

## MULTI-GENERATIONAL FAMILY FARM BENEFITS FROM LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES

**ABOUT WILCOX FARMS, INC.** Wilcox Family Farms was founded in 1909 by Judson and Elizabeth Wilcox, when they purchased land at Harts Lake in Roy. Today the family business is still being lovingly ran by 4th and 5th generation Wilcox family members and employs 150 people. The farm produces eggs and egg products found across the Pacific Northwest and as far east as Colorado, courtesy of happy hens that roam freely on the fertile pastures (and are protected by pasture dogs). In addition, the multigenerational farm creates compost/fertilizer products.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Wilcox Farms' organization was growing and the company needed to increase productivity and an expand their distribution network, all while ensuring successful development of production management and process improvement at the line level. For help they turned to Impact Washington, part of the MEP National Network™.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Impact Washington worked with Wilcox Farms on a series of projects from 2013 through 2021, including lean training, food safety and organization development. Later projects spanned management coaching, supervisor development (TWI), COVID safety support and animal welfare support for the hen farm. The relationship has been long and helped foster increased trainer confidence, and decreased turnover. At the beginning, training within industry (TWI) was relied upon to maintain and grow staffing levels. Through the years the needs for support and training evolved.

One of the largest projects was a lean-related JSP. The project included training key leaders in lean thinking through Impact Washington's Lean Enterprise Certificate Program. Next, key opportunities for waste reduction and process improvements were identified during value stream mapping of both the facility operations and logistics operations. Kaizen events, with a focus on cross-functional teams, were performed to help implement the lean solutions through Wilcox facilities and the logistics operations. Total maintenance training (TPM/5S) also took place, highlighting the importance of maintenance.

In 2021, Impact Washington helped implement the Hen Euthanization Safety Project, which included 16 hours of safety-related services. It provided third-party oversight in the operations related to hen euthanization and may include further consulting and training in the future.

**"Impact Washington has been a fantastic partner to work with. Over the last 10 years, their consultants have worked with all levels of our workforce to really help create a culture of continuous improvement. With their help we have talked about multiple new products and helped establish best practices to deal with issues such COVID-19 and avian influenza. Without their help and influence we would not be anywhere near the level we are today in terms of quality and innovation."**

-Andy Wilcox, Director of Operations

## RESULTS



18 jobs created and 45 jobs retained



\$8,000,000 in increased sales;  
\$75,000,000 in retained sales



\$2,765,000 in new investment



\$325,000 in cost savings

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