

FRESHENING UP ON FOOD SAFETY TRAINING

ABOUT CRUNCH PAK, LLC. Based in Cashmere, Washington, Crunch Pak is the industry leader in fresh, pre-sliced apple products. A group of Washington state apple growers started the company in 2000, and it now offers the largest variety of apple slice products available. Crunch Pak has five hundred employees and a certified lab on its premises for safety testing. The company sends apple pickers out into the orchards to select the best apple varieties according to seasonality and quality, including Gala, Granny Smith, and Pink Lady.

THE CHALLENGE. Crunch Pak takes food safety very seriously. The company provided in-house training in food safety best practices, but wanted to take that training to a higher level to keep it fresh in employees' minds and incorporate new standards. Generally, domestic and foreign food facilities that are required to register with section 415 of the Food, Drug, & Cosmetic Act must comply with the requirements for risk-based preventive controls mandated by the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), as well as the modernized Current Good Manufacturing Practices (CGMPs). This rule, which became final in September 2015, requires food facilities to have a food safety plan in place that includes an analysis of hazards, along with risk-based preventive controls to minimize or prevent those hazards.

The FDA created the Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) to provide a training curriculum that helps small and medium-size companies comply with the FSMA. Impact Washington, part of the MEP National Network™, supports the training requirements for the FSPCA curriculum. Crunch Pak already had success working with Impact Washington on Continuous Improvement initiatives, and decided to contact them again to provide more rigorous food safety training for Crunch Pak employees.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Impact Washington provided general food safety training to Crunch Pak employees, as well as critical FSPCA training to the operations teams. Crunch Pak's approach was to train as much of the critical workforce as possible. Impact Washington understood the company's objective and worked around their manufacturing schedule and limitations to achieve Crunch Pak's workforce training needs. The training helped management set the tone for the importance of food safety, and provided a sense of accomplishment and job validation for Crunch Pak employees. The company was satisfied with the engagement and plans to work with Impact Washington again on future food safety training events.

"Although the bulk of this training was similar to our in-house training, we realized that having an outside party provide perspective and experience re-energized our teams about the subject. The training was very effective and many of our team members felt empowered with their new level of knowledge and certification."

-Drew Dalgetty, General Manager

RESULTS



Trained **150** employees in food safety



Trained **24** employees in FSPCA Preventive Controls



Developed food safety consciousness as part of company culture

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