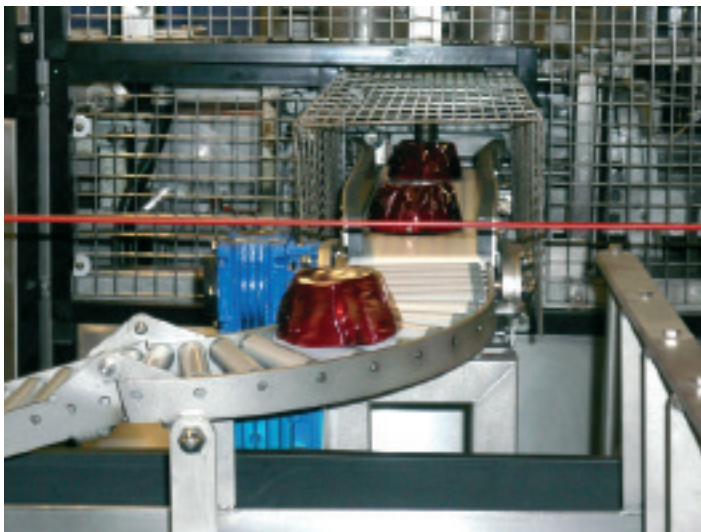


It's a good bet that, if you do not make your own, the Christmas pudding you will be consuming on 25 December 2010 will be one made by **Matthew Walker**. In fact, in a factory at Heanor, near Derby, the company is already producing puddings to order for 2011! With an annual production of Matthew Walker Puddings running at four million, and with over 40 different recipes to follow, this is a task beyond the capabilities of Santa and his elves.

develop a spares & parts storage & recording system; establish plant history records based on spreadsheets.

Sleigh maintenance perhaps? – but Rudolf would be out of his depth here



Prior to the audit the maintenance strategy had been largely reactive, with some planned, time-based servicing of machinery by in house engineers and equipment suppliers. There were procedures in place to respond to maintenance work requests but it was on a factory-wide basis and the system was not adequately documented. Post audit, these procedures were tightened and an engineering hierarchy for managing maintenance operations was introduced. The factory was zoned and designated engineers were allocated to specific departments. When a request is made the zone is identified and engineer for that zone is dispatched to deal with the problem

The engineering department still uses a manual card system for raising job requests, rather than a CMMS - this is being looked at but Nick says the manual system works well and although a computerised system would allow ease of both data input and collation of statistics, the initial outlay has not yet been justified. SAP is used at a corporate level and this is one possibility Nick is considering, although he would prefer to have his own dedicated CMMS. From the information recorded by the engineers on the job cards, spreadsheets are produced which record the cause of the fault, the remedial action take and any spares used, thus enabling plant histories to be compiled. From this recurring faults can be identified and machinery/procedures amended to correct the problems.

The production operations at Heanor are still quite labour intensive, although some aspects of production have been automated and there is an ongoing commitment to increase the level of automation. Nick is also introducing a level of production-led maintenance on a factory wide basis, where machine or line operators are responsible for some routine maintenance tasks or machine adjustments. However, to some extent, most departments are still autonomous with regard to the way they operate, although harmonisation is improving.

In summary, in 2005 there was no overall strategy, maintenance work was generally done at weekends and there was a lack of production involvement. By 2009, the maintenance objectives and strategy were in place; there was a plan of work for each week; a work order tracking system and plant history had been built using spreadsheets; the spares store had been established; production and maintenance were more harmonised; and there was an overall drive on continuous improvement. Over the period 2005-2007, the AMIS scores improved to 49% and by 2009 stood 61%. OEE has increased by 5% over the same period.

The key feature of the success has even the dedication of a small team, who have been able to develop maintenance procedures that were tailored to their own specific requirements. With the efficiency and productivity improvements being made at Heanor Nick has aspirations that Matthew Walker will be seen as at least equal to the sites that have far more sophisticated systems. ✨

* AMIS is the Asset Management Improvement System developed by MCP Consulting and Training.

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Dressed in white coat and mobcap (rather than red robes trimmed with ermine) Nick Garnett, the Chief Engineer at Matthew Walker (a division of Northern Foods) is responsible for ensuring that all his 'elves' have production plant and equipment that is fit for purpose. As part of the engineering and maintenance team's ongoing efforts to improve the standard of the company's maintenance operations an AMIS* audit was undertaken early in 2005, with a resulting audit score of 32%. Following the first audit a three year plan was drawn up with the following aims:

- 2005** Develop a strategy for planned maintenance; carry out a criticality analysis of all machines; identify spares for critical plant.
- 2006** Develop a work order tracking system and history using spreadsheets; assign plant numbers to all machines.
- 2007** Introduce key performance indicators (KPI's); aim for lower levels of machine downtime;