

Sustainable Business Practices: A Natural Fit

An SBN Case Study on Taura Natural Ingredients

Website: www.tauraurc.com
Contact: Andrew Rout, Plant Manager
Established: In 1973 in Tauranga; additional production facilities in Belgium and service offices in UK & US.
Focus: Manufacturing/Supply/Exporting

BACKGROUND

Established in 1973, Taura Natural Ingredients is a leading global manufacturer and supplier of functional, concentrated fruit ingredients for leading brand marketers and product manufacturers. Utilising Ultra Rapid Concentration (URC®) technology, Taura manufactures a range of pieces, flakes and pastes for nutritional snacks, baked goods, cereals, chocolate and confectionery under the URC® brand. More than a traditional dried fruit supplier, Taura specialises in functional fruit ingredients for snack and bakery applications, manufacturing solutions, technical advice and innovative product concepts that are on-trend and driving new category growth.

QUOTE

“Sustainability is all-encompassing providing environmental, economic and social benefits to the business, its personnel, and the community. Putting sustainable practices in place is important in today’s environment to ensure Taura’s activities are conducted in the most efficient manner, minimising resource usage and waste. Environmental practices provide competitive advantage and a sustainable future for the business.”

Andrew Rout, Plant Manager, Taura Natural Ingredients

ACTIONS

a) Electricity

- Increasing production throughputs, reducing product changeovers and cleaning downtime thereby reducing amount of energy used during non-production. Overall this means the majority of energy used relates to productivity saving kWh per MT of product produced.
- All new motors installed are the most power efficient available.
- Variable Speed Drives continue to be installed on motors where possible to further increase their efficiency.
- Lighting replacement ongoing with more efficient bulbs e.g. 400W warehouse lights are gradually being replaced with 200W achieving the same Lux values.

b) General Rubbish

- Introduction of recycling programme.
- Some product formulations simplified with lower numbers of different raw materials. The packaging of these raw materials is 100% recyclable.
- Requesting where possible a change in packaging from suppliers to enable recycling.

c) Water

- Installation of a new processing pump that does not require water for seal operation, thereby reducing water usage.
- Reduced cleaning and water flushes through efficient scheduling.

- All pumps seal water. Only runs when the pump operating so water not going down drain when process isn't operating.

d) Trade Waste

- Reduced water usage means reduced water to trade waste (Win-Win).
- Production scheduling very important to minimise cleaning and water flushes between products.
- Recovery of product waste through improving production systems.

RESULTS (2006 VS 2011)

a) Electricity

- >250,000kWh saving pa
- Amounting to savings of approximately \$38,000

b) General Rubbish

- >500m³ reduction pa
- Amounting to savings of approximately \$17,000

c) Water

- Reduction of 3,000,000 litres pa
- Amounting to savings of approximately \$4,000

d) Trade Waste

- Chemical Oxygen Reduction 62 COD/MT to 34 COD/MT pa (45% reduction)
- Amounting to savings of approximately \$15,000

Awards/Achievements

- A key part of Taura's strategy was to utilise the EnviroSmart Programme to implement an Environmental Management System to the Enviro-Mark® Certification, initially to Gold level after 2 years and then to Diamond Level (ISO 14001 equivalent) 18 months later.
- One of five finalists in 2011 Supreme Sharp Tudhope Exporter of the Year category of the 21st Annual Bay of Plenty Export Awards. Taura won this same Award in 1992.

Staff as the Number One Asset

In addition to working hard to minimise the effects the business has on the environment, Taura also recognises that its number one asset is its people. Many and varied measures aim to show its staff that they're valued:

- \$200 annual reimbursement for staff for anything that contributes to health and wellbeing e.g. new training shoes, biking equipment, dental exam, a contribution towards health insurance etc.
- Annual on-site health check including eyesight, hearing, blood pressure etc.
- Annual Flu Vaccinations for all staff that would like to be immunised.
- Opportunity for staff and partners to go to a rugby game/movie once a year as a group.
- Christmas function for staff and partners.
- Annual ten-pin bowling event for staff.
- Every 2-3 years a family day is organised. Local staff cultural connections are acknowledged – one year the family day was held at the Matapihi Marae at the request of a staff member.
- Branded Taura sports bags, t-shirts etc. are made available to staff including a subsidised cycle uniform
- Monthly run/walk around the Mount.
- MASH (Management Afterhours Staff Hospitality) Breakfasts where the senior management team comes in early and prepares breakfast on site for all staff including nightshift.
- Staff entry fees subsidized for various sporting events such as local triathlons.
- Quarterly Staff updates on company performance and relevant initiatives.