

CASE STUDY

J.R. Simplot Saves Energy through Documentation



Food processor's Idaho facility ramps up energy management systems

A number of J.R. Simplot Food Group facilities in Idaho and Washington have been participating in and benefiting from NEEA's Continuous Energy Improvement (CEI) program for several years. When NEEA proposed that Simplot's Aberdeen, Idaho, site join the ISO 50001/SEP-based Demonstration Pilot, it seemed like a natural next step for this leading facility.

In October 2009, Simplot Food Group's Aberdeen facility – which produces fried and frozen potato products – committed to participate in the Pilot as well as the U.S. DOE's *Save Energy Now* LEADER program. Its customers were already asking the Aberdeen facility to standardize more of its food safety processes. The facility responded and recognized the overlap between food safety standards and ISO management system standards. And while not interested in seeking ISO certification, the Aberdeen site did want to determine if a more rigorous energy management system would produce more energy savings.

» Standardization is key

The need for standardization in many areas spurred Simplot to investigate ISO-level management systems, but also posed a challenge, since the staff was required to divide time between

implementing multiple standards and meeting multiple requirements.



The ISO energy management system allowed Simplot's Aberdeen facility to focus on tracking energy use. Although initially cautious about standardization and documentation, the Aberdeen facility discovered that having documentation enables smoother staffing transitions. Instead of feeling confined, Simplot has found that standardization has made things clearer and easier.

» Implementing across multiple locations

An additional benefit to increased standardization and documentation is that all of the company's sites can learn and benefit from the successes and challenges of the other sites, without having to wait for the same problem to occur at their site. Consistent practices among staff members also make it much easier to evaluate progress over time. As an 80-year-old company, Simplot comprises a vast amount of institutional wisdom that is preserved through documentation.

The company is beginning to see the benefits of more detailed planning and preparation as the pathway to achieving their

» [continued on back](#)



J.R. Simplot's Aberdeen facility continues to yield more focus on energy use and more consistent and predictable energy savings.



J.R. Simplot now plans to offer the expertise, documentation, and processes developed at the Aberdeen site to its other sites.

goals becomes clearer. They are also enthusiastic about performing regular walk-throughs of past energy projects to ensure that the projects are still working as designed and preserve their investment. Simplot Food Group now plans to offer the expertise, documentation, and processes developed at the Aberdeen site to their other sites.

»» Achieving predictable savings into the future

In addition to focusing strictly on energy use, the Aberdeen site wanted more detailed levels of energy use monitoring. Their ultimate goal is to be able to measure the energy performance of individual equipment components. However, simply by focusing more attention on energy, the company is driving down their energy intensity statistics. Aberdeen's more robust energy management system continues to yield more focus on energy use and more consistent and predictable energy savings. ■

About NEEA's pilot program

The Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance's (NEEA) Northwest Strategic Energy Management (SEM) Demonstration Pilot of the International Standardization Organization's (ISO) 50001 energy management standard, and the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Superior Energy Performance (SEP) program is part of its commitment to transform the market for strategic energy management in the Northwest. NEEA, with the help of utility partners, conducted the pilot from October 2008-2010 with five participating companies from throughout the region. NEEA provided strategy and technology support, utility coordination efforts, and included NEEA field advisors to work with participating companies to embed energy management into industrial business plans — from leadership to operational levels — to support long-term energy savings.



»» Pilot Benefits

- Implementation of energy-saving efforts at each of the participant companies
- Persistent and reliable energy savings
- Statistically validated energy savings

»» Pilot Challenges

- Started at the height of the recession
- Many companies were not in a financial or staff resources position to participate
- All companies experienced major business changes during the pilot timeframe
- Many utilities and company "facilities maintenance" groups were not familiar with ISO-style management systems

»» Best Practices for Energy Reduction

- Executive, public commitment to the U.S. DOE's *Save Energy Now* LEADER program
- Goal of 5% energy intensity reduction over the past 3 years, plus 25% more future energy intensity reduction over 10 years
- Data tracking and analysis
- Describing and documenting processes
- Energy training
- Auditing and corrective action
- Management reviews



THE JURY IS IN

Industrial facilities choosing to implement strategic energy management have persistent and reliable energy savings, bolster the bottom line, and position themselves for sustained success in the increasingly competitive global marketplace.

