

RED STAR YEAST CASE STUDY



BACKGROUND

Bakers have trusted the high-quality performance of Red Star Yeast, LLC for over a century. The company, which is a joint venture between Lesaffre Yeast Corp. and Archer Daniels Midland, has become a world leader in yeast technology. Their Cedar Rapids, Iowa, plant is currently the largest manufacturer of fresh yeast in North America.

MAPCON

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Creating work orders in the spreadsheet required a number of steps. First, the information had to be entered in the work order tab. Then, the supervisor would assign the order to a technician, and it would be entered into their individual spreadsheet. At the end of the day, supervisors had to follow up to see if the work was done, and an email was sent out to the entire department noting what work was done during that shift. Following up with workers took up a significant amount of the supervisor's time each day.

THE CHALLENGES

When the plant first opened in 2005, they did not have a dedicated maintenance management system in place, so they used Excel spreadsheets, which caused a number of issues. First and foremost, they were not able to have more than one person in the spreadsheet at a time. When information had to be entered, workers sometimes had to wait until someone else was done with it. The other major problems with the spreadsheet were how repairs and inventory were tracked and managed.

Using an Excel spreadsheet to manage their inventory made tracking more difficult for Red Star Yeast. Since items could not easily be found, sometimes workers would think they were out of the item and order more. This led to money being spent on duplicate items. Conversely, technicians could not easily determine when new parts were needed, so they ran out occasionally, which caused issues when repairs were needed.

“The spreadsheets made it very difficult to find anything, and there was a lot of duplicate information.” Senior Technical Buyer and CMMS Administrator Eric Tucker stated.

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THE SOLUTION

Eventually the company realized spreadsheets were no longer sufficient. When Tucker was hired by Red Star Yeast, he took on the task of finding a maintenance management system that would be a better fit. In the fall of 2008, MAPCON CMMS was purchased. Tucker had actually used MAPCON at a previous job, and he was confident it would be a good fit.

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MAPCON has made tracking inventory and creating work orders a breeze. Employees can search for parts using a simple keyword search in the software, which prevents duplicate items from being purchased. Additionally, the inventory module allows administrators to set a minimum on each part. That means whenever the minimum number of a part is reached, a purchase requisition for it is automatically created.

Creating and dispatching work orders within MAPCON is also simple. Workers just navigate to the work order screen and enter the necessary information there. This saves the supervisors time because they don’t have to track down workers to find out the status of a repair. They can just look in their MAPCON system.

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THE RESULTS

The implementation of MAPCON CMMS has had a huge impact upon Red Star Yeast. The ability to easily track and locate inventory has not only saved them money by decreasing duplicates, but it has also decreased machine downtime because the proper person is automatically notified when they are running low on a necessary part. Additionally, the ease of creating and tracking work orders has saved employees and supervisors alike quite a bit of time, which can now be spent doing other necessary tasks.

In fact, Red Star Yeast has found MAPCON to be such a valuable tool, they have purchased nearly all of the advanced modules, and have rolled out the software to a total of five sites.

