

At Swissmex, Mexico, the lasertube has streamlined production of agricultural machinery and has made it more flexible, helping to overcome the seasonal ups and downs of the market.

Lasertube for **agricultural** machinery



Swissmex is a company with 480 employees that exports 40% of its agricultural machinery and tools in thirty countries throughout the world. The remaining 60% is sold to the domestic market. The company started out back in 1962 as a simple importer of farming machinery (soil fumigator and reapers) but after the frontiers for this type of technology started to close, the company became a manufacturer. Today Swissmex produces an extremely vast line of products for any size and requirement, ranging from irrigation devices, fertilizer distributors, manual and powered sprayers, automation of sowing devices and harvesting to motor-spades and millers.

Small and diverse batches

As the area is mostly agricultural (no metal-working industries) and due to the poor reliability of the local sub-suppliers in terms of delivery and product quality Swissmex has always stood out thanks to the vertical integration of its production processes.

"We produce everything we need to make our products in-house – says Mr. Pedro Wirz Luchin-

gen, an engineer and general manager of the company – anything from washers, gears, plastic mouldings, springs and polyester bands. For this reason, in 2005 we purchased our first ADIGE LT120 lasertube cutting system, followed a year later by an automatic BLM DYNAMO tube bender, an ADIGE CM601 saw for bars and a second LT120 lasertube system. Investing in laser solutions has turned out to be a winning strategy as the flexibility needed to respond to the requirements of an extremely demanding





and evolving market like that of agricultural machinery are guaranteed”.

At Swissmex, production is just as variable as the quantity (there are years in which sales soar due to certain atmospheric conditions and others in which sales slump) or the time of year; some years sales reach their peak in the period from May to July, in others the peak is reached during the winter months.

“This is why the lasertube technology takes the cutting edge” says Wirz with a rather satisfied tone. “Many small and extremely different batches can be produced quickly; in fact, it only takes a couple of minutes to perform a complete production change.

Nowadays, if an order is received on a Monday, for example, the finished product can quite easily be despatched on Friday, thanks to the reduced production times. Likewise, the reduced stocks of finished product, which were once necessary to fill a customer's order in the shortest possible time”.

From 9 to 4 operations For the chassis

The increased quality level of the elements produced and the considerable savings in the intermediate processes thanks to the lasertube are certainly worthy of mention. At one time, **nine operations were needed** to make a chassis: cutting, brushing, boring, milling, bending, washing, spot welding, welding and painting. Whereas **today only four operations are required**: laser cutting, washing, welding and painting. Moreover, welding robots have also been included in the production process. Each piece coming from the LT120 is the same as the previous one and therefore can be sent directly to the welding jigs without being spot-welded first.

“As can be seen, laser systems have not only reduced the number of steps in the process - says Wirz once again – but have also cut down on the cost of machinery and management of semi-finished products, as well as consumables such as millers, drill bits, cutting disks, etc. and even on personnel. We hope that the growth in production continues so that we can buy other ADIGE lasertubes!

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