



Customer Success Story: Midwestern Pet Foods



Pet Lovers Making Pet Food

Midwestern Pet Foods is a privately held fourth generation, family - owned business that manufacturers high quality pet food & treats. Midwestern Pet Foods operates plants in Monmouth, IL, Evansville, IN, Chickasha, OK, and Waverly, New York. The company was founded in 1926 and got their start through producing human food such as flour, corn meal and other dry goods. In the 1970s, they transitioned into manufacturing pet food and treats. Today, the company produces only high-quality pet food lines which include *Earthborn Holistic*, *Unrefined*, *Venture*, *Ultimates*, *Wholesomes*, *Sportmix*, and *Sportmix CanineX*.

Midwestern Pet Foods is distinguished by their family-owned, pet-loving culture and environment. Their tagline *“Pet food is what we do... and we love it”* perfectly illustrates the company’s passion and commitment to pets and their well-being. All the employees are pet owners and pet lovers. Office employees often bring their pets to work with them. As pet lovers, they sincerely care about the ingredients, quality, and handling of their products because they feed these same products to their own beloved pets every day.

Dylan Woods, Plant Manager of the Chickasha, OK plant, shared how their experience with Repete automation has benefited Midwestern Pet Foods and helped them create premium products for their furry end users. After researching and speaking with various automated control system providers, Dylan said Midwestern Pet Foods chose Repete because of the relatable family-owned culture, the value and fair pricing, and the support we offered.

- *A Valued Partnership*
- *Food Safety*
- *Quality & Consistency*
- *Proactivity*
- *Traceability*
- *Accountability*
- *Reduced Waste*

The partnership started with successfully implementing Repete batching systems at their plants. Then Midwestern Pet Foods continued to implement automation into other process areas such as extrusion. Today, Repete systems are controlling key process areas such as batching, extrusion, and other areas of the plant. All 5 plants will soon be entirely automated from receiving to packaging. Repete solutions are integrated with their ERP system, supporting higher level business automation and traceability.

Since implementing the Repete systems, Dylan said some of the biggest impact has been in the areas of **improved food safety, quality and consistency, proactivity, traceability, accountability, and reduced waste**. Improvement in these areas has enhanced their products overall to better benefit the pets' health and wellness; which is what they're always striving for.

Prior to implementing Repete systems, Midwestern Pet Foods was doing a lot of paper tracking for lot traceability. Dylan said that since automating extrusion, grinding, and subsequent logistical items, they've optimized **transparency and traceability**. This has been key to ensuring that Midwestern Pet Food's top priority of **food safety** is realized.

"The systems have helped with quality and food safety because of the accountability and tracking they offer. We've taken that human error portion out of the equation, so we now know for a fact exactly how, where, and when a product is handled."

Dylan also talked about how they've become much more **proactive** since implementing Repete solutions.

"Repete has directly pushed our extrusion processes (which is the heart of all our plants) to become much more proactive. Historically with all the manual labor, we were very reactive. We'd have to wait to look at the product, then react based on what food we were getting to see if we need to make a change. Now that we have more visibility and control over what's going into the systems, we're much more proactive."

Along with this proactiveness, comes **better accuracy**. Midwestern Pet Foods takes formulation seriously and uses high quality and wholesome ingredients for all their recipes. It is important to them that each run is as accurate as possible.

"We know what we're putting in, we know what we're getting out and we're not just chasing a specification any longer. We're no longer turning valves and pushing buttons. We're starting the process and allowing the system to run that process from start to finish. We're asking the system for a specification and that's what we're getting."



Reduced waste and **better consistency** were other advantages Dylan mentioned.

“We have a built-in shrink (or scrap) that we anticipate with every production run, and Repete controls undoubtedly has reduced that scrap factor. That’s really been beneficial in the ROI department, but more importantly in food safety and quality. We’ve gained a more consistent product, a more consistently handled product, and visibility over lot traceability.”

When asked if the Midwestern Pet employees have benefited from the solutions, Dylan said his **employees have benefitted** greatly, most notably within the extrusion part of the process because there is much less manual labor involved now and they can spend their time more productively on other tasks.

“Before extruder automation, to start the equipment and make kibble appropriately, the employees had to touch no less than 20 buttons and valves. Now that it’s automated, that’s done on a computer screen with a click of a couple buttons to queue up that run. Our operators are much happier and have less manual labor and running around/ reacting to issues.”



The **strong partnership** between Midwestern Pet Foods and Repete is the foundation to all this success.

“We are extremely happy with the service and the support that we received after implementation. Midwestern Pet Foods and Repete learned a lot working together on the extruder automation project. After the system was deployed, Repete provided support to make sure the team was trained and the system was properly utilized. Repete didn’t just produce this control system, implement it and handover the keys. They understood they would need to support and refine this once we got rolling and that’s absolutely what happened... And apart from that, from a day-to-day operation, if we have a support issue or service problem it’s been very easy to get in touch with someone and get the right eyes on it,” said Dylan.

The team at Repete enjoys working with Midwestern Pet Foods and values the relationship. Their mission of providing the highest quality, safest product to their customers is something we’re proud to be part of.