SPECIALITY FOOD SMOKER GOES FOR GROWTH

"Operating in a high risk food processing sector necessitates demanding microbiological standards. We have built an excellent reputation, considered the premier smokers in our field, but must ensure our supply chain and infrastructure are able to fully support the quality standards and new product development required for us to capitalise on this increasing demand. The University of Plymouth continue to be natural, valuable partners for us”

Nick Obolensky, Partner, Dartmouth Smokehouse

Established in 1995 at its base in Dartmouth, Dartmouth Smokehouse has established a considerable reputation for traditionally cured and smoked foods. The company is recognised as one of the UK’s leading speciality smokers and has received many prestigious food awards and endorsements from top food writers such as Rick Stein. It has demonstrated considerable success competing and indeed expanding in this niche market through mail order and direct delivery.

www.dartmouthsmokehouse.co.uk

The G&C project sparked a successful and highly productive relationship between the company and the University of Plymouth’s Agrifood Centre of Expertise, based within the Faculty of Science. Dartmouth Smokehouse accessed practical academic support at a subsidised affordable rate, an essential factor to a small medium sized enterprise.

As a direct result, some significant initiatives were progressed for the company, including:

- Specialist Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) study associated with food smoking was completed defining control measures, tolerances and procedures for monitoring, recording and documentation
- New associated policies and procedures were implemented such as “clear flow procedures”
- Recognising the need for British Retail Consortium accreditation, a preliminary detailed audit was undertaken against the BRC protocol incorporating purchasing, packaging, production staff controls, product development and control, stock management, equipment maintenance, health and hygiene
- Staff training was undertaken on BRC and quality management systems including training internal auditors, commencement of quality and procedure manual writing exercise and detailed preparation for assessment and accreditation audit
- New product development procedures were formalised
- Acquired the business of well respected westcountry smoker “Cornish Smoked Fish”
- Dartmouth Smokehouse was successfully accepted for a DTI funded Knowledge Transfer Partnership, available only to high growth companies seeking strategic business growth and development – project to focus on manufacturing systems development with emphasis on supply chain management, quality systems improvements and achieving BRC accreditation to exploit the company’s excellent market growth opportunities.

Catherine Emmings, KTP Associate with Dartmouth Smokehouse

For further information on working in partnership with the University of Plymouth contact:
Research and Innovation, University of Plymouth, Drake Circus, Plymouth, Devon PL4 8AA
Business Enquiry Service: t+44(0) 800 052 5600 f+44(0) 1752 233505
e Businessservices@plymouth.ac.uk www.plymouth.ac.uk/businessservices

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