

FLOUR POWER: FAIRHAVEN MILL SEEKS TRAINING TO BECOME SQF CERTIFIED

ABOUT FAIRHAVEN MILL. Fairhaven Mill is an organic flour mill founded in the Fairhaven area of Bellingham, Washington, as a cooperative in 1974. A couple bought the mill and moved it to Burlington in the Skagit Valley in 2010. In 2019, a group of farmers and visionaries purchased the mill to continue to grow it and support their farmers and the local economy. Fairhaven mills a variety of organic products, including 100% whole-grain bread flour, 00 pizza flour, yellow cornmeal, rye flour, oat flour, barley flour, and more. The mill sources certified organic grains from farms around the country and grosses more than \$500,000 in sales annually. The mill currently employs four people.

THE CHALLENGE. Customers requested Fairhaven obtain Safe Quality Food (SQF) certification and that the company get its products third-party certified by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI). This prompted Fairhaven Mill to reach out to Impact Washington Chief Food Scientist Craig Doan. After a food and beverage evaluation, the project received a two-year Jobs Skills Program grant. The SQF training program is intensive and respected by most retailers, brand owners, and food service providers around the globe. Fairhaven mills needed training to prepare for certification.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Kellerman Consulting's Laura Swanson, a registered SQF consultant connected with the mill via Impact Washington, part of the MEP National Network™, led the SQF-preparedness training. The program guided Fairhaven Mill through the process of setting up a comprehensive food safety management system. Staff first learned about SQF prerequisite programs, including current good manufacturing practices (cGMPs), standard operating procedures (SOPs), master sanitation, environmental monitoring and supply chain. SQF certification preparation, maintaining SQF certification, site SQF requirements, and SQF manufacturing code were covered as well. Training for certification includes everything from allergen management training to audit reporting. This farm-to-fork food safety and quality certification is considered by many in the food industry as the gold standard.

"Fairhaven Mill has been extremely pleased with the incredible training and onsite learning we received through the job skills grant. Impact Washington representative Laura Swanson was incredibly knowledgeable regarding the food safety training our team needed to take our business to the next level. We feel confident now we will be producing products at the highest level of safety and quality for our customers. I have personally benefitted from this job skills training as a new position in the milling industry. Laura with Impact Washington was a wealth of knowledge and provided myself and my team with the food and safety plans that will position our mill with the highest standards of safety. I value the time we spent and the quality of work we walked away with."

-Kristen Keltz, CEO of Spinach Business Ventures

RESULTS



1 created or retained job



\$5,000 in cost savings



Built a new mill facility in Burlington

CONTACT US



11812 North Creek Parkway N
Suite 205
Bothell, WA 98011



(425)287-6808



www.impactwashington.org

