

## Packing in Improvement at SunRice



At SunRice's Leeton Mill, bumper rice crops were seen as an opportunity to take their Packing Plant to another level of performance.

In late 2012, a TPM & Lean approach to improvement was undertaken by the site in order to analyse and improve the performance of 4 out of the 5 Packing Lines in the plant.

Four Cross-functional Improvement Teams were formed, with each team made up of five (5) members representing:

- Operations;
- Maintenance;
- Engineering;
- Quality; and
- Management.

CTPM's on-site Navigation along with the Macro Focused Equipment and Process Improvement Team Member Manual, supported the teams throughout their improvement cycle. A cycle comprised of a 12 – 14 week program where teams come together for 1½ hour meetings and 1 hour activity each week to help improve the current state of their workplace, equipment and processes.

The expectation was that the significant amount of Formal On-going Improvement Time being allocated to the Packing Plant through the activity of the teams, would see the plant achieve a minimum 10% increase in output.

Mid-way through their first improvement cycle, the teams were interviewed by the sites

**TPM Co-ordinator**, James Gawne. The following extract of his interview with the "Sons Of SunRice" team (as seen in Figure 1) was shared with all personnel on site via their site TPM Times Newsletter.

*Q: What challenges are you faced with?*

*A: One of the challenges is that this line runs many different size products which means more changeover and more difficulty in operating the line.*

*Q: You all conducted a line observation. Did that reveal anything interesting?*

*A: Yes, we observed that the 90 degree pusher (an automated machine for turning bags) on the line needed some repairs and maintenance. We had that work done and straight away it improved the flow of the line.*

*Q: What have you identified as your focus items and improvement plan to increase the OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness)?*

*A: We are focusing on improving the bags per minute rate... also looking at the root cause of why we have so many blockages in the bundle machine.*

**Figure 1 – Sons Of SunRice Improvement Team**



**L to R:** Dylan Holt, Scott Ewers, Danie Schoeman, Brad Boots, and Robert Lord

*Q: What improvement ideas has your team come up with?*

*A: One idea which has been approved and rolled out, is changing the guide rails on the side of the conveyors which has removed a constant catch point.*

*Q: What has been your favourite thing about being involved in the TPM Program?*

*A: Seeing people start to question “why” and looking for a better way to do things... getting people engaged and encouraging other to participate... looking at new improvement ideas for the plant... better understanding of issues experienced by operators.*

This extract details the great commitment and work being accomplished by the teams at SunRice – Leeton and the constant support and praise of Leadership throughout the site.

The teams are currently wrapping up their first improvement cycle and will be presenting their results to the Site Leadership Team in the coming weeks. Watch this space for the great success and achievements of the SunRice teams in upcoming months.

For further information please contact:



**Vince Agostino**

Senior Navigator

Phone: 0419 876 488

Head Office: +61 2 4226 6184

Website: [www.ctpm.org.au](http://www.ctpm.org.au)