



## Simply setting a new standard

Arla Foods, Denmark

case story



Unique 7000s installed in the Christiansfeld dairy.

**Arla Foods processes more than 90% of the fresh milk and dairy produce consumed in Denmark every day. It is therefore crucial that its production lines always run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. Every component – large or small – has to deliver peak performance on every line at all times. Even with ever-increasing demands, especially the stringent European health, safety and hygiene regulations.**

Given this background, one could be forgiven for thinking that Arla Foods might have been wary about installing a new design for a single seat valve in one of the company's main fresh milk processing lines.

And perhaps this would have been the case if the new Unique 7000 – a relatively small yet vital component – had come from another company. Alfa Laval, however, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of single seat valves and fluid handling solutions. The Unique 7000's design enables good traceability, and complies fully with EU Food Regulation 1935/2004. The valve has EHEDG certification and bears the 3A symbol.

As Niels Schmidt – technical director at the Arla Foods Christiansfeld plant in the south of Denmark – puts it, "There are a lot of components you'd often expect to give teething problems. Normally, we'd let a competitor install a new part to see if there were any glitches, before using it ourselves. A bit like how you'd let your neighbor buy a new car first," he adds with a smile.

## Pragmatic approach

The new valve was soon installed at Arla Foods, and those at Mr Schmidt's plant have been in place for some time. "We've always had a very good working relationship with Alfa Laval, and we know from experience that they always come up with quality products," he says.

Considering the critical production processes involved, Arla Foods has been pleased with the new valve, and Mr Schmidt adds, "Well, we haven't had any trouble with it."

Such a statement is more revealing than it might suggest, and high praise indeed in this part of Denmark, where understatement is a virtue.

As Michael Nielsen of Alfa Laval and Torben Bertelsen of TetraPak – Alfa Laval's sales partner – are keen to point out, "The less trouble the valve gives our customers the better. Ideally, it should be possible for customers to completely forget that the valve is even there, safe in the knowledge that it will continue to function as reliably and efficiently as its predecessor."

This raises the question of how to improve on a very successful product – over one million units of the existing model of Alfa Laval single seat valves have been installed around the world. Many of these – including a fair number at Arla Food – have provided more than 30 years of trouble-free performance.

## Looking to the future

Even though Alfa Laval always listens carefully to what customers say, and goes with what they want most of the time, it is sometimes important to take a step back and get the whole picture. "What we've done here is to ensure that we have a valve that will run just as long – from a regulatory and a performance perspective – even though demands are now so much more stringent than when the current model was introduced," says Mr Bertelsen.

"We expect the Unique 7000 to still be setting the standard for this class of valve in 10 years' time," adds Mr Nielsen.



Niels Schmidt, technical director at Arla Foods, Christiansfeld.

Once again, Alfa Laval has taken it upon itself to look into the future. The true value of the new design will become more and more apparent as the years pass. The Unique 7000 meets every current regulatory requirement around the world. It has been designed to continue meeting these requirements well into the future, and it sets new standards for safety, cleanliness, functionality and value.

The Unique 7000 is packed with ground-breaking technology, yet the philosophy behind the valve is much older, and is perhaps best summed up by Mr Schmidt, who says, "If the new valve works just as well as the old one, then we'll be more than satisfied." Thereby continuing a proud Alfa Laval tradition of producing a single seat valve that, once installed, the company's customers can actually afford to forget.

### The Tri-Clover® Unique 7000 series

- No dead zones
- No welds
- Improved ball-shaped valve body
- Designed using Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD)
- Controlled compression of seals by metal-to-metal contact
- Improved pressure performance
- Improved actuator performance
- Improved modularity
- One-piece aseptic design with long life diaphragm
- Automation portfolio that matches all market needs.

## How to contact Alfa Laval

Up-to-date Alfa Laval contact details for all countries are always available on our website at [www.alfalaval.com](http://www.alfalaval.com)