Agristo

we love potatoes

FACTS AND FIGURES

SECTOR
Food

TURNOVER
600 million

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
1000

LOCATIONS
4

SOLUTION
Ultimo Maintenance Management

CHALLENGES
- No consistency in maintenance management between sites.
- Lack of operational data made it difficult to improve.
- Outdated view of maintenance operation held back adoption of preventive maintenance models.

RESULTS
- 5% increase in uptime.
- One, simple-to-use EAM system used across all sites.
- A clear set of maintenance data to use to benchmark progress.
- A solution Agristo can easily customise to its needs.

REGAINING CONTROL WITH THE ULTIMO EAM SOFTWARE.

AGRISTO REVOLUTIONISES MAINTENANCE OPERATION.

Specialising in own-label brands, Agristo has been manufacturing frozen potato products, such as traditional Belgian fries, for the global market since 1986. Based in Harelbeke, Belgium, the fast-growing company has three production sites in the country as well as one in the neighbouring Netherlands, which together produce over 800,000 tonnes of products per year. When Agristo opened its latest plant in Wielsbeke, Belgium, its production capability soared to new heights. However, as the capacity grew, so did the maintenance requirements. It became clear that the company had grown too big to stay in control of maintenance across all sites, which translated into operational inefficiency. The same problem could occur at each site, but each facility resolved it differently, and technical knowledge was not retained or shared in the company. To overcome the problem, the company decided to implement an Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system to control the maintenance process. After letting the maintenance and production teams compare and rate several providers, it became clear that Ultimo offered all the features the company required.

'With Ultimo, the chaos is gone.'

STEVEN VOLCKAERT, GROUP MAINTENANCE MANAGER

Live-link your assets and facilities.

ULTIMO

'Ultimo has been a game-changer, helping us change the whole mentality when it comes to maintenance.'

More structured and well-planned maintenance

The primary purpose of the new software was to implement structure into the maintenance operation. Before, there was a minimal digital log of all maintenance requests and jobs carried out. This made it difficult to analyse the amount of work carried out, manage stock of parts, and stay on top of the condition of the equipment.

Now, every request, action, and resolution is logged into Ultimo. Keeping track of the tasks carried out is simple. In 2020, the year Ultimo was installed at all sites, a total of 53,695 jobs were created and 46,330 completed. This means that over 127 maintenance tasks were performed each day, in a 24-hour-per-day, seven-days-per-week working regime. Agristo has complete visibility over every maintenance job across all facilities, making it easy to stay on top of asset health and benchmark performance.

The system is structured around the manufacturing processes, which are the same in every facility, even if the building and layout are different. This means that the maintenance teams can easily view and understand the maintenance status across the locations to ensure uniform solutions. What's more, Agristo gains vital insight into the health of the machines and the efficiency of its production processes, resulting in an estimated increase in uptime of at least five percent.

In addition to enabling more structured and well-planned maintenance, Ultimo offers Agristo other significant benefits. Firstly, it helps retain knowledge. Agristo's highly-trained maintenance technicians have a unique skillset, and it is vital that the knowledge is shared and kept within the company. As each maintenance task is logged in the Ultimo system, there is a clear trail of the steps taken to correct the issue. This helps future-proof essential processes if employees retire or leave the company.

Safety is paramount

Secondly, having a robust EAM system in place gives Agristo an easy way to demonstrate compliance to auditors and potential new customers. In the food processing sector, safety is paramount. With a clear maintenance structure and detailed digital records, Agristo can easily prove that periodical maintenance is carried out on schedule, show what the last breakdown was, and even which parts were used to fix it. All essential certificates are also stored in Ultimo and can be pulled up for demonstration with just a couple of clicks.

Agristo uses Ultimo across operations, making most of the submodules available in the system, including Production, Quality control, and Health and Safety. However, the company has also worked with Ultimo consultants to customise the software to meet its unique requirements. For example, it has built a list-based menu to eliminate spelling errors in part names. Before, technicians would type in the name of the part they used. However, the spelling was inconsistent, featuring capitals and mis-spellings, making the data impossible to analyse. Now technicians select the part name from the list, which saves time and ensures consistency in reporting and stock management.

'The biggest strength of Ultimo is that you can do a lot on your own to customise the solution.'