

## CUSTOMIZED FOOD TRAINING GIVES GROEZINGER PROVISIONS THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

**ABOUT GROEZINGER PROVISIONS INC.** Groezinger Provisions Inc. is a family- and women-owned business that manufactures pâtés and specialty meats in Neptune, New Jersey. This 'MADE in New Jersey' manufacturer has been in business since 1982. Groezinger and Alexian are their two signature brands distributed to specialty food stores and high-end grocers across the country. Focusing on continuous improvement and providing the highest quality safe food to customers has elevated their business and both food brands.

**THE CHALLENGE.** In the past few years, Groezinger experienced staffing challenges resulting from retirements and sudden medical leaves of absence. Employee absences are especially challenging when positions are specialized and employees are not cross trained or when specific skills or certifications are needed, which can bring a production line to a halt or serious mistakes can be made. Additionally, updates in FDA and USDA rules and regulations required Groezinger to revisit its food safety plans and programs. After identifying these challenges on their own, the Groezinger team reached out to NJMEP, part of the MEP National Network™, for help addressing them.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Juliana Canale, NJMEP's food manufacturing and regulatory expert, connected with Alexandra Groezinger, VP of Groezinger Provisions Inc, to conduct a complimentary business and food safety assessment. After the assessment, Canale and Groezinger made plans to address the key issues with training personnel and updating food safety plans and programs to remain compliant.

Cross-training was the only way to ensure a single employee's absence would not impact the entire organization. On-site training was the most direct way for Groezinger to effectively and efficiently cross-train their workforce. Canale worked with Alexandra Groezinger and key personnel to ensure a customized training solution was developed, completely rework how they upskilled their employees and updated their materials.

"We changed up the style of training we've been doing. Juliana is excellent at aligning with this new strategy to create a more effective training program. We host smaller group trainings and they're more like roundtables, more of a discussion format rather than the whole group of 30 employees sitting in front of a projector with a facilitator droning about a PowerPoint. Having smaller groups also meant that we didn't have to stop production to do the trainings," Alexandra Groezinger stated. "The feedback from our employees was positive and reassuring that this style works."

"I've heard my employees say they really like the direction things are going and the training is one of the areas that have been improved. NJMEP has been extremely helpful and an integral part in the way we've been doing business. You have provided so much support for manufacturing and it's very nice having NJMEP put such an emphasis on food manufacturing. You can't do business anymore unless you have the help of experts. Juliana is like a member of our team I can turn to when we have questions."

-Alexandra Groezinger, Vice President

## RESULTS



\$3,000,000 in retained sales



\$900,000 in increased sales



15 jobs retained



2 jobs created



\$10,000 in cost savings

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