

LEAN LAYOUT AND CONTINUOUS FLOW INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY

ABOUT FELICIANO BRAS REBECA/ SETAS DE PUERTO RICO.

Setas de PR is the first manufacturer on the island dedicated to the growth, processing, and distribution of mushrooms through retail and wholesale supermarket chains. Founded in 2011 and led by a Puerto Rican couple, it began as an agricultural company with only 7 employees. This company, located in the “City of Flowers” at Aibonito, Puerto Rico, produces three varieties - white, baby bella and portabella - and today it's in the process of launching a new product to the market with the help of 40 employees.

THE CHALLENGE. Due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic the company experienced a reduction in workforce, which left management feeling concerned. This phenomenon led the company to seek out the MEP Center in PR, PRIMEX, part of the MEP National Network™, to evaluate improvement alternatives that would allow them to meet demand with the new productive capacity. As a matter of fact, Setas de PR and PRIMEX have a relationship spanning several years. It began in early 2017 with the development of a new “mushroom burger” project (PRIMEX assisted with facilities layout and product viability studies) and, through a project of electrical infrastructure improvements, making the evaluation and implementation process more convenient.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. PRIMEX offered a lean diagnostics service, specifically for the packaging line, where a time study and process evaluation were carried out to identify waste. Additionally, measurements of the designated packaging area were taken to provide a layout configuration that establishes continuous flow through the packaging line. Finally, packaging machinery were recommended to further reduce waste and help improve productivity.

"For several years we have been building a very close relationship, in which we have received great professional support from PRIMEX. Recently, amid the pandemic crisis and with the lack of sufficient human resources in the packing room of our product, we suffered mechanical damage in one of our automatic packing machines, which created an immediate challenge and prompted us to make decisions not only to change equipment, but at the same time to operate structure. That is why we decided to consult with PRIMEX to look for equipment alternatives and why not improve our way of operating.

Thanks to the consulting and project management of Eng. Javier Estrada, in a short time we were able to carry out a study of the operations, identifying the critical points, downtimes and levels of effective vs expected production. We also identified possible equipment in the market and once the new machine was received, the 'layout' of the process line and packaging of the final product was designed, achieving a significant change in many aspects both labor, occupational health, productivity, and the possibility of increasing the capacity of the room as we continue to grow.

Thanks always to Javier, Ramón and all the great TEAM of PRIMEX. You make a difference and motivate change!"

-Eng. Jimmy Delgadillo, Vice President

RESULTS



40 jobs retained



\$35,000 in new investment for a new wrapping machine



18% less time dedicated to the production of a pallet unit



Improved productivity by 1 additional pallet, equivalent to 270 24-oz. packages (405lbs)



34% reduction in waste by movement

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