

Woolston CV department pilots efficiency project

Skellerup's Continuous Vulcanisation (CV) department at Woolston is piloting a Continuous Improvement initiative. The project aims to boost efficiency initially in the CV department and then throughout the Skellerup Dairy Group. It was developed in partnership with industry training organisation, Improve (NZ) Ltd.

GARY GILLIANS, SKELLERUP'S BUSINESS Analyst says Improve has worked with the company to develop systems and processes that can be used by the various teams on projects which are then facilitated by Steering Committee and Departmental work groups.

"It's a tough market currently and we need to cut out waste, we need to be more flexible and more cost competitive. The main difference between this type of initiative and other types of projects," says Gary, "is that it is driven by the operators who work in an area to meet the overall goals of the programme.

"Using the tools provided the operators solve their problems and issues, by themselves in the majority of cases. All operators have a stake in the process which is visible to the whole group."



Back row (from left) Gary Gillians, Erol White (obscured), Alan Morris, Isaac Jackson (obscured), Paul Heremala, Pat Dench, Dave Green. Front Row (from left) Patsy Hooper, Alan Redmond, Morris King, Bruce Hood, Wayne Wallis.

The initiative is noticeably inclusive with projects and responsibilities mapped out on whiteboards. The plant management team, supervisors and operators have all completed a training programme to ensure everyone knows the goals of the initiative and the part they have to play.

The current overall goals for the project are to increase customer and employee satisfaction, increase process yields and facilitate profitable growth.

"There has been a very positive response to the project," says Gary. The pilot has been running in the CV department since October and is expected to be rolled out through the Skellerup Group next year.

Gary says the main job of the Steering Committee is to approve larger projects as well as guide the number of projects running at any one time. "That way we make sure we don't overstretch resources, that funding is allocated correctly and we can remove any roadblocks."

"Through the initial processes put in place several areas of potential improvement have come to light and these have either been remedied, are being worked on or are on the extensive list on

the Continuous Improvement Board in the CV Department waiting to be started," says Gary.

The CV initiative has had such a large visual impact that employees who walk through the area are asking when it will be their turn to be involved. "To them I say "Watch this space!," says Gary.



Meet Skellerup the Kiwi

This is Skellerup – a North Island Brown Kiwi and the newest addition to the Skellerup family. In recognition of the loyal support we've received as a long-established Kiwi company (we'll soon be turning 100) we wanted to help a New Zealand icon that's facing a hard time ahead. Read Skellerup the Kiwi's story on Page 4.