Seville Farms

www.sevillefarms.com

COMPANY

- Location: HQ in Fort Worth, TX, US, with several greenhouse facilities around Texas; sales territory includes Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma
- Industry: Horticultural production and sales of live plants to large retailers

OVERVIEW

Founded in 1993, Seville Farms' sales grew 40% in the 18 months after switching to Acumatica from QuickBooks and specialized software in 2011.

KEY RESULTS

- 40% growth in sales in an 18-month period, stemming from new seamless integration of systems
- Savings of more than $100,000 from new ability to manage large volume of data
- Time-savings equal to one full head-count from linking Acumatica with internal production planning system, processing huge volume of purchase orders
- More efficient management of labor usage fluctuations
- Ability to grow business rapidly and plan future expansion with no additional per-user licensing costs

Horticulture wholesaler grows 40% in sales after switching to Acumatica from Quickbooks

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- Laura Harris, CFO, Seville Farms

SITUATION

Seville Farms and their affiliated companies grow millions of live plants (annuals, perennials, grasses, ground cover and tropical plants) to sell to "big box" retailers in Texas and neighboring states. They have 650 year-round employees, which increases to 1500 during the spring growing season.

Seville Farms Chief Financial Officer, Laura Harris, says for about 10 years their group of companies had used a combination of QuickBooks and specialized software designed for the plant-growing industry. Harris says their original financial software was "extremely limited" and "difficult to customize." They also experienced technical problems, she says: the system would shut down unexpectedly, which caused some accounts to get out-of-balance.

After they migrated to their new sales inventory software Harris says they needed to find a financial management product that could integrate with that new software. In addition, Harris says, "One of the critical things we needed was 52 periods. It's kind of odd, not all packages can accommodate that. The whole industry is driven by the

week. Even purchase orders are based on the week. When selling so much in a short window, it's critical."

SOLUTION

CFO Harris says, "Acumatica can handle 52 periods, which a lot of packages couldn't." She notes that Seville Farms' Acumatica partner, Jeff Frazier at Advanced Grower Solutions (AGS), checked out 200 different packages and narrowed it down to three for demo: Acumatica, SAP Business One and Dynamics GP.

Harris was "very unimpressed" with Dynamics GP: "I could tell it was an older technology—and it wasn't web-based." Harris says after looking at Dynamics and SAP, "I didn't like the look or feel of either. And the cost." She calls Acumatica a "very good product." Acumatica partner Jeff Frazier agrees, saying, "It wasn't much of a contest. Acumatica was the clear choice for Seville."

Seville Farms purchased Acumatica's Financial Management and Distribution Management suites; they also plan to implement Fixed Assets. They chose a divisional license, so they can connect up to 10 companies without additional user fees. Harris notes, "I like not paying by the seat. That allows you to roll things out quicker."

BENEFITS

Without Acumatica, Harris believes, the company could not have executed the 40% growth in sales it experienced in an 18-month period. "Integration with our other systems is huge from a control standpoint and a labor-saving standpoint," Harris says.

Acumatica has "a very good import feature," according to Harris. "We saved an enormous amount of time with Acumatica, probably at least one head count. I was able to import 200 orders at a stretch—that would have taken someone 10 days."

Integrating Acumatica with their specialized sales order/inventory system has saved "a ton of time," Harris says, "because for purchasing we had to use QuickBooks; it was horrible." Now their purchasing department enjoys a "streamlined process and improved control," without having to go through all of the steps they used to do manually. Also, now each manager of a remote facility can go online and print their P.O.'s for the week: "This helps them plan their work for the week—it's really driven off when product is coming in."

Seville Farms estimates that Acumatica's data management capabilities have saved them between $100,000 and $200,000.

Seville Farms also set up queries to track their Accounts Payable by employee. This helps them ramp up staffing and if they need to make changes, they know how those will affect staff. They can also manage individual staff's productivity with objective measurements.

Tracking data with Acumatica has helped Seville Farms save money as well as time. During the last six months of 2013 they handled purchase orders for about 29 million plants. With "thousands and thousands of P.O's," Harris says, "being able to download that data, and manipulate that data in pivot tables, helps us save money. You can look at it, compare to plan and see if we missed something." She estimates the data management capability has saved them between $100,000 and $200,000.

Harris has told other finance managers about Acumatica. She points out, "You need to have a good ERP system so that you can respond quickly to issues, produce financials, see data quickly and efficiently— and can compete in today's market. For us, it was a really good investment. I've been very happy with it."