

WSDA – Seed Testing Bag Markings

Project Title: Seed Testing (Nematode) Bag Markings Dates of Workshop: April 2013 Contact Person: Brad Avy, Assistant Director, Commodity Inspection Division Lean Tool(s): Quick Start: Implementing “Everyday Ideas”
Background
The Seed Program area inspectors gather field samples each season for Nematode testing. The samples are gathered in plastic bags and the area inspectors mark each bag with the information required for the laboratory technicians to process the sample when it arrives back in the Seed lab. The markings consist of three or four lines of information (sample number, field number, crop number, etc.) and it takes about five minutes per sample for the area inspector to mark the inspection bag, reading from copies of inspection request documents provided to the inspectors from office assistants.
Objectives/Mission Statement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the amount of time and opportunity for error when inspectors were transferring information from the inspection request documents to the sample bags.• Eliminate duplication of effort• Reduce copying of inspection requests.• Increase capacity for area inspectors to focus on customer requests
Targets/Metrics Estimated for Current and Future Conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formed a team consisting of office staff and area inspectors• Discussed/documentated current work processes• Discovered that the needed information was already kept in a spreadsheet in the office. Labels could be generated for the bags from this existing spreadsheet.
Results
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Inspectors use pre-printed labels generated from information already contained in a spreadsheet in the office.2. Copying of inspection request documents for area inspectors was eliminated3. Potential for errors reduced due to reading/writing errors, increasing customer satisfaction and confidence.4. Inspectors save approximately 5 minutes per sample by using the pre-printed labels. Field Nematode Inspections this year totaled 302. At 5 minutes per bag, approximately 25 hours were saved by inspectors not having to read through the documents and mark the sample bags.
Next Steps
Review other seasonal lab processes for effectiveness and efficiency
Other Comments