



CORAL BEACH FARMS

SAP® BUSINESS ONE BEARS ABUNDANT FRUIT FOR CHERRY PRODUCER

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Mike Lane, Controller, Coral Beach Farms Ltd.

QUICK FACTS

Company

- Name: Coral Beach Farms Ltd.
- Location: Lake Country, British Columbia, Canada
- Industry: Consumer products – food
- Products and services: Cherries
- Revenue: US\$7 million
- Employees: 32 off-season, 500 during peak season
- Web site: www.jealousfruits.com
- Implementation partner: Coastal Range Systems Inc.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Provide a single, trustworthy, highly visible source of business information
- Improve inventory control
- Simplify cost tracking
- Provide real-time accounting
- Eliminate duplicate data entry
- Institute controls to prevent unauthorized data modification
- Improve customer satisfaction

Objectives

- Implement a comprehensive enterprise resource planning solution
- Maintain separate databases for 2 distinct legal entities

SAP® Solutions and Services

SAP® Business One application, version 8.8

Implementation Highlights

Completed project in 3 months, meeting budget and schedule goals

Why SAP

- Excellent experiences at previous employer with SAP Business One and Coastal Range Systems
- Integrated functionality for all departments

Benefits

- Eliminated reliance on human memory for business data
- Increased information visibility and accessibility
- Sped up accounting processes
- Improved inventory control
- Eliminated need for duplicate data entry, saving 1 to 2 full-time equivalents
- Improved ability to track costs
- Achieved usability from any computer
- Increased data accuracy
- Created a more detailed general ledger structure
- Increased ability to monitor budgets
- Improved reporting environment
- Heightened customer satisfaction

Existing Environment

- Legacy accounting system
- Spreadsheets

Third-Party Integration

- B1UP from Boyum IT
- Rapid scanning system custom developed by Coastal Range Systems

To support its business, cherry supplier Coral Beach Farms Ltd. used to rely on limited software applications and the information in its people's heads. When the shortcomings of this fragile platform began to jeopardize customer satisfaction, the firm moved to the SAP® Business One application. "Our competitors in agriculture are lucky if they have so much as a Web site, let alone good business software," says Mike Lane, the company's controller. "SAP Business One is a huge competitive differentiator."

Building on Recent Experience

With its annual production of approximately 1,800 tons, Coral Beach Farms Ltd. is Canada's largest supplier of cherries. It is a vertically integrated company: picking the cherries from the seven farms it owns, processing them at its own packing plant, and shipping them to wholesale and retail partners around the world. Coral Beach Farms has a marketing arm called Jealous Fruits that is a separate legal entity.

The software applications the company employed in the past consisted of spreadsheets and a small batch-oriented accounting program. Business data was scattered among these applications, held in file cabinets, or – too often – not recorded at all. When information was input electronically, it often had to be entered manually in two or more places. With its data so dispersed, Coral Beach Farms found operations like cost

tracking and inventory control difficult and mistakes too common. Invoicing was particularly error prone, which unfortunately made the firm's challenges apparent to customers.

When client satisfaction threatened to ebb, Coral Beach Farms' top executives knew it was time for better business software support. Therefore they hired Lane, who has extensive experience with enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, and gave him the mission to choose and implement the right new business software suite. It did not take Lane long at all to make his decision. "At my previous employer, I had just finished a highly successful implementation of SAP Business One with help from Coastal Range Systems Inc.," he explains. "In the past I had worked with a number of ERP systems, and SAP Business One compared so favorably with them that I never even considered anything else for Coral Beach Farms. Nor did I consider any

company but Coastal Range Systems to do the implementation. In fact, I believe that a big reason why the company hired me for the project was that I was extremely well positioned to fast-track it from day one."

Managing Two Distinct Legal Entities

Coral Beach Farms' implementation was just as expeditious as its selection process. Lane and Coastal Range established a very ambitious three-month schedule and a budget to match and proceeded to handsomely achieve both goals. An important part of the job was to create separate databases for Coral Beach Farms and Jealous Fruits since they are separate entities that are required by law to report on different variables. To expedite reporting out of the two databases, the team implemented the B1UP application from Boyum IT to augment SAP Business One.



“We had high expectations for SAP Business One, and it has lived up to every one of them.”

Mike Lane, Controller, Coral Beach Farms Ltd.

Business users throughout Coral Beach Farms and Jealous Fruits quickly embraced their new solution and began using it to improve operational efficiency. All important business information is entered once and only once. The elimination of redundant data entry is saving one or two full-time equivalents' worth of labor. Accuracy is improved, especially on invoicing, and there are corresponding improvements in customer satisfaction. All key business information is stored electronically in SAP Business One, where it is highly visible and accessible on the basis of users' roles. Batch accounting is history, replaced by much more detailed real-time accounting. Stock movements are finally linked to accounting, automating many manual operations. The two entities maintain their budgets in SAP Business One and find them much easier

software was automatically included. “We really like SAP Crystal Reports,” says Lane. “It has easy-to-use, powerful functionality and is well integrated with the rest of the software. Many other features of the application have proven very useful to us too, such as user-defined fields and Microsoft Excel reporter.”

Building a Bright Future

To address another glaring need of the business – logging in cherries picked by workers who are paid by the piece – Coral Beach Farms had Coastal Range Systems develop a rapid scanning system for cherry totes and integrate it with SAP Business One. This solution replaces a stand-alone, PDA-based scanning system that was so slow that people had to

varies with time of year. Therefore, Coral Beach Farms plans to convert to paying by weight and will accommodate that change in the next phase of its SAP Business One deployment, which has several other purposes as well. One of the highlights of this next phase, to be conducted again by Coastal Range Systems, will be to automatically decrement Coral Beach Farms' inventory information whenever Jealous Fruits makes a sale. Another possibility is to take advantage of the solution's mobile integration functionality to capture data recorded in the fields on portable devices.

Coral Beach Farms regards its status as the largest cherry producer in Canada as a significant achievement, but that does not mean the firm is satisfied. “We're looking to grow a lot more, and SAP Business One is a big reason why we will,” explains Lane in closing. “SAP Business One gives us a clear advantage over our competition. They still suffer from the same problems we had before we implemented the software. We definitely made a winning business move by adopting SAP Business One.”

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to monitor and their data more reliable than with the previous software. “We had high expectations for SAP Business One, and it has lived up to every one of them,” reports Lane.

Since it was version 8.8 of SAP Business One that Coral Beach Farms implemented, SAP Crystal Reports®

work until midnight to tabulate a day's results. With triple the scanning rate and automatic data import into SAP Business One, the new system saves labor in many ways.

Paying by the piece, however, is a flawed measure because the weight of cherries, and therefore their value,



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