

NEW NORMAL: DICKSON INDUSTRIES GROWING WITH GOWNS

ABOUT DICKSON INDUSTRIES INC. Dickson Industries Inc is a family-owned business founded in 1946 and located in Des Moines, Iowa. The company employs 48 people making quality fabrics for multiple markets, ranging from food processing garments to sporting goods.

THE CHALLENGE. Dickson Industries made its name making medical fabrics and garments before venturing into various lines of food-industry clothing and pre-consumer products, such as specialized netting used to enhance the flavor of meat during smoking. When the coronavirus decimated demand for food-industry products, Dickson officials realized that they were ideally situated to help fill part of Iowa's need for personal protective equipment (PPE). For help with this new venture Dickson turned to CIRAS, part of the MEP National Network™.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. CIRAS Project Manager Kim Anderson told Dickson federal regulators issued emergency use authorizations (EUAs) in the early days of the pandemic to help meet an overwhelming PPE demand. Dickson made the gown decision after extensive conversations with CIRAS about what it would take to meet governmental safety standards going forward. CIRAS also provided training focused on growth option in medical manufacturing during the pandemic. The combination of an existing supply chain and local manufacturing capability meant the company could be incredibly flexible and able to pivot quickly. Dickson also had existing relationships with medical supply distributors, making it easy for hospitals to purchase from the company. The company began producing hospital isolation gowns to fill emergency shortages and has since decided to continue.

"We're thinking this could become a permanent line item for us under the medical division. The comments we've received have been overwhelmingly positive."

-David Dickson, President

RESULTS



10 retained jobs, created 5 jobs



\$1,000,000 increased sales



\$100,000 investment in medical device programs

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