Maine MEP Project Manager Talks Lean at 2015 Winter Fancy Food Show in San Francisco

Augusta, Maine: Looking to help specialty food manufacturers across the country increase their profitability, the Specialty Food Association invited Maine MEP Project Manager Bill Whittier to present a workshop on Lean Manufacturing at the Winter Fancy Food Show in San Francisco. Now in its 40th year, the show is one of the world’s largest marketplaces for food producers and buyers and this year featured more than 14,000 exhibitors from across the U.S. and around the world.

The show is sponsored by the Specialty Food Association, an organization of food artisans, importers and entrepreneurs that was established in 1952 to nurture companies in an always-evolving marketplace. The Winter Fancy Food Show took place January 11-15, 2015.

“Maine MEP was very pleased that the Specialty Food Association recognized the expertise of Bill Whittier and his impressive track record of helping small and mid-size food producers improve their operations. Bill is exceptionally adept at identifying solutions to help entrepreneurs scale up production to meet rising demand and has guided dozens of Maine startups to market prominence,” said Muriel Mosher, president of the Maine MEP.

The Association promoted the importance of Lean Manufacturing in its build-up to the winter show and featured Whittier in its online news features talking about the importance of lean production in boosting the profitability of food producers.

At his presentation in San Francisco, Whittier drew on more than 20 years of experience in the food production industry to illustrate the value of Lean for entrepreneurial firms looking to succeed in a hyper-competitive market.

“The specialty food industry is fueled by passionate entrepreneurs who seek to make a difference through the products they bring to market. These leaders are making an even greater impact by pioneering new business practices, empowering workers, and taking risks,” said Ann Daw, president of the Specialty Food Association at the Winter Fancy Food Show award’s presentation.

About Maine MEP

The Maine MEP is a program of the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP system is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2,000 manufacturing and business professionals whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits and enhanced global competitiveness. For information on the Maine MEP program, please visit www.mainemep.org, or phone 1-800-MEP-4MFG.