

## Case study – Crafty Chef



### Energy savings on the menu for Crafty Chef

The need to streamline processes and reduce energy costs prompted Western Sydney food manufacturer Crafty Chef to undergo an Energy Saver audit. The findings of the audit enabled Crafty Chef to access Commonwealth Government financial assistance to implement several energy saving projects.

The Gohil family, who operate the food manufacturing business Crafty Chef, saw a gap in the market for healthy, quality convenience food. Within six months of opening, they were supplying major supermarkets nationally, and needed to relocate to larger premises. That was fifteen years ago. Today, the company produces a range of products, from cottage pies to vegetable samosas, at a 6400 square metre site in Emu Plains, Sydney, and employs 53 local workers.

Increased competition and rising production costs meant that Crafty Chef looked for strategies to remain competitive. The company chose to increase capacity by replacing its freezer system with an ammonia spiral freezer. When coupled with a keen interest in sustainable practices, this led the Gohil family to the Office of Environment and Heritage's (OEH) Energy Saver program. From the outset, the company's General Manager, Jitesh Gohil saw the benefits of an Energy Saver audit.

'It is certainly a competitiveness issue. We know that energy prices are going up, and refrigeration is crucial to our business. It is imperative to keep costs under control and streamline our efficiencies at the same time.'

The Energy Saver audit recommended simple upgrades to Crafty Chef's refrigeration systems, which would reduce site electricity consumption by more than 50 per cent. Crafty Chef is going ahead ▶

#### In brief

An Energy Saver audit helped the family-owned food manufacturer, Crafty Chef, identify how to upgrade its refrigeration system to reduce costs by improving energy efficiency. Implementing the main audit recommendations is saving Crafty Chef \$65,000 a year on power costs, with a payback period of three years.

The audit report also provided the technical input for applications for Australian Government funding and finance, which enabled Crafty Chef to implement the proposed projects without raising its own capital.

#### Results

- Electricity savings of 58 per cent.
- Realised ongoing annual cost savings of \$65,000 with a three year payback.
- Potential total ongoing annual cost savings of \$79,000.
- Ongoing annual reductions in carbon emissions of 700 tonnes.
- Successful applications for Australian Government funding of \$499,999 and other finance, resulting in no required up-front capital for equipment upgrades.



► with the audit recommendations of energy efficiency actions for the new ammonia spiral freezer:

- screw compressor speed control
- evaporator fan speed control
- variable head pressure control
- heat recovery.

These actions deliver ongoing annual savings of \$65,000 a year, with a payback period of three years.

The size of the savings and the availability of the technology impressed Jitesh Gohil.

'We were totally surprised and very pleased with the amount of energy use we could reduce. What we could save was quite phenomenal. The technology we are implementing is not brand new technology. It's amazing what is out there and what is possible without reinventing the wheel.'

Energy Saver provided engineering support after the audit to assist with project implementation. It was through this process that the Gohil family discovered that Crafty Chef was eligible to apply for an Australian Government grant to implement the project under the Clean Technology Investment Program and could also access finance through Low Carbon Australia.

'Working with OEH was a surprise for us, the level at which they helped us. It made us focus on consumption of energy as a project; and what came out in the audit was eye-opening for us. But more so, it opened doors into other Government departments. And that was a big benefit.'

The Energy Saver audit enabled Crafty Chef to approach both the Clean Technology Investment Program and Low Carbon Australia with confidence. The audit clearly outlined the financial benefits of implementing the projects, and fulfilled large portions of both applications.

'A lot of the information that came out of the energy audit transposed directly into the application, covering the bulk of the work.' Crafty Chef received a grant of \$499,999 from the Clean Technology Investment Program and financed the remainder through Low Carbon Australia.

With its successful funding and finance applications, Crafty Chef has upgraded its refrigeration plant, allowing it to meet increased demand for its products while significantly reducing its energy costs. The savings on Crafty Chef's energy bills will cover the repayments on its Low Carbon Australia finance, meaning that the Gohils will cover the total upgrade costs of \$1,089,913 without raising any up-front capital. The upgrades will also minimise the impact of increased energy costs in the future.

### Your next step

To find out how your business can access support contact the Energy Saver team

**Email** [energysaver@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:energysaver@environment.nsw.gov.au)

**Call** 1300 361 967

**Visit** [environment.nsw.gov.au/business](http://environment.nsw.gov.au/business)