FOOD & BEVERAGE PRODUCTION

Tips for Balancing Agility & Quality
Key Questions for Managing the SKU-mageddon

What’s Driving the “SKU-mageddon”?
It doesn't take an industry analyst to tell you that SKU proliferation is accelerating. Any grocery shopper today is familiar with the overwhelming variety and choices contained in just one aisle of your typical modern supermarket.

The Challenges of De-Specialized Production
For food and beverage production facilities, de-specialization is the undeniable future: Four out of five food and beverage production facilities now produce more than 100 product SKUs and most expect this number to grow in the near future.¹

Productivity
Facilities must manage more frequent changeovers that cut into production numbers.

Inventory Management
More SKUs often mean a wider variety of ingredients to manage.

Quality & Compliance
More products expand the challenge of maintaining quality & compliance.

Food Safety
New ingredients, production workflows and changeovers increase potential fail points for contamination.

Cleaning & Sanitization Comes into the Spotlight
The new challenges and increased risks presented by de-specialization and expanding SKU production are bringing facilities’ cleaning and sanitization programs into the spotlight. Forward-thinking production facilities are making proactive adjustments to these traditionally behind-the-scenes programs, laying the foundation for operational agility while enhancing their confidence in quality assurance and food safety compliance.

1. PMMI Food Packaging Trends and Advances Report
Key Questions for Managing Risk & Enabling Operational Agility
To help you get started, here are critical questions that allow you to evaluate your current program and identify gaps and opportunities for improvement:

Being Audit-Ready
☐ Do you have an audit-readiness program that helps you proactively maintain ongoing compliance with relevant food safety and public health regulations?
☐ Do your vendor partners (cleaning, sanitation, pest management, etc.) provide audit-readiness services, such as pre-audit assessments to help you identify and address issues?

Ensuring Ingredient Quality
☐ Do you have clearly defined protocol for receiving and inspecting ingredients?
☐ Do you have metrics that allow you to evaluate your ingredient storage practices (i.e., spoilage and contamination rates, pest management costs, etc.)?
☐ Do you have a process for developing new receiving, inspecting and storage protocols for new ingredients?

Evaluating & Identifying Risk
☐ Do you know your facility’s specific key risk points for contamination issues like allergen cross-contact and flavor carry-over?
☐ Does your cleaning, sanitization and pest management program account for the specific ingredients, unique allergen and contamination risks of your current production environment?
☐ Do you have a process for re-evaluating and/or adapting your cleaning, sanitization and pest management program when new ingredients or new SKUs are introduced?

Streamlining Your Cleaning & Sanitization Program
☐ Do you know what elements of your current cleaning and sanitization program do not comply with organic food manufacturing standards?
☐ Do you have metrics that define the impact of your cleaning and sanitization practices on production throughput, downtime and overall facility performance?

Don’t Face SKU-Mageddon Alone
The good news for food and beverage production facilities: You don’t have to shoulder the added burdens of de-specialization and SKU-mageddon alone. Leaning on high-value partners not only allow you to solve these emerging challenges – but gives you more time and renewed confidence to focus on the larger strategies of building and running a successful production operation.

Learn more at www.ecolab.com/FoodBeverageIPM