

## Langage Farm



**Business Sector: Manufacturing**  
**Number of Employees: 50-249**  
**Region: South West**

**Business Profile:** A family business supplying branded cream, clotted cream, yoghurt, sorbet and cheese to supermarkets and caterers across the South of England and in export markets as far away as Hong Kong.



Sam Snowdon and Richard Scutt at Langage Farm

*"Communication among the staff has improved and confidence levels are much higher as people feel better equipped to do their jobs".*

Richard Scutt  
Commercial Manager

### The challenge

Langage Farm, set in the rolling Devon countryside on the south slopes of Dartmoor at Smithaleigh, has a history stretching back more than 900 years – in fact, it must be one of the few businesses that was surveyed for the Domesday Book.

But nowadays it is not only agricultural skills that go to make this a successful rural company. Langage's current owners, the Harvey family, have built business supplying branded cream, clotted cream, yoghurt, sorbet and cheese to supermarkets and caterers across the South of England and in export markets as far away as Hong Kong.

And that means that as well as caring for a herd of more than 260 Jersey and Guernsey cows they must also master the arts of manufacturing, marketing and distribution.

Two years ago the Harveys found themselves confronting the types of problems many manufacturing firms face – in particular wastage at their factory at Lee Mill, near Plymouth, and high turnover among the site's 50 plus staff.

### The solution

Langage turned to Train to Gain, the skills support service that matches businesses' training needs with the most relevant training available.

Some staff needed relatively small amounts of help with literacy and numeracy to help them perform better. The factory work involves knowledge of fractions and percentages – and the one-to-one training arranged by Business Link Adviser Sam Snowdon targeted their needs while ensuring that no-one had to leave the site.

Now 30 of Langage's staff have been through a Skills for Life programme tailored to their individual needs – and the results have been impressive.

Many staff have also taken NVQ courses at Level 2 in team leadership, business administration, retail and commercial skills, IT, engineering and manufacturing. Managers have studied for NVQs at Level 3 in business administration.

"Sam made it very simple," said Richard Scutt. "Thanks to him we now have a training plan for the entire organisation and training is a continuous activity."

"In fact we are looking at a course in dairy food manufacturing at Duchy College which is almost tailor made for us and will also be delivered mostly on our site."

### The results

"Staff retention rates are now a lot better," said Commercial Manager Richard Scutt.

"Communication among the staff has improved and confidence levels are much higher as people feel better equipped to do their jobs.

"Net profit is up by two per cent – which for a food manufacturing company is considerable."

#### What is Train to Gain?

Train to Gain is a service offering independent advice on improving the skills of your employees. The Service helps employers – of all sizes and in all sectors – to boost their business by training their staff.

Independent Business Link Advisers help you to find the right training and the right providers, and construct a training package tailored to each business.