

Case Study Motivating employees to save water

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“ In designing the posters the key challenge was to try and make some big complex numbers relevant and to have some fun along the way. *“Although we cannot directly attribute savings to the posters, we have a continuous pipeline of good ideas being generated by our colleagues. The posters have gone down really well and have caught the eye of colleagues and customers alike.”* ”

Robin Dearden, Group Environment, Health & Safety Manager, Arla.

Arla Foods is the UK's largest dairy company¹. It's a farmer-owned cooperative that processes over three billion litres of milk per year across 14 manufacturing sites. As well as being number one in fresh liquid milk, cream, butters and spreads, they are also the UK's largest cheese manufacturer. Arla produce for all the major UK retailers and are behind leading brands such as Lurpak, Anchor, Cravendale, Lactofree and Castello.

In 2013 Arla used 3.8 million litres of water in its operations. As part of an ambitious sustainability strategy, they committed to reduce water use by 20% by 2020 (from a 2005 baseline).

Arla is investing in technology to reduce water usage. Their new dairy in Aylesbury incorporates a number of technologically advanced water-saving innovations in its design, such as water recovery and re-use, rainwater harvesting and a state of the art processing plant.

However, Arla also recognises that employee engagement is key to reducing water use.

Throughout 2013, Arla produced a series of posters to encourage employees to reduce water, energy, fuel and carbon impact across its operations.

Figure 1: Arla's poster campaign on saving water



The posters were designed to link into the company's existing LEAN and Continuous Improvement activities. Both topics were covered by posters which appeared in sequence:

- one looked at the bigger picture - the water savings that the company as a whole needed to achieve to meet their target;
- the second then broke it down – expressing the target as equivalent savings that was required per employee.

In both parts of the campaign, employees were asked for **their** ideas as to how Arla could improve. All ideas are captured and recorded in each manufacturing site's Continual Improvement (CI) log.

The ideas are reviewed by the CI team and allocated for action, where possible. The colleague who raised the idea receives feedback and the opportunity to be involved in the implementation stage, as appropriate.

¹ Based on turnover and milk pool (<http://www.arlafoods.co.uk/about/company-overview/>)

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