

Case Study

Injury rates were rising, and National Beef needed a solution to improve the hiring process so new employees were not getting injured within the first year of employment. For those who did get injured and were given restrictions, National Beef needed an accurate and quantitative return-to-work and limited duty process to follow.



The Client:

National Beef is a beef processor headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri that produces fresh, chilled, and further processed beef and beef by-products for customers worldwide.

Number of jobs analyzed: 700

Services Provided:

Job Demands Analysis, Ergonomic Risk Assessment, AtlasWork™

“The Dodge City facility is the 4th largest beef processor in the US, and they needed an efficient and effective way to capture essential functions and job demands, and complete accurate ergonomic risk assessments and develop solutions for those high-risk jobs.” Tony Silva, CPE, Director Atlas IPS



Supporting Your Investment in People



Over 3000 employees performing over 700 jobs.

Our Challenges:

It's a challenge we have seen many times. Human Resources needs to fill open positions and Safety needs to reduce injury rates and sometimes those silos don't always communicate the obstacles they each face. National Beef was seeing an alarming rate of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) among its workers at its Kansas City, Missouri processing plant. New hires were getting injured at an increased rate and the return-to-work process was not working.



Atlas and National Beef began by discussing the challenges they were facing. These included:

- Not putting barriers in the hiring process
- The need for matching employees with the right job for their physical ability
- Reducing injury rates among current employees
- Job matching for return-to-work employees after an injury
- Updating job descriptions and conducting ergonomic risk assessments

Even though US meat and poultry packers and processors have continued to make significant progress reducing injury rates over the last two decades, they remain higher than their manufacturing counterparts.

As many of the most serious work conditions have been addressed it had become time for National Beef to look at new methodologies to keep their industrial athletes safe from repetitive movement soft tissue injuries.

Our Solutions:

MSDs, reported early in employment (within the first 18-24 months), are common with fast paced repetitive movement jobs like those seen at National Beef.

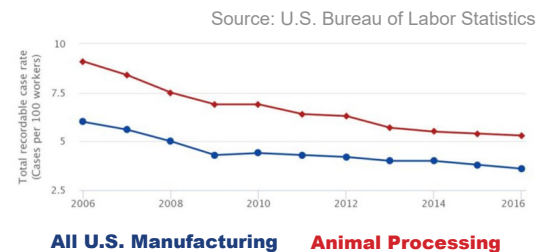
"A single neck / back injury can cost an organization \$84,000-\$168,000", says Silva. "Knowing the physical requirements of a position ensures employers are putting employees who can physically perform the essential functions of the work in a position to succeed." As each job comes with its own set of physical requirements, job demands analysis had to be completed or updated on all production positions at National Beef to ensure reliability and legal compliance.

Atlas worked on-site at National Beef to complete over 700 job demands analysis and ergonomic risk assessments. As part of the process, Atlas measured and validated each job's essential and non-essential tasks. This ensured the job descriptions were accurate and legally compliant, which would assist in the hiring process as well as the limited duty and return-to-work processes.

"Our experience shows that often the single biggest obstacle to defining the physical requirements of the work is finding the time to gather and input the data. AtlasWork™, our cloud-based software, makes the process simple and efficient," says Silva. "The software also immediately uses the JDA data to drive ergonomic analysis and prioritization of hazards, eliminating the need for a separate onsite analysis."

Atlas ergonomic experts trained the National Beef ergonomics team in ergonomics, ensuring National Beef would be able to continuously improve safety with the software and data provided by the job demand and ergonomics analysis project.

Finally, and possibly most important given the many jobs and numerous stakeholders reviewing information, AtlasWork™ proved to be the robust and easy to use platform National Beef needed to house all their job information in one central location.



Our Results:

Utilizing AtlasWork™ to capture and record data reduced the amount of time it took to complete 700 job demands analysis by half. Instead of a paper-based record that lives on a shelf in the Human Resource department, through AtlasWork™, Human Resources, Safety/Loss Prevention, Operations, and Workers' Compensation are now provided easy access to current job requirement data, allowing for better decision making.

AtlasWork™ also helped National Beef effectively and efficiently manage and execute their ergonomics process. Having a central location to access job related job demands data, supporting media (videos and photos), and documents involved with the procedures of the work made understanding the job easy. Having AtlasWork™ automatically generate an ergonomic risk assessment made the process simple and quick.

Finally, allowing accurate and up to date job demands data to drive better informed decision making for job placement, and return-to-work and limited duty requests gave National Beef the boost they needed to continue to reduce injury risk.

Match Results for Employee: Jane Doe			
Department	Job	Percent Match	
3400 COOLER	GRADE SCALE	100%	Review Restrictions
Min Percent Match			
3400 COOLER	LEAN FAT DEFECT PICKER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	FILL TUB	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	LOIN VING TRIMMER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	LOIN FLAP MEAT TRIMMER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	RIB FINGER/HEEL MUSCLE PLATE FINISHER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	LEANER LINE2 BACK RIB BOXER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	CHUCK FLAP BOXER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	TRIM HANGING TENDER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	3RD MUSCLE TRIMMER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	TRIMMERS CHUCK TENDER/HOOD TENDER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	STAGE RIB	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	STAGE BALL TOP	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	BAG BACK RIB	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	BACK RIB SAW OPERATOR	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	STAGE CHUCK SHORT RIB	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	STAGE CHUCK SHORT RIB	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	BAG RIB SHORT RIB	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	BAG RIB FRIGER	95%	Review Restrictions
3400 COOLER	BAG OUTSIDE SHORT	95%	Review Restrictions

“Utilizing numerous staff concurrently over the course of only 3 months, Atlas was able to complete a site wide job measurement, ergonomic risk assessment, and solution generation project that resulted in immediate improvements in their processes and reduced injuries.”

Tony Silva, Atlas IPS Director



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Our comprehensive suite of services and technology, and most of all our strategies, work. You don't have to take our word for it – ask our satisfied customers. They're the ones who can tell you firsthand how our customized solutions have helped them reduce workers' compensation costs, lower injury reports, and improve employee job performance.

Simple, cost-effective solutions that make a measurable difference – it's what we do best, and it's our way of supporting your investment in people.