

CASESTUDY

Growing Gourmet Garden

When Sunshine Coast based Company Gourmet Garden set off on their LEAN journey they knew they needed to get the right person on board to help them achieve the results they were seeking. Gourmet Garden has been in operation for over 14 years. They are both innovative and forward-thinking with their products as well as their production. Their passion runs right through their team.

Andrew Eves-Brown had been working in the UK for a number of years using the Operation LEAN principles with great success. When he moved to Australia and headed up Gourmet Garden he could see that LEAN training was something that would greatly benefit the company and the brand.

Andrew Eves-Brown and Rob Tomlinson (Director of IIAU) are on exactly the same page when it comes to understanding LEAN Manufacturing and how best to implement the training into an existing business like Gourmet Garden, which has made the training seamless.

When asked why he thought that Gourmet Garden required LEAN training, Andrew Eves-Brown stated that "Every company needs LEAN Training, across all of the departments. Without it you just waste without realising it".

Gourmet Garden's first product which is the Herb and Spice Paste in a tube, now has a value added product that spins off of this which means waste is no longer waste, its just something different and that converts to dollars.

The newest addition to the range is a Lightly Dried Fresh Herb and Spices product, which maintains the freshness in the packaging, so you can have fresh herbs and spices no matter what the season. This product has really helped Gourmet Garden to maintain and develop their "Fresh Credentials" and use LEAN training principals throughout its development.

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When you start to go through the LEAN Manufacturing program, you start to identify waste in all sorts of places throughout the company so the Gourmet Garden team are now more efficient than ever. This streamlined approach has essentially made the time it takes to produce the products much tighter, so they can make more in the same time and increase profit margins.

One example of this is where staff altered and changed the operation of the dating line by spending \$3,000 and saving \$71,000. Changes made in time management and machinery positioning increased output by 1.8 million tubes per year and allowed 3 months of double shifts to be cut. These changes were driven by staff under training and staff watching those being trained and adding their ideas to the result. The interaction between trained and untrained staff allows them to take ownership of the changes they make.

IIAU has helped to introduce a value system into Gourmet Garden which essentially covers Benchmarking, Safety, Innovation & Leadership. As manufacturing is driven by people, the people on the floor need to be both aware of LEAN principles and willing to use them. Gourmet Garden has taken this one step further by implementing a reward system for those members of staff who continually strive to reduce waste. The rewards include vouchers for meals out, a car parking space on site for a period of time, a write up in the company magazine and more importantly the recognition of a job well done, which can and does lead to promotion. IIAU helped Gourmet Garden to establish a culture of accepting change. They have enabled the management team to think on their feet, use processes that are tried and tested and have given them the ability to innovate and substantiate the changes. Now the whole team works in line with our LEAN vision, minimizing waste wherever possible.

Andrew Eves-Brown – Chief Operating Officer is thrilled that Gourmet Garden is thriving beyond expectations. He attributes the successes to the LEAN Training the company has implemented through IIAU, and in particular, Rob Tomlinson.

“LEAN has been the catalyst for Gourmet Garden doubling in size over the last 12 months and we will continue to evolve using LEAN principles. As each key new staff member comes on board they are trained in LEAN principles so each team member is working towards our united vision of minimising waste from day one.

To quantify the success of this program we can disclose the fact that IIAU has helped us deliver savings of approximately \$800,000 - \$900,000 over a 4 year period.

With 46 out of the 70 current staff members already trained, plus an additional 19 at present in the process, it won't be long before every member of the Gourmet Garden team will be implementing the LEAN training principles and reaping the rewards.

Developing a value added product means that waste is no longer waste.

Staff identified and altered an operation that cost \$3000 to do but saved \$71,000

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