



TRACEGAINS

Case Study

Case No.: 001120

Assigned to: CLASSIFIED

The “SECRET SAUCE” is Superior Supply Chain Management

Mullins Food Products Inc. has been an industry-leading sauce manufacturer since they first started bottling their popular, homemade barbecue sauce in 1934. Still family owned and located in Broadview, Illinois, Mullins Food Products manufactures and packages sauces and dressings for some of the largest quick service restaurants in the world. The company’s 330,000-square-foot facility produces millions of gallons of liquid food products every year, incorporating about 550 raw materials from 139 ingredient and packaging suppliers. Mullins Food Products processes a full range of sauce packaging capabilities, making them the premier private label sauce supplier in the industry.

Never willing to compromise on the fundamentals that built the company, Mullins Food Products requires their suppliers to adhere to the same standards and principles that Mullins does: quality, honesty, and a commitment to sustainable and socially responsible sourcing and employment practices.



Case Study contains the following:

- **Challenges**
- **Solutions**
- **Testimonial**
- **Outcomes**



Challenge

Mullins Food Products Quality Assurance Department was predominantly responsible for all their suppliers' regulatory documents and product specific documents. Each supplier's facility was required to provide 10 documents each and 17 additional documents per item. In total, **Mullins Food Products had to manage more than 10,000 documents, which were stored as hard copies in countless three-ring binders.**

The company had **experimented with another document management system** to manage all the required documentation and ensure it was all on site and up to date. The system wasn't user friendly and didn't provide Mullins Food Products with the help they needed. Instead, they were **left with some of the documents in a system that wasn't easy to use, with the rest still stuck in three-ring binders.**

Solution

Near the end of 2014, Mullins Food Products implemented both **Supplier Management** and **Supplier Compliance** from TraceGains. In February 2016, Mullins had their annual BRC audit. **With the new document management programs from TraceGains, Mullins could pull up all the documents the auditor requested within seconds.** Before implementing TraceGains, Mullins employees would have to scour through the old document system and thumb through the old three-ring binders in the hopes of finding the documents the auditor wanted.

TraceGains requires suppliers to provide certain documents on a yearly basis. All the documents Mullins provided to the auditor were up-to-date, unlike in previous years. Jamie Krystofiak, Quality Assurance Manager at Mullins Food Products, says, "If the documents obtained from the old system and binders weren't dated within that audit cycle timeframe, the auditor noticed."

Implementing TraceGains Supplier Management and Compliance products not only streamlined the audit process for Mullins Food Products, it also **improved cross-functional communication within the company.** Before TraceGains, responsibility for supplier documents rested with the Quality Assurance Department. Since the implementation of TraceGains, **multiple departments at Mullins have received login credentials so they all can access the information stored in the TraceGains system.**

Krystofiak adds that, "**because TraceGains is a 'living' system, all of the documents are present and up-to-date.**"

Not only did TraceGains streamline communication with Mullins' vendors, it also shifted the burden of managing more than 10,000 documents away from QA and allowed for all departments at Mullins Food Products to simply log into the TraceGains system and find what they need when they need it.



"I have nothing but positive comments about TraceGains, both the software and the customer service. We've been using the Supplier Management product for about three years now. This manages the regulatory documents that you require from your suppliers and the regulatory documents you require for the items they supply. We really had no way to know if we had the most current documentation, if we were following our policy regarding requiring the documentation every two years, or if we even had all our required documentation.

"We realized that when FSMA rolled out, we needed to find a tool to help us become a better company and

ensure that we had every piece of documentation we needed for each supplier and each item that we bring into our building. Right now, there is myself and one other person maintaining Supplier Management.

"We considered a few other software suppliers, but we felt TraceGains had what we were looking for: a place for us to organize our

required documentation and customer service to ensure we were making the most of the software.

"When first starting, we had to load a lot of information into the system (supplier ID, supplier name, item ID, item name, etc.). It's a lot of work upfront, but one person could do this. TraceGains supplies you a spreadsheet tool to use that, once completed, you send it back to them and they load it into the system. Once I became familiar with the software, though, I could do this manually on my own. You can set up eblasts to your suppliers that indicate which documents are missing, expired, or expiring soon. This is a nice feature because once it's set up, you just let it go. Suppliers are open to using the system and have been very cooperative.

"TraceGains also has standard documents that can be used. These are nice because:

- a) Your documentation becomes standardized through all the suppliers.*
- b) The information from these standard forms automatically will get populated into the system.*
- c) There's an executive group made up of TraceGains customers who works on ensuring these standard documents are relevant with regulations and for each type of company in the food industry.*

"The software is very user friendly. We have multiple departments at Mullins that use TraceGains: receiving, pricing, purchasing, product development, and QA. There are only a few "super users" at our facility and the system can be set up so that other groups can just view the documents and not edit anything. Our method of obtaining documents was very sporadic and unorganized before TraceGains. The TraceGains software has streamlined this process immensely and it is very user friendly. In addition to the basic training, TraceGains also hosts regional trainings. I've attended these, and they're a great addition to the basic training and go into more detail.

"TraceGains is always evolving, too. They have an executive team made of up their customers who review and edit the standard documents. This is only one example of how TraceGains ensures that they're giving you the best product. They have a lot of presence in the industry and make sure they're up on the latest regulatory news. They required that all their employees take the Preventive Controls Qualified Individual course to understand what the industry is dealing with in terms of the Food Safety Modernization Act. I still have scheduled weekly calls with my customer care rep to go over any questions or any updates. Stellar customer service!

Overall, it's a great system if you're looking for something to organize and streamline your process."



Customer: Mullins Food Products Inc.

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SOLUTION OVERVIEW

Challenge: The company had difficulty manually managing more than 10,000 documents stored in three-ring binders and a system that wasn't user friendly. Ensuring all documents from each supplier were up to date and easily accessible for audits and day-to-day operations across departments was tedious and complicated.

Solution: TraceGains' Supplier Management and Supplier Compliance solutions were seamlessly implemented and allowed for quick and easy access improving cross-functional work flow and seamless auditing processes.

Outcomes

- By implementing TraceGains solutions, Mullins Food Products is confident and 365 Audit Ready™.
- Employees no longer forced to search through three-ring binders and outdated file management system to find documents. Everything is easily accessible and always up to date.
- TraceGains systems allows for employees in all departments to access current supplier forms as needed rather than having to burden one specific department with constant document requests.

