

January - June 2018

WE'VE MORE THAN DOUBLED OUR GROWTH

The Challenge

Heylo LLC (Heylo) produces whole-bud full-spectrum cannabis extracts and sells their products at retail stores across Washington state. Founded in 2017 by Laurel (Lo) Friesen, Heylo has continued to specialize in terpene-rich, high-CBD, and rare cannabinoid extracts. Monthly sales in 2018 topped the \$100,000 milestone.

To match increased demand and an expanding product line, Heylo needed to boost their production capacity and grow their team. However, Heylo had concerns about maintaining product consistency, quality, and bringing on employees with the same values.

“At the time we were launching our PAX Pods in collaboration with PAX, which we knew would stimulate growth beyond our already upward trajectory. I wanted to ensure our growth did not compromise our quality - a common thread among companies experiencing rapid growth.” said Lo, Founder and CEO of Heylo.

The Solution

Through sharing their concerns, Heylo identified a food safety program as the solution to producing consistent product and training a strong team. With a small team and very little time, Heylo outsourced support for developing a robust food safety program. Tandem Food LLC reinforced the idea that a strong food safety program provides the foundation necessary to support growth and success.

For a period of six months, Tandem had four on-site visits with the Heylo team. The first three visits were 3-day workshops and the fourth visit was a 2-day audit. The food safety program tailored to Heylo's needs entailed creating and fine tuning Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs), a Supplier Approval Program, Training Programs, a Recall Program, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and more. However, the key deliverable was a food safety program not only in the form of documents, but in the form of a mindset and intuition. The combination of food safety program documents and a food safety company culture approach established a foundation for Heylo to flourish.



Tandem Food LLC
launched with a single
vision: to make food
safety practices
relevant, simple, and
engaging for all.

“Heylo’s values are education and transparency. Tandem was the perfect fit for us as Tandem aims to support their clients by training leadership on how to build a food safety program and preparing the team for continuing to develop their program throughout growth.” said Lo. “Tandem’s professionalism and passion provided the tools that we needed to write our own documents and customize our systems and protocols knowing that we had their support to perfect our program.”

The Implementation

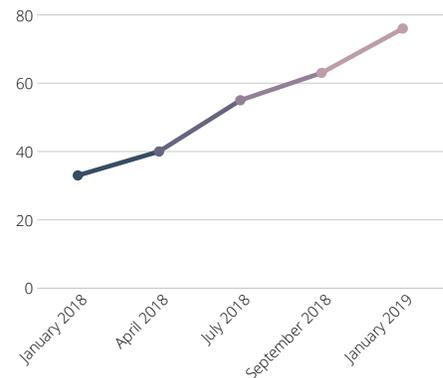
Lo continued, “Creating our flowcharts and deepening/refining procedures was tedious but necessary. Tandem presented the importance of food safety information in an engaging and simple manner where we could, not just bear the process, but enjoy it. Most importantly, Tandem was flexible but kept us on schedule to simultaneously make progress on the food safety program and continue to work on our production.”

Management buy-in was central to the successful implementation of the food safety program at Heylo. The Heylo management team committed to food safety by investing the time, money and resources. The message then spread from the executive team to the interdepartmental team within the workplace. The execution of a food safety program depends upon the understanding that each individual is a part of and has ownership of contributing to the food safety program, which threads itself throughout company culture.

Benefits

Lo shares, “A year after initiating our food safety program, Heylo has more than doubled. Our products are in over 75 stores across Washington State, we’re white label processing for a number of customers, and have expanded our team to over ten people. Thanks to working on the food safety program with Tandem, we have grown and are excited to continue building on top of our strong foundation. We also have increased production efficiency, reduced production costs to keep prices stable for the consumer, reduced product critical control points/risk, and amplified the level of accountability when no one is watching, etc.”

*Chart 1.
Number of
retailers in
Washington
state selling
Heylo
products*



Moreover, Lo admits “As a chemist with a medical background, I have always instilled in my team the importance of consistency and product safety, but it still took me a few months to learn how to write a thorough and effective SOP to support them and our values; I don’t know how long it would have taken me to develop the first program of a food safety program without Tandem; Tandem absolutely catalyzed our growth.”

The Future

The creation of the food safety program was just the beginning; Heylo has continuously improved their documents and incorporated the food safety mindset into their approach to training and management. Heylo is thrilled that the food safety program provides internal structure, assurance for the customer, and credibility to their reputation. Heylo is looking to expand into other states with even larger markets. The task is a little easier as Heylo is equipped to quickly implement the food safety program. Lo also provides consulting services through her consulting company, Heylo Create, and brings a strong foundation of food safety knowledge and document creation thanks to Tandem. Moving forward, basic food safety considerations are incorporated into the consulting services to ensure all consumers benefit.

Tandem conducts an annual internal audit with Heylo to highlight both areas of previous progress and areas for continuous improvement.

“Even though a process may not be related to food, I still think with a food safety mindset. We’re considering all risks points while developing and updating documentation and training. Simply put - we’re more prepared than ever.”