A helping hand during the flood and a process to keep meats safe

Since the 1980s, Davenport, Iowa-based Blue Wave has been in the business of designing and building state-of-the-art machines that harness ultrasonic waves to clean industrial parts and machinery. Notably, Blue Wave’s cleaning process employs water-based, eco-friendly detergents in place of potentially harmful solvents and chemicals.

To convert electrical energy into high-powered, cleansing sound waves, the 18-employee Company uses unique magnetostrictive transducers in their cleaning devices, an engineering-intensive technology that makes Blue Wave the quality leader in its industry and allows the company to offer customers a life-time guarantee. Blue Wave machines can be used in many industries, including: aerospace, pharmaceuticals, electronics and semiconductors, rubber and plastic molding, as well as in medical facilities such as hospitals.

CIRAS’ involvement with Blue Wave goes back 10 years. Last year, thanks to contacts arranged via CIRAS, Blue Wave was instrumental in helping other Iowa companies devastated by the 2008 floods. Blue Wave went into action and engineered a process that salvaged roughly $400,000 in tools that might have otherwise been ruined by the floodwaters.

Among Blue Wave’s global customers is Iowa State University, which uses the Davenport manufacturer’s cleaning equipment in its laboratory facilities. CIRAS was also instrumental in helping Blue Wave work with ISU’s Meat Lab on a project that could represent an entirely new and significant market for the company. The collaboration involves designing and testing ultrasonic machinery for use in meat-processing facilities by ridding meat of harmful bacteria.

Blue Wave equipment’s ability to destroy bacteria through sound alone will likely become increasingly indispensable at a time when harmful hospital-borne bacteria have grown resistant to many of the drugs designed to destroy them. The Blue Wave story provides yet another example of how a small company can grow to global prominence by enlisting the resources available through ISU.

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