

Situation

When rising costs began eating into Ridley Feed Ingredients' profit margins, leaders at the Mendota-based feed processor called on IMEC for assistance and the resulting productivity improvements enabled the company to maintain double digit growth in the face of intense global competition. Ten years ago, the company made about twenty standard blends of pre-mix. Today, Ridley customers buy more than 1,000 specialized formulas. As a result, Ridley can't carry large amounts of inventory and must become more flexible to produce to smaller run orders.

IMEC Solution

IMEC conducted a thorough review of the operations, mapped the value streams in four key areas of the operation, conducted baseline Lean Leadership and change management training, and provided basic Lean training to the employees through a hands-on simulation. Initial efforts were focused on the "Form, Fill, and Seal", a labor intensive, but profitable product line.

The team developed a predictable value stream for the line, reducing set up times for machines and implementing inventory replenishment systems. The focus was on reducing overtime costs and stock outages, cutting per-ton man hours, increasing on-time delivery and, most importantly improving the work experience for the Ridley Team.

Results

- Consistent on-time delivery
- Man-hours cut by one third

"We know that it's easy to sit back and cut costs, but if you're not careful, you can also cut value to the customer. With IMEC's help, we eliminated unnecessary waste while producing the quality our customers expect."

Tom Seite, VP and General Manager, Ridley Feed Ingredients