

INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH A POSITIVE AIR FLOW

ABOUT ROGER WOOD FOODS. Located in historic Savannah, Georgia, Roger Wood Foods is a third-generation family-owned and -operated food processing company that produces great-tasting smoked sausage and meats. For 85 years they have prided themselves on making superior products and were awarded the SQF certification by the Safe Quality Food Institute for going above and beyond in quality assurance required by the USDA.

THE CHALLENGE. Roger Wood Foods couldn't escape the Southern humidity. The plant was experiencing a negative air balance, which created condensation due to the hot, humid air hitting the cold work surfaces. Plastic sheeting was used to shield the food, but this was only a temporary fix. Angela Travis, controller for Roger Wood Foods, reached out to Ben Cheeks, coastal region manager for the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech, part of the MEP National Network™, to help them properly solve this problem and remain USDA compliant.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Cheeks brought in Jason Clarke, project manager for the energy and sustainability group at GaMEP, who had just the expertise Roger Wood Foods needed. He conducted a plant air flow study to determine the root cause of the issue. Clarke discovered that since this was an older plant with numerous additions, air was not flowing properly to all areas of the plant. He also witnessed on several occasions that doors to the outside were left open, allowing the humid air in at a faster rate. In a controlled environment, you want a slightly positive air flow. Clarke found that there was not a "directed" air flow in the facility, and more air was going out than coming in, which created a negative air balance throughout the facility. This not only produced condensation problems on the plant floor but also affected the front office area as well.

"I would highly recommend the GaMEP. Jason was always available to help and saw the big picture of how to improve the air flow at our plant. It was a positive experience, and I look forward to working with him and the GaMEP team in the future."

-Angela Travis, Controller

RESULTS



38% increase in their internal score regarding efficiencies with outside regulatory agencies



15% reduction in downtime with the reduced condensation



Removed **3** exhaust fans, saving energy and removing less conditioned air from the facility



Implemented a road map that is applicable for the plant to use in the future



Installed numerous recirculation fans, removing need for plastic condensation sheets, saving time

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