MAPLE LODGE FARMS

Maple Lodge Farms increases productivity, shortens product development cycles, and reduces risk with Lascom CPG Solution

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Luis Ramirez – Maple Lodge Farm's Corporate Product Development Director

About Maple Lodge Farms

Maple Lodge Farms (MLF) is Canada's largest chicken processor and a winner of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies program since 2010. With four processing plants, three hatcheries and approximately 2,200 employees, the company processes 3.6 million chickens per week into a wide range of branded, private label, and food service products. With product innovation and food safety as key priorities, MLF employees are focused on delivering highly unique products using food safety protocols and standards that are amongst the highest in the industry.

The Challenge

To meet and exceed customers' demanding and ever-changing requirements, MLF's R&D team develops and launches as many as 30 new processed products and over 100 new packaging formats annually. Developing new products quickly, reliably, and with an uncompromising focus on quality is critical to the company's continued success. However, as the quantity, complexity, and tight turnaround of product changes increased, the existing tools and processes simply couldn't keep up.

Product, ingredient, quality and other key specifications were not centrally managed or electronically linked making it difficult to find, validate, update, and reuse information. Document creation and product review and approval processes were highly manual resulting in low staff productivity, slower time to market, and an increased risk of errors. To maintain MLF's market leadership, changes would be required.

Why Lascom CPG?

MLF's R&D team began searching for a fully integrated and cost-effective solution that could support their product development needs. Key requirements included:

- Easy to use
- Web based
- Customizable
- Data and document linking in order to eliminate re-keying
- Integrated approval processes

After a review of several Product Lifecycle Management systems, Lascom CPG R&D Solution was selected because it met all the R&D team's needs in the most cost-effective manner.

Luis Ramirez, MLF's Corporate Product Development Director, stated that "we love the way it integrates with our Word and Excel documents. Being non-proprietary and open to support our existing documents saves us a lot of re-keying and is a real plus". He goes on to say that "the system is not complicated to understand and is user-friendly enough that we can have users outside of our NPD group accessing the system without a lot of support".

MAPLE LODGE FARMS key figures:

- Over 3.6 million chickens processed per week
- 30 new processed product launches per year
- Over 100 new packaging format launches per year

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Lascom CPG R&D Solution

Today, Maple Lodge Farms' Lascom CPG Solution manages over 1,000 products and supports over 25 users in R&D, Purchasing, Q/A, Sales and Marketing, Costing/Finance, and Production.
Some of the key solution features include:

- Central management of all product development related specifications, documents, manufacturing process steps, and approval information
- Easy to use document searching and reporting tools
- Integration with Microsoft Excel to create, review, edit, simulate, and optimize product formulations
- Integration with ESHA Research's Genesis R&D system to synchronize nutritional data with R&D Edition's central information repository. This integration eliminates re-keying and accurately uploads revised formula, label graphic, ingredient list, or nutritional labeling text information
- Integration with Microsoft Word to automatically produce formatted Product Specifications and other key documents, saving time and eliminating errors
- Automated management of tasks related to product development processes that are triggered by dates or events occurring in the CPG system
- Review and approve workflows to manage all new product approval cycles

MLF plans to add future enhancements to the CPG system including a risk assessment approval process and integration with their ERP system.

Benefits

MLF's Lascom CPG Solution cost-effectively manages all the data, parameters, requirements, certifications, specifications, documents, and other information associated with product development, quality management, and regulatory compliance. Product development and other system users save considerable time in searching, validating, and analyzing information, helping them make better decisions, accelerate time-to-market, and increase their company's market valuation.

Users and management have reported the following benefits:

- Greater productivity – easier and faster to search for information, develop formulations, generate key documents
- Better control and visibility of the new product development review and approval process through managed workflows and easy-to-use reporting tools
- Able to shorten product development cycles and launch more new products per developer while reducing the risk of errors
- Provide support for internal and external quality and regulatory audits

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