

# Case Farms

## A case study for learning better maintenance practices

GOLDSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA – Case Farms is a large poultry producer. Growing competition locally and abroad put Case Farms on alert to reduce costs in an effort to achieve higher profitability even though the price of poultry was not rising equally to meet the challenge. It was quickly determined that maintenance operations were a large part of those costs but without a proper CMMS/EAM system in place, it was practically impossible to determine how much it was actually affecting the bottom line.

### Company Background

Being a substantial employer in the local community, Case Farms employs almost 700 people from the area, of which more than 30 are dedicated to maintenance operations. It's a busy place during production runs, which last 2 shifts a day, 6 days a week. In a given day, more than 140,000 chickens are processed and shipped to customers across the US and Europe. With numbers like these, Case Farms couldn't afford to leave maintenance to chance. An unexpected breakdown could result in massive waste.

### The Challenge

Tony Bishop, Maintenance Manager, summed it up this way, "If I had to pick the three main areas where we needed help, it would be managing PM's, the work order process and controlling the costs of the work." Bishop continued, "We would send guys out to fix things without the proper tools or procedures and not knowing if the parts were available. We managed basic PM's but the process was so time consuming the overtime budget was going through the roof". Bishop surmised that they needed to first identify what their costs were and where they were being applied before they could begin to reduce them. It was determined that a CMMS/EAM system would help. In addition to the obvious, Case Farms also realized that their senior maintenance staff was aging and would soon be retiring. "We have a lot of knowledge but it was all inside people's heads", Bishop expressed. "We needed a place to document procedures for future generations and quite frankly, to make the

existing processes more automated. The existing manual method was just not good enough to keep up with demand. Too often, work orders would be issued with less than half of the information required, leading to improper work and wasted trips back and forth, resulting in unrealistic schedules".

**"DirectLine has done nothing but make us money"**

### The Solution

Because Case Farms was starting from scratch, they knew they could not realistically implement everything at once. Instead they chose to tackle the most prevalent needs first. The account management team at Megamation quickly ascertained the low hanging fruit and started working on the solution that best fit Case Farms' needs. "By implementing Work Orders and PM's first, we were able to quickly eliminate almost all overtime", mentioned Laszlo Podor, Account Manager in charge of the Case Farm relationship. "We were able to capture their unique processes and duplicate them in our system while introducing some best of breed processes to the maintenance team so they were able to take better advantage of the Directline service". Bishop added, "Directline can do anything 5 different ways to suit most of our needs but if we needed something unique, modifications were made almost overnight to meet those needs".

Bishop went on to include the benefits of unlimited attachments on every screen found in the system. “We are now able to document all procedures on all work orders to guarantee the technician has the right information at the right time to get the job done right the first time.” Scheduling has never been easier. “We now automatically schedule PM’s at optimum frequencies and with the ability to nest PM’s we don’t have to worry about duplicating efforts on the same line. It’s like we’ve photocopied the experiences of our senior technicians and placed them in Directline. The cost savings are incredible. Directline has done nothing but make us money”.

Not having used a maintenance management system at Case Farms before, the experience was relatively new for most people involved. Learning something new can be a daunting experience for most but as part of the Directline service all the training is included. “I love the fact that I can pick up the phone and just talk to someone who is there to help me”, said Bishop. “Whether it’s a simple process question or a request for a 2 hour training session, the team at Megamation Systems is always there and I don’t pay anything extra for it. I really feel like I’m the customer and that’s what service is all about”. Tony continued, “From our perspective, Directline has been a tool to allow us to make changes. But without the guidance of the account management team at Megamation, we probably would never have gotten the full value out of the system we enjoy today”.

Another benefit of Directline is that Tony now gets real-time reports at the click of a button. “The reports that I get out of Directline are exactly what I need to be able to make sound business decisions”, mused Bishop. “The reports that came with Directline are exactly what I need and when it comes to reporting to other people in the

organization, ‘I look good’ and for me, that is priceless”. Directline was able to pay for itself in the first month with reductions in overtime and downtime; reducing overtime by as much as \$10,000 a week. But the real rewards are yet to come. “As we learn to take advantage of the full scope of the benefits Directline has to offer, we expect that we’ll save enough money to be able to hire more people”, Bishop commented. “We are now engaging the Megamation team to build an interface to our Purchasing and Inventory system. We could have used Directline to manage this but we had already invested heavily in a separate system. Megamation was only too pleased to help us out... and again, it was all part of our monthly fees”.

### Some of the Key Benefits for Case Farms

- ▶ **Improved Preventive Maintenance; Reducing downtime and overtime**
- ▶ **Able to do more in less time with better Work Order Management**
- ▶ **Better real-time reporting**
- ▶ **Captured skills and trades in the system**
- ▶ **Better management of people , time, parts, tools, equipment and facilities**
- ▶ **Improved cost tracking; leading to reductions in costs across the board**

Case Farms has a significant number of employees whose native language is not English. Soon they will be implementing the Spanish localization for those people who will benefit from using a language with which they are most comfortable. Based on the users ID, they will see the system in English or Spanish but the information will be the same.

Eventually, Directline will be used in a much larger new production facility being built adjacent to the old plant. It too will process chickens but it will take advantage of different technologies to cater to different processes and different customers. “Based on how well Directline has worked out for us in this facility, we expect that the new facility will be in great hands once it’s opened”, concluded Bishop.

DirectLine is a world-class online CMMS/EAM service offered globally through an all-encompassing monthly subscription. With hundreds of customers throughout North America and Europe of various sizes and industries, DirectLine continues to benefit a broad range of maintenance and facilities management professionals.

Please contact us with any questions  
1-800-344-8655 and dial 4 ■ [info@megamationsystems.com](mailto:info@megamationsystems.com)