs of high value product such as cured/smoked meat/fish, cheeses and confectionary packs are missing out on a potentially easy and legitimate gain by failing to adopt the "Average weight system". As a result they're likely to be giving away product for nothing. Ave wt isn't new, many packers have been using the system since the 1980s. Food Technical services can help to determine whether or not if conversion would be beneficial and if so assist in equipment selection and training.

### A) The benefits:

- a reduction of giveaway (eg if you sell packs labelled as 100g – and if on average they weigh 103.1g and if you sell 2,000,000 packs year at £15 per kg then you are giving away 6.2 tonne or £93,000 per year).
- by broadening the acceptable pack wt range (eg from 100-105g out to 96-107g) - the packing and weighing line becomes more efficient (its faster easier and less labour intensive to pack to wider weight band).

### B) Graphical expression for an example packing line that converted from the Minimum to the Average weight system:



### **C) The basic rules to be used as a rough guide only (eg Using 100g packs to demonstrate):**

- 1) The sampling regime must be deemed adequate (for simplicity 10 packs per hour is enough even for a factory packing 10,000 pack per shift)
- 2) The weighing equipment must be deemed adequate
- 3) The batch average (eg the days production of a 100g pack) must weigh  $\geq 100\text{g}$
- 4) There must be no packs below T2 which in the case of 100g packs is 91g)
- 5) There must be no more than 2.5% (or 1/40 packs) between T2 and T1 (which in the case of 100g packs is between 91 g and 95.5g (or 96g)
- 6) There must be adequate records to demonstrate that the batch( eg days production) meets the above rules.

**This note is not a full interpretation of the legislation.**

### **D) Example of recent factory upgrades to Average weight:**

#### **1) Chocolate Packing line within a small luxury confectionary business:**

##### **Packing to minimum weight**

- where each scale operator has to manually fill packs higher or equal to nominal weight of 150g.
- Selling 200,000 packs per year.
- Each pack on average is +4.4g over declared weight.
- Approximate selling price £40 per kg.
- Retail value of chocolate given away =£35200 pa

##### **After converting to average weight system**

- A manual paper recording system costing approx £2000. -packers have a wider band and can pack quicker.
- Selling 200.000 packs per year
- Each pack on average is +0.4g over declared weight.
- Approximate selling price £40 per kg.
- Retail value of chocolate given away =£3200 pa

**Savings made:** On giveaway alone: £32,000 per year (1<sup>st</sup> year is £30,000 after installation cost). Labour costs and packing line capacity were also improved upon due to the wider band of acceptable weights.

#### **2) Smoked salmon producer packing a range of nominal weights from 100g to 1000g per pack:**

**Packing to minimum weight** – where each pack is weighed the nominal weight or higher filling manually and automatically.

- Selling 5,000,000 packs per year
- Each pack on average is + 3.1 on declared weight
- Approximate selling price to retailers £15 per kg
- Value of smoked salmon given away =£232,500.

**After converting to average weight system** - With an Average weight system installed at a total cost of £40,000. Packers have a wider band and can pack quicker .

- Selling 5000,000 packs per year
- Each pack on average is now +0.3g on the declared weight
- Approximate selling price to retailer £15 per kg
- Value of smoked salmon given away =£22,500

**Savings made:** On giveaway alone: £210,000 per year (1<sup>st</sup> year is £170,000 after installation costs). Labour costs and packing line capacity and speeds were also improved upon due to the wider band of acceptable weights.

### **E) For further detail:**

For further detail contact Ian Meek on 01463 229593 or email [ianmeek@foodtechnicalservices.com](mailto:ianmeek@foodtechnicalservices.com)

Link back to website: [www.foodtechnicalservices.com](http://www.foodtechnicalservices.com)