MEP National Network™

SENSOR TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERS FOOD MANUFACTURER

ABOUT FOOD FOR THE SOLE. At the root, Food For The Sole's philosophy is simple-- make the best tasting and most healthy portable foods for people headed out on adventures. As avid hikers, Julie Mosier and her son Henry didn't like the boring and repetitive tasting products on the shelf, so they made their own. Food For The Sole makes healthy, dietary-restriction-friendly food that is different than what was on the market. Most importantly, customers tell them they taste like something you'd eat in a restaurant.

THE CHALLENGE. Food For The Sole sought support from OMEP, part of the MEP National Network™. During the Covid-19 pandemic, demand for outdoor products as well as food and beverage products skyrocketed. Food For The Sole was operating out of a co-op kitchen and challenged to keep up with demand. Along with the rapid growth came many challenges including capacity constraints, productivity, equipment failures, supply chain and inventory management, and team leadership.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. OMEP worked with Food For The Sole on applying principles of lean to address their capacity and productivity issues. The Food For The Sole team embraced the process and the improvements stacked up quickly in production. OMEP also observed the inventory management and order fulfillment processes and recommended a pull system based on a Kanban system.
Food For The Sole quickly realized the benefits. Prior to implementing the Kanban system, the team was sectioning inventory off by distribution channel and would often end up with one channel out of inventory and other channels with excess. Now the company has more space and the inventory is more manageable, making the process much easier and reliable.
Consistent dehydration is critical for Food For The Sole's product. Dehydrator batches often had problems, often due to dehydrators overheating at night, wasting ingredients and labor. Food For The Sole sought a way to easily monitor the dehydrators and make changes before losses occurred. OMEP identified an advanced technology opportunity using Internet of Things, setting up real-time monitoring using thermocouple sensors in the dehydrators. The sensors send data through a Wi-Fi gateway to a cloud database once per minute. Visual dashboards and event triggers report dehydrator performance, making reports available even from offsite. Alarms trigger when temperatures are out of range, allowing leadership to address issues immediately. Sensors also provide actionable data to continuously improve production and a morale boost for staff. The kitchen team puts energy and love into creating food and no longer suffers the lost efforts due to dehydrator issues.

RESULTS

3 jobs created and retained existing

$200,000 in increased or retained sales

$25,000 in cost savings

CONTACT US

7650 SW Beveland Street
Suite 170
Portland, OR 97223

(503)406-3770

www.omep.org

OMEP

"**Our experience with OMEP has been exemplary. The counsel we've received has been invaluable.**"

-Henry Mosier, Co-Founder