

CALANDRA'S ITALIAN & FRENCH BAKERY- SQF COMPLIANCE

ABOUT CALANDRA'S ITALIAN & FRENCH BAKERY INC. Calandra's story begins in 1962 with the opening of Calandra's Bakery in Newark, New Jersey. Luciano Calandra, an Italian immigrant, had been in America for just five years when he went into business for himself and opened a small Italian and French bakery. Mr. Calandra and his wife Ortenza worked hard day and night, and their bakery quickly developed a reputation for producing delicious bread.

Today, Calandra's Bakery in Newark is a 50,000-square-foot operation and the family now has two additional bakeries, one in Fairfield and one in Caldwell. The three bakeries deliver their products to more than 500 supermarkets, delis, restaurants, catering halls and sporting arenas in the tri-state area. In addition to their bakeries, the Calandra family now owns and operates several hotels, restaurants, and apartment buildings in northern New Jersey. The family also produces and sells their own line of olive oil, coffee, fresh pasta, homemade sauces, and wines from their vineyard in Italy.

THE CHALLENGE. Calandra's has grown considerably, and they needed a system to help track and document inspections, production records, training records, recipe books, preventive maintenance, and compliance efforts. They also were required to obtain SQF (Safe Quality Foods) certification in order to sell their products in certain stores as they need to adhere to vendor qualifications, which are defined by the Food Safety Modernization Act. The SQF certification program is designed to prevent contamination of food products and provides a pro-active measure concerning food safety. Calandra's turned to NJMEP to assist them in becoming SQF certified.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. NJMEP supported Calandra's with training, paperwork, and was instrumental in navigating a grant for government reimbursement for most of the SQF certification costs. Much of the focus of SQF comes down to proper documentation and making necessary improvements. The SQF code is very specific, and while Calandra's had most of the pieces, now they needed to get them into the right format. Calandra's and NJMEP forged a strong relationship during the process. Regular, in-person meetings at the facility turned out to be crucial to the process. Now that they have received their SQF certification, Calandra's can now supply more companies with their products. Their paper trails are up to date and their managers went from a "how are we ever going to get this done" to a very positive "yes we can" attitude, resulting in a much more cohesive team.

"NJMEP should be supported because they truly take care of the manufacturers. They look out for them and find ways for them to succeed."

-Kristin Calandra, Vice President

RESULTS



\$100,000 in new sales



\$3,000 investment in workforce skills and practices

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