

Synlait Farms operates 14 dairy farms on nearly 4000ha in the mid- Canterbury area. This season, with 85 staff, we are milking almost 13,000 cows and producing 1380kgs of milk solids per hectare, which gives a total of 5.44 million kgs of milk solids.

The [vision](#) of the Synlait Farm is to become the best multi-farm dairy business in the world.

Synlait considers that all activities in the business fall into one of six strategic pillars. These are cows, grass, profit, people, environment and innovation.

Innovation is the most important of Synlait Farms' six "strategic pillars".

The company launched its tailor-made set of Lean principles in February 2012. This project is called InSynC.

The SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and PIT (Performance Improvement Team) were trained before the InSynC launch.

InSynC (derived from innovation, Synlait and continuous improvement) has six goals - reducing waste, engaging the team, developing an innovative culture, adding value for customers, taking care of every individual and the environment, and enhancing work and financial performance.

In November 2012, the InSynC Support Team started visiting all the Synlait farm teams.

The two key objectives of these visits were waste education and conveying the message of empowerment regarding identification of wastes and reporting to their manager

After learning to identify wastes all the team members completed a waste hunt relevant to their work areas.

At this point we needed to implement a tool to organize our work places to eliminate most of the wastes we found in the waste hunts.

By January 2013 we started educating team members about the 6S tool and they started implementing this tool across all the farms.

The need to share innovative ideas and calibration of 6S audits was raised. We came up with a concept called "InSynC Show Days".

We have a once-a-month InSynC Show Day where all the team members from the 14 farms are invited.

All team members are invited to develop ideas around improving processes. We try to get the bottom to top approach by creating a learning environment and then creating lots of engagement.

As a result of implementing the 6S principles in milking sheds, Synlait Farms estimates that it is now saving 30 minutes per employee per day. This might not sound significant, until you multiply it out across 80+ people all saving 124 hours each a year. That increased productivity is equivalent to employing an additional 5.25 extra team members, which would have cost around \$210,000 if they were to achieve these gains pre InSynC. 6S is an important building block of our InSynC journey