

# Meat supplier trims processes to improve output.

## Client:

A premier global food supplier to the world's leading brands.

## Challenge:

After completing a major expansion of one of their meat processing plants, they wanted to improve their product flow and yield, but without incurring additional costs.

## Process:

Initially, our analysis focused on every stage of the production process to identify any excesses or breakdowns that might contribute to less-than optimal results. A joint project team was formed to look at work flow on the meat trimming table. The team, made up of personnel selected from the production, quality control and process control areas, studied the methods used by individual trimmers and the movement of product before, during and after processing. They quickly found nonvalue-added activities in the layout of three trimming tables and, then, tested several different configurations to determine the most efficient layout. They modified individual workstations and refined the techniques for product trimming and handling.

The team also redesigned some of the tools and fixtures. For example, in slicing meat logs, uneven ends had been routinely cut off to minimize under-sized slices. When the team designed a new end-cutting fixture, the number of deficient end slices dropped from almost ten per-log to only two or three.

The team focused next on other aspects of yield management. In the cooking department, where the objective is to bring the interim product to a specified temperature and weight, extreme variations will cause lost product. The team worked with the cooking staff to develop controls that reduced their usual 1 - 1.5% over target weight to a mere 0.2%, leaving more product for downstream processing.

We also helped client staff to sharpen their supervisory skills through developmental sessions on waste identification and elimination, process mapping, capacity planning, value-added analysis, problem solving, statistical process control, and management control systems.

## Performance Results:

- 68 % Improvement in average meat trimmed per pound/hour.
- 6.4% Improvement in trim yield
- 2.2% improvement in final yield
- 80% reduction in cooked product over target weight
- 46% reduction in raw end piece losses

## Conclusion:

The client saw results within the first six weeks, when pounds/hour trimmed shot up over 60%. When quality control specialists challenged certain types and amounts of trimming, additional changes were made that increased trim yields from 90% to over 96%, providing more meat for the final processes. The team achieved further results through detailed process mapping and exhaustive analysis of value-added versus nonvalue-added activities. They reduced nonvalue-added activities by 71%, trim process time by 65%, and totally eliminated rework and WIP at individual work-stations.

After the training was delivered, the clients' staff was able to identify over eighty different forms of waste and to generate a list of action items that would enable them to make even more improvements to the process. They continue to meet daily to review performance, set new goals, and put their new found problem-solving skills to work. Months later, said the corporate EVP, "Results are measurable, consistent and continuing."