

EPA Green Enterprise

Project: Minimising fish waste in the supply chain

Organisation: Irish Fish Canners Ltd
Reference: 2019-ET-CP-97

Project Objectives:
To systematically examine the fish production process with a view to reducing process waste.

Amount Of Grant Aid Awarded: €60,000



Background:

Irish Fish Canners produces a range of canned fish products at its factory in Dungloe, Co. Donegal. It produces product for premium brands as well as its own-branded products.



Project activities:

THIS PROJECT ACHIEVED A 26% REDUCTION IN WASTE PER TONNE OF PRODUCT PRODUCED.

The project used 'design of experiments' techniques to identify changes to optimise the factory processes and reduce waste. Using these 'lean' approaches, processes were examined to identify where waste streams were coming from and the reasons behind these wastes. This systematic assessment was conducted with the help of external expertise and the process prioritised which waste sources to look at.

A mix of both technical and procedural changes were identified and implemented to achieve an overall waste reduction of 26% per tonne of product produced.

Sunflower oil used as an ingredient in some of the products was optimised through more accurate filling of cans, saving this valuable ingredient and leading to less can rejections due to overfilling. Distribution of fish piece size was also addressed to reduce fish waste. Cook times and smoking times were also analysed and optimised. Canned product wastage was reduced, by examining and making changes to the filling process, adding an extra step to clear the can flanges before putting on the lids. This reduced can rejects, in turn saving on metal.



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Project Outcomes:

The company found the systematic look at all areas of the plant together to be very beneficial, helping to identify and map areas of the process where waste occurred.

Energy was also saved due to the changes made, with a 26% reduction in heating oil, and 28% in energy use per tonne of product, due to optimising cook times and reducing reworks.



Further work since the project:

Irish Fish Canners continues to look at their production processes to optimise them in terms of energy, water and waste prevention. The company is investigating potential new applications for the unavoidable fish waste generated during the process.

For more on the EPA's Green Enterprise programme visit [here](#)

For more on this project contact info@irishfishcanners.ie

