

BUSY BEEHIVE MAKERS USE LEAN TO MEET UNRELENTING DEMAND

ABOUT HARVEST LANE HONEY. Harvest Lane Honey, located in South Salt Lake, Utah, produces top-quality beehives and sells them and other beekeeping equipment through retailers such as Tractor Supply, CAL Ranch Stores, IFA, North 40, Orgill, and others. The company started in a very small shop with the beekeeping passion of its founders, Mindy and Jason Waite. Their drive for quality projects opened the doors to many retailers who wanted to get their products into the hands of farmers, ranchers, and backyard beekeepers.

THE CHALLENGE. The company normally experiences a higher demand for its products when spring approaches and the retailers order a line of products for their shelves. However, improved marketing and success created an unrelenting demand for their products. Harvest Lane Honey reached out to the Utah Manufacturers Association to provide help to increase their throughput and make other process improvements.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Utah Manufacturers Association, a sub-recipient partner of the UofU MEP and part of the MEP National Network™, worked with the operations team to create a process to build the beehives in a one-piece flow process, which led to a doubling of the output of the products. The team worked together to design three systems that would work with a variable number of team members depending on customer demand. To reinforce the system the company changed from creating large batch orders and began a daily huddle examining all of the orders and sending signals to the production floor to build the right mix of products to close specific orders. The increased flexibility allowed orders to close more quickly. Further, the team changed its supply chain of wood to request daily orders of the right mix of wood to provide the materials for the particular products made that day.

"UMA Center for Business and Continuous Improvement did a great job and made a real difference in our company."

-Mindy Waite, CEO-Founder

RESULTS



Increased throughput to **200** complete units from 115 partially-completed boxes previously



50% reduction of space required on the production floor for work in progress



Established new daily huddle system with a new report to see and prioritize orders.



50% reduction in time to cut and shape wood led to increased production

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