



2020 IMPACT REPORT

MAINEMEP 
we teach manufacturing

mainemep.org

Our Mission

At Maine MEP, our mission is to facilitate economic development in Maine by providing needed services to Maine's manufacturers, helping them become more efficient, productive, profitable and globally competitive.

Maine MEP (Manufacturing Extension Partnership) is the most comprehensive resource available for manufacturers in Maine. Whether working with high-tech companies or start-up artisans, Maine MEP forges close and collaborative relationships with our clients to meet their particular needs.

Economic Impact

Maine's manufacturers have an enormous impact on the overall economic development profile of our state. It's no exaggeration to say that, with Maine MEP's help, our small and medium manufacturers keep Maine's economy moving and growing!

During the upheaval caused by COVID-19, Maine MEP worked hard to help manufacturers adapt, stay nimble and continue to succeed.

IN 2020, MAINE MEP CLIENTS REPORTED



\$66M

IN NEW &
RETAINED SALES



945

JOB
CREATED
OR RETAINED



\$13.7M

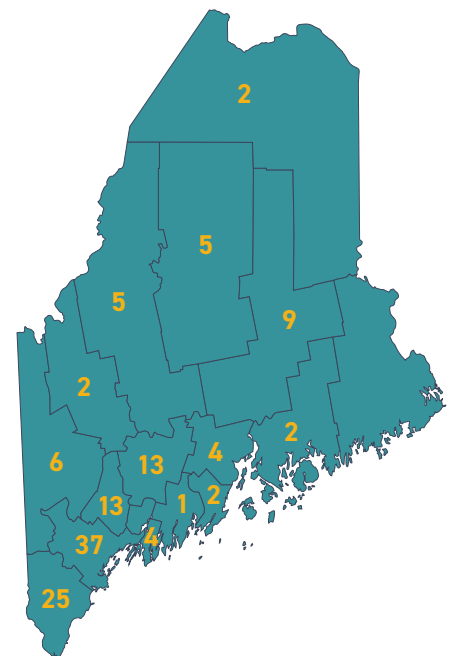
IN SAVINGS



\$22.8M

IN NEW
INVESTMENT

NUMBER OF 2020 PROJECTS BY COUNTY



PURITAN MEDICAL PRODUCTS

Even—especially—in times of crisis, Maine manufacturing can thrive. In the case of Puritan Medical Products, Maine MEP provided a rapid scale-up response that resulted in the company boosting its region's workforce and creating products that help keep the entire nation safe.

About Puritan

Located in Guilford, Puritan Medical Products is known worldwide as the most trusted manufacturer of swabs and an ever-expanding line of other medical products.

During the pandemic, as demand skyrocketed, Puritan has been one of only two manufacturers of COVID-19 testing swabs in the world. Previously, Puritan produced 20 million swabs per month. Now Puritan produces 90 million swabs per month.

Challenge

This rapid, demand-driven expansion required an immediate increase in staffing. At the same time, strict regulations and quality control measures meant that the new employees needed a robust onboarding process in addition to on-the-job training.

Solution

In May of 2020, Puritan reached out to Eastern Maine Community College for assistance. Knowing that Maine MEP project managers would be able to develop trainings, EMCC got in touch.

Maine MEP developed a 16-hour interactive training program tailored to the requirements for machine operators. This program set the tone for the Puritan culture, emphasizing safety, quality, and FDA Compliance. Since July 2020, Maine MEP project managers have trained 1100 new Puritan employees.

RESULT

Maine manufacturer meets national need in time of crisis.



\$75.5M

IN A 2020
GOVERNMENT-ASSISTED
INVESTMENT



1100

NEW EMPLOYEES
TRAINED



\$250K

PER WEEK IN INCREASED
PAYROLL FOR SKILLED
MANUFACTURING EMPLOYEES

"In my career, I've never seen the speed and support for a program like this happen as fast and as well as it did [as with Maine MEP]."

—Michael Ballesteros, Director of Regulatory Affairs and Quality Assurance, Puritan Medical Products

PROMOTING INNOVATION



COMPOTECH

Innovation is key to manufacturing success. Through a partnership with the Advanced Manufacturing Center, Maine MEP is working to give manufacturers in our state access to Industry 4.0 technology. These advanced services provide manufacturers with a competitive edge in the global marketplace, and by working with Maine MEP and AMC, the costs and risk are kept low while businesses test out cutting-edge technologies.

About Compotech

Headquartered in Brewer, Compotech creates mobile structures that keep soldiers safe in remote army camps. Their innovative technology—developed at the University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center by Paul Melrose and his team—is lightweight, easy to assemble and blast- and ballistic-resistant.

Challenge

Early in the product development process, Paul approached AMC and Maine MEP to assist in developing prototypes. After winning a DoD contract based on the success of the prototype, there was significant work to be done to fulfill it: shifting labor-intensive processes done by hand to quality-controlled, high-volume output.

Solution

AMC worked with Paul to develop three automation cells that combine and mechanize manual tasks. The cells are operator-controlled by touchscreen, allowing the input of custom instructions. This digital process saves time, ensures accuracy, and tracks all product data, allowing for the quality control necessary to meet government requirements.

RESULT

This Maine company turned an innovative idea into a reality.



