

## USDA MEAT AND POULTRY PROCESSING EXPANSION PROGRAM (MPPEP) GRANT MAKES EXPANSION POSSIBLE AND CREATES ASTONISHING COST SAVINGS

**ABOUT PROCESSORS INC. (GUIDRY'S CATFISH).** Cajun family-owned and -operated since 1976, Guidry's Catfish is the largest catfish processing facility in the state of Louisiana and one of the largest producers of U.S. farm-raised catfish in the United States. Located in the heart of Cajun Country in South Louisiana, Guidry's processes over 1.2 million pounds a week of the freshest, best-tasting catfish in the industry. Guidry's Catfish caters to both the retail customer and the foodservice industry, offering over 70 different catfish items, plus their own delicious blend of fish fry and hushpuppies.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Guidry's Catfish (Processor's), a long-time client of LCTCS MEP of LA, part of the MEP National Network™, was operating at maximum processing capacity when a working partnership was formed with the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) of Louisiana South Louisiana Community College (SLCC) in 2021 to discuss how to expand.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** MEP SLCC urged Guidry's Catfish to conduct a feasibility study to obtain the market outlook and forecast the impact of the expansion. MEP SLCC provided proforma income statements to predict an increase in sales for the company and to connect Louisiana Economic Development (LED) and the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) groups to obtain future tax credits. Lastly, MEP SLCC encouraged Guidry's Catfish to apply for a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (USDA MPPEP), with MEP SLCC overseeing the writing of the application.

In 2022 USDA MPPEP awarded Guidry's Catfish \$7,058,243.95. As a result, Guidry's Catfish increased 2022-2023 revenue over \$65 million, \$45 million directly related to the production line expansion with MEP SLCC. With three new lines and ongoing work on the par-frying processing plant, the additional packers and production workers hired increased employee count to over 400. Annual cost savings were over \$15 million, with \$8.5 million directly related to MEP SLCC's assistance.

In 2022-2023, Guidry's Catfish invested over \$60 million into the company, \$30 million directly related to the expansion plans assisted by MEP SLCC. With the innovation of the production lines and the equipment purchased for new lines and the par-frying plant, \$1 million was spent as part of the software that runs each piece of equipment and upgrading the current computer and server system for the entire company. The additional three value-added products for the par-frying plant were an investment of \$16.5 million dollars in product and process equipment. The investment was made through a \$9.5-million-dollar company loan and MPPEP grant funds of \$7 million.

## RESULTS



247 new or retained jobs



\$42,000,000 in new investment



\$30,000,000 in other



\$25,000,000 in new or retained sales



\$15,500,000 in cost savings

## CONTACT US



265 South Foster Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806



(337)394-2762



[www.mepol.org](http://www.mepol.org)



LOUISIANA'S COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGES  
MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

"The \$7 million from the grant is much appreciated, and we are blessed and thankful for the cost savings this has allowed us during our expansion."

-Cherrie Guidry, Co-Owner & Director of Marketing & Quality Assurance