



BY AMERICAN MEAT SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

Selecting the Proper Meat Grinder

Grinders come in many different sizes from small table-top models designed for in-home or supermarket use, to high capacity machines for commercial ground meat manufacture.

It is important that a processor evaluates the intended use of the grinder before making a selection. Some considerations processors need to make are: size, type, and accessories. Some key points when selecting a grinder to fit you operation:

Current and Expected Required Capacity

As with most equipment price is closely correlated with size. This is a major consideration for processor as grinders can represent a substantial investment. If too small of a grinder is selected, plant efficiency decreases as stuffing and packaging can be slowed down. Select too large of a grinder and the payback becomes longer and profits can be decreased. A good rule of thumb is total grinding capacity should equal 110-120% of daily grinding needs.

Type of Products Being Made

Is the grinder going to be used to produce multiple types of products or is it part of an in-line systems that produces the same product continuously? If a grinders is going to be used to produce several different products several considerations must be made. These considerations include: ease of plate and knife installation, ease of clean-up between product batches. This has become even more important with the importance of being able to track large amounts of product. If a grinder is not properly cleaned between different types of product it is possible that ingredients may be transferred among lots, resulting in mislabeled product. This is especially important for potential allergens such as wheat or soy proteins, and when switching between products containing any nitrites or nitrates.

Additional Features Required or Desired

Bone collectors are commonly used in high-volume grinders to help eliminate hard particles from the meat. Bone collectors add some expense and complexity to the maintenance and operation of the grinders, but are almost a necessity for large volume grinding.



Key Takeaways:

- A good rule of thumb is total grinding capacity should equal 110-120% of daily grinding needs.
- Consider how many different product you'll be making with the grinder.
- Consider additional features—like bone collectors—when selecting your grinder.