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Wienie-Pak

## Longest is not always best

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This article is the third in a series regarding the production of hot dogs. The request was to highlight the hotdog process in relation to our Wienie-Pak casing. Since the casing is only a part of the whole process, the focus in these articles is broader than just the processing.

When discussing Wienie-Pak optimization, we must consider the four main parameters of the strand. These four parameters are:

1. Meters/feet of Wienie-Pak requested in a strand, also known as the strand load
2. SLIT limitations, which refer to the allowed length of a Wienie-Pak strand
3. The inner bore of the strand, in relation to the stuffing tube size
4. Shirring technology, reflecting the newest technology available for demanding shirring requirements.

With these strand properties in mind, we can apply them to a customer's situation. It is surprising to hear customers' thoughts about the optimum strand length. Some decisions for a certain product are self-evident, others are historically based, or even based on ignorance. Let us try to break down these factors.

### **Equipment limitations**

Obviously, we must work with the available equipment. The hopper width of automatic machines is a limitation for strand length. These widths are fixed but differ from machine to machine.

### **Stuffing tube length**

The effective stuffing tube length is another consideration. Stuffing tubes currently vary from 35cm to 60cm.

### **Strand load and casing size**

For two reasons, the optimum number of feet load in a strand is related to the casing size. The size directly affects the number of loops that can be accepted on a smoke stick.

### **Smoke stick length**

Smoke stick lengths vary between 80cm and 150cm.

### **Strand load balance**

The balance between the available casing in a strand and the link length is another decisive factor for the technical strand load, as shown in the table below.

### **Neglected considerations**

This consideration is often neglected, especially when natural smoke is used to treat the sausages. For proper smoke treatment of hotdog products, both the drying and smoking steps are crucial.

## **Conclusion**

The optimum strand load is a balance between possibilities, expectations, and efficiency.

### **Possibilities**

The choice of strand depends on the customer's process options and limitations in the stuffing room and cooking department.