By Chris Komorek

Thursday 23rd July 2020, 2:42 GMT

Tomra Food opens new HQ in LatAm

New premises in Santiago, Chile equipped with customer experience centre and regional training hub

L eading provider for optical food sorting machines, Tomra Food, has officially opened its new regional headquarters in Santiago, Chile.

The purpose-built facilities, equipped with a customer experience centre and regional training hub, aim to strengthen the customer support provided across Latin America by Tomra Food and its two sister companies, Compac and BBC Technologies.

The headquarters provide a boost to Tomra Foods' presence in the region, which contributes significantly to the global supply of fruits, nuts, vegetables, potato products, grains and seeds, dried fruit, meat and seafood.

The 810m^2 two-story building adds to the premises BBC Technologies has been operating in Chillán for 10 years with more than 20 employees.

The new building accommodates offices, a meeting room, a spare parts store for greater spare parts stock, and a test and demonstration area.

The new facilities in Santiago, Chile

Michel Picandet, head of Tomra Food, commented: "Tomra Food is growing in Latin America, as it is elsewhere in the world, and Chile is the perfect location for expanding our presence here.

"The new regional headquarters put us closer to all our Latin American customers to ensure they receive the best resources, service and support. This large facility hosts both service and sales personnel, affirming our commitment to the future in this region," added Picandet.

Chief executive of Compac, Ken Moynihan, paid tribute to the opening as a step forward in providing local access to the company's global network of training, technical expertise and services across the whole Latin American region.

"Fresh produce companies are looking to supply their customers 365 days per year, so they need to secure high-quality supply from the southern hemisphere. And to succeed in this high value market, exporters need the best packing lines, which is where we add value to their business," said Moynihan.

Another added benefit of the new premises sees Latin American customers able to test Tomra machines with their own samples of produce, whereas before they'd have to travel to California, US to achieve this.

The demonstration room in Santiago currently hosts five optical sorting machines: Tomra 5A, Tomra 5B, Tomra 3C, Tomra Nimbus BSI+, and Blizzard.

There are also plans for customers to be able to test the Compac Single Lane

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Sorter with Spectrim, UltraView, and Inspectra inspection systems.

Johan Germeys, regional sales manager LATAM, Tomra Food, said interest has been building in the facilities for some time.

"We have already delivered many tests for customers on a wide variety of produce – fresh and IQF berries such as strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and blackberries, IQF grapes, green beans – and on every occasion, customers have been impressed by the results," said Germeys.

Tomra Food is also willing to hold tests with online demonstrations, should customers be unable to travel to Chile due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The new facilities in Latin America joins Tomra Food's existing regional headquarters in the US, China, and South Africa, global headquarters in Belgium, and 32 regional offices around the world.