

POTATO COMPANY BRINGS THE TASTY WITH FOOD SAFETY

ABOUT SUN-GLO OF IDAHO, INC. Established in 1974 by five Southeast Idaho potato growers, Sun-Glo of Idaho, Inc. is a fourth-generation, family-owned grower, packer, and shipper of premium quality fresh Idaho® Russet Norkotah and Burbank potatoes, with state of the art facilities and sales operations in Sugar City, Idaho. Located at the base of the Teton mountains in Eastern Idaho, the Crapo family grows the highest-quality potatoes that Idaho has to offer by combining generations of knowledge, modern technology, and old-fashioned hard work. Their potato and onion products extend to private labels as well as their own labels of Sun Supreme, Riverside Farms, and Ace.

THE CHALLENGE. To meet Sun-Glo's food safety assessment goals, staff needed training in Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP). HACCP is a risk assessment program that addresses food safety by analyzing and controlling biological, chemical, and physical hazards. Passing the food safety audit is critical to keeping their customer base, which directly impacts the company's sales and workforce skills. A requirement of the Primus Global Food Safety (GFS) Audit is to have a GFS CPO (Certified Program Order) where team members must have certification to oversee a company's food safety plan. This situation became more challenging due to the travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. The president of the Idaho Growers and Shippers Association reached out to Janna Hamlett, a processing specialist at TechHelp, a member of the MEP National Network™ and assistant professor for the University of Idaho, to identify courses that would be useful for their members. TechHelp then developed an online HACCP course specifically focused on the potato packhouse industry. This course is recognized by the International HACCP Alliance and considered an accredited training program. In addition, this course was subsidized through National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) National Emergency Assistance Program (NEAP) funds and was provided to companies at no cost. This uniquely-designed course was only offered to companies that process potato products with course material relevant to their specific industry and food safety hazards. Melissa Coles, Sun-Glo's HR and food safety coordinator, has taken several courses through TechHelp over the years and therefore recognized TechHelp as a trusted resource when she needed training. TechHelp offered the course online, eliminating the need for travel and reducing the cost of attending the course in person, as well as mitigating the risks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"When my certification expired during the Covid-19 pandemic, my options were limited due to travel and group restrictions. When the IGSA offered this convenient course through TechHelp, I knew I needed to enroll as other courses I have taken through them were very educational. It was convenient to attend the online course and helpful to interact with others in the same industry. I was particularly grateful we were able to break the course up into several afternoon sessions versus having to dedicate full workdays for training. I would highly recommend any future courses offered through TechHelp."

-Melissa Coles, HR and Food Safety Coordinator

RESULTS



80 created or retained jobs



\$11,600,000 in new investment



\$3,000,000 in increased or retained sales

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Idaho Manufacturing Specialists