

## BRC Case Study – Continental Fine Foods

A short walk from Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium will take you to the **Continental Fine Foods** factory. A key site for the **Cranswick Food Group**, they specialise in manufacturing and slicing private label cooked meats for UK retailers, including Asda (part of Wal-Mart).

Working at the site are 200 full-time workers, generating a turnover of €100m, of which 90% comes from sales of private label products. In 2000 the factory achieved certification to the BRC Global Standard – Food. Before that the factory operated with an internal system based on customer and legal requirements.

Gareth Millman has been the Asda Supplier Technical Manager for Continental Fine Foods since 2005 and he works closely with the 35 European suppliers. *"I've been involved in the meat industry for over 20 years. I love the food business and I have a great job helping to get products ready to launch. There are about 180 different Asda products on their shelves that Continental Fine Foods supply and that I have worked on. This work takes me across Europe where we buy ingredients and finished packed product as well. I came across the BRC in the late 90's. We used to work with HACCP but without a strong Quality Management System. There was no continuous improvement process; it was up to the individual to push things forward."*



**Gareth Milman and Nicola Walmsey**

At Continental Fine Foods, Nicola Walmsey has worked as the Site Technical Manager for two years having worked her way up through the Cranswick Food Group. *"I look after the factory process. The BRC gives us a clear benchmark. To be effective it needs commitment from everybody in the company. I know when there is a revision of the Standard underway because we are asked for our opinion. I'm pleased to see more structure and focus on HACCP in the new version. We will have an opportunity to raise awareness for everybody here. I believe that the BRC standard has helped us reduce the incidences of non-conforming product here. That adds value for the business. Recall or withdrawal costs can be very high."*

*"In developing the fifth version, our Technical Committee has placed an increased emphasis on Senior Management Commitment and HACCP. We consider that these are vital components of an effective system and support those responsible for implementing and auditing against the standard"*

**Geoff Spriegel**

*Director of Global Standards, British Retail Consortium*