\$35M

GOVERNMENT
CONTRACT



\$540K

SAVED COSTS

“The Maine MEP and AMC staff have been great to work with. Their efforts went a long way toward streamlining our production process. We are also grateful for Maine MEP’s help getting our ISO 9001 Certification: it was critical to landing this government contract.”

—Paul Melrose, President, Compotech

GROWING LOCAL TALENT



READY SEAFOOD

Retaining skilled labor suited to the jobs available in Maine is one of our state's biggest obstacles today. To address this issue, Maine MEP provides customized employee training to upskill manufacturing staff. These trainings strengthen our state's individual companies and our overall economic development.

About Ready Seafood

A purveyor of one of Maine's most iconic products, Portland's Ready Seafood supplies live and processed lobster from our coast to retail, wholesale, and food service companies worldwide.

Challenge

Ready Seafood is experiencing rapid growth, with a recent quadrupling of plant size. While this is good news, it has also meant challenges within the organization, including a significant increase in employees new to seafood processing and a need for coaching, mentorship, and training for the new management team. The challenge was to develop leadership training on a very short timeline driven by the start of the lobstering season.

Solution

Maine MEP co-developed a custom curriculum which combines leadership/team building/mentorship training with Lean Kaizen ("continual improvement") real-time problem-solving. Through the training, the team was able to develop leadership skills while working through four major challenges: 1) employee recruitment and retention, 2) downtime reduction, 3) sanitation process standardization, and 4) vendor evaluation efficiency.

RESULT

Ready Seafood is saving thousands of dollars per *minute* through improved efficiencies.



20M

POUNDS OF LOBSTER PACKED
& SHIPPED ANNUALLY



\$72M

TOTAL HARVEST
VALUE OF MAINE-GROWN
SEAFOOD IN 2018

"Bill from Maine MEP has completely transformed our organization. The skills he's taught us have had an immediate impact. Team morale and team expectations jumped up. We easily doubled our core team (people that all understand the common goal)."

—Brian Skoczenski, COO, Ready Seafood

AT THE HEART OF MAINE MEP ARE OUR SKILLED PROJECT MANAGERS

Our project managers come to us with years of hands-on experience in the manufacturing industry and proven success in their fields, and continue to stay on top of the latest technologies, best practices and certification requirements. Their assistance allows smaller manufacturers to tap into an extremely high level of expertise and partner with an individual who is genuinely invested in their success.

Our newest team member



ROB CLEMENT

Rob Clement joined the Maine MEP team in 2021 with more than 30 years of highly diversified experience including shipbuilding, precision machining, electronics, and decorative metal packaging. He has worked for organizations large and small, but most of his career has been with family-owned manufacturers. Rob has implemented quality management systems and has also lead efforts that allow employers to improve the quality of their processes and operations.



FOREST WENTWORTH

“My position gives me the opportunity to use cutting-edge technology to design and build solutions for client problems. We work together to develop everything from manual processing equipment for chocolate bar manufacturing to semi-automated packaging for soap makers to integrated robotic automation solutions for defense contractors.”



BILL WHITTIER

“Thirty plus years of experience in food processing allows me to assist Maine's producers to build process efficiency that allows them to reach larger markets.”



WAYNE MESSER

“I specialize in enterprise-wide transformations and strategic planning. I enjoy assessing the organizational environment and working with senior leadership to develop a successful strategy, whether that's through company-wide Lean implementations, plant designs and layout, or workforce training.”



JIM FAY

“At Maine MEP, we move the economic development needle in Maine every day. I love working with rural and small manufacturers in the state to help grow their business and create well-paying jobs. When I visit a manufacturer we've worked with and see how they've doubled in size in a year, it is incredibly rewarding.”

73% of our clients come to Maine MEP because of staff expertise



BOB DOIRON

“I have 30+ years of experience focused on quality management. A strong quality system is not only a good business practice, it also gives companies a competitive advantage. Helping clients maintain their quality management systems, develop quality programs and successfully achieve ISO Certification is extremely satisfying.”



JOHN KARP

“As a cross connect between Maine Technology Institute and Maine MEP, I advise clients on new technology, business development, financial feasibility analysis, technology transfer/licensing, intellectual property, access to capital and more.”

BOARD MEMBERS

Steve Boulet

Auburn Manufacturing Inc.
Human Resources Manager

Greg Boyd

Alternative Manufacturing Inc.
President & CEO

Joan Dolan

Maine Department of Labor
Director of Apprenticeship & Strategic Partnerships

Sally Garand

Camden National Bank
Vice President, Portfolio Manager

Denise Garland

Maine Department of Economic
& Community Development
Deputy Commissioner

Scott Knapp

Central Maine Community College
President

Kristine Logan

Midcoast Regional
Development Authority
Deputy Director

Dave Mika

Porvair Filtration
General Manager

Keri Seitz

Idexx
Director, Global QA

Dennis Shores

Xuron
Consultant

Harvey Smith

Kennebec Technologies
Retired, VP of Operations

John Wolanski

JL Group Enterprises Inc.
President

David Nemi

Franklin Printing
General Manager

Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is supported by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (a subsidiary of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce) and the state of Maine. Maine MEP is a partner organization of Maine's Department of Economic and Community Development and collaborates with other economic development organizations to provide integrated services to Maine manufacturers.



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Connect with us today for a
no-cost on-site assessment!