Hail Merry manufactures pure, healthy snacks that are vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free and non-GMO certified. Their philosophy is to make great-tasting snacks – including tarts, macaroons, granola, nuts, and seeds – that are natural and beneficial to the human body.

To do this, Hail Merry dehydrates snacks and desserts at low temperatures instead of baking them, and seasons foods with organic herbs and spices instead of vast amounts of sweeteners. This sophisticated and innovate process requires Hail Merry to manufacture and package their own products, as there are no co-packers with the know-how or capability. Over the past decade, Hail Merry’s sales have grown significantly – and so has the complexity of their operations.

Faced with the need to deliver high quality products at ever-increasing scale, Hail Merry turned to the CoInspect application to help ensure operational excellence.
PRESERVING HAIL MERRY’S PURE FOOD PHILOSOPHY DURING LARGE-SCALE COMMERCIALIZATION

Susan O’Brien could never have dreamed of Hail Merry’s success when she founded the company from a makeshift commercial kitchen she built in her backyard in 2006. Today, Hail Merry snacks can be found in locations ranging from the shelves of Costco and Whole Foods, to the pillows at Omni hotels and onboard Virgin America flights. Susan founded Hail Merry because of the personal success she had seen in adopting a raw foods lifestyle.

Giving up carbs and sugars in favor of fresh, whole, unprocessed plant-based foods had helped look, feel, and sleep better. Susan founded Hail Merry to share this success with others. In 2009, she partnered with two leading food operations experts to expand the business further: Sarah Chapin, who had extensive experience serving as the CEO of an intellectual property company that patented food technology, and Alison Brushaber, a food scientist and chef talented at scaling recipes.

As a company grows, so too must its technology — especially when it comes to maintaining standards of brand excellence. By 2016, Hail Merry’s operations had grown significantly and the company was doing over $15 million in sales. Hail Merry needed a way to better manage quality assurance and safety during a time of rapid growth and large-scale commercialization.

A decade after Susan O’Brien founded the company, Hail Merry chose the CoInspect application to ensure their products remain safe, healthy, delicious and loved by their customers.
THE SOLUTION: HOW COINSPECT HELPS HAIL MERRY MAINTAIN ITS BRAND STANDARDS AND FOOD PHILOSOPHY

Ferdinand Colon is Hail Merry’s Director of Operations. Ferdinand manages a quality assurance team of over thirty people. He oversees everything from the receiving of ingredients and making sure those ingredients are in line with Hail Merry’s food philosophy, to packaging and shipping Hail Merry products directly to customers. Ferdinand joined Hail Merry over a year ago, with prior experience as a general manager at a major food manufacturer. He reports directly to Hail Merry’s Chief Operating Officer, Rick Roberts.

Ferdinand communicates with Rick daily, leveraging Colnspect to share inspection reports and key performance indicators (KPIs) such as inspection pass rates that help senior management track progress. The powerful Colnspect Dashboard displays efficiency and performance KPIs in both graph and table views, highlighting insights for easy analysis.
Ferdinand and his team have found the CoInspect app provides several key benefits, including:

**INCREASED EFFICIENCY AND IMPROVED COLLABORATION**

Prior to using CoInspect, Ferdinand and his team were using paper and pencil methods to conduct intricate internal audits. These methods were time-consuming because inspection results were not readily available to others. With CoInspect, Hail Merry employees can now see audit results in real-time -- saving hours of time spent creating and sharing reports every week.

**ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY**

CoInspect makes inspection results readily retrievable to the team. Before deploying CoInspect, Ferdinand and his team had to manually retrieve inspection reports from a physical file stored in a single location. CoInspect seamlessly consolidates all inspection results in a central, digital location, making performance data more accessible and improving accountability across the organization.

**CRITICAL PERFORMANCE ANALYTICS**

CoInspect’s Dashboard allows Ferdinand to spot outliers immediately. He can get a bird’s eye view of audits that have “passed” and “failed” while making inquiries in real time. The dashboard is one of many features of CoInspect that helps Ferdinand save valuable management time daily. CoInspect’s dashboard allows Ferdinand to instantaneously provide his team with feedback and coaching because he can readily see where inspections are falling short as well as where they are exceeding expectations.

Hail Merry’s interim CEO Mark Rampolla says, “Our endgame is to see Hail Merry become the leading better-for-you food brand in the country.” CoInspect is helping Hail Merry achieve that objective by driving brand excellence across its complex production and packaging operations.

Mark Rampolla
Interim CEO
CoInspect increases accountability, transparency, and helps improve performance.

Ferdinand and his team find the CoInspect Mobile App and Dashboard simple and easy to use. According to Ferdinand, “We were able to implement CoInspect within hours – adoption was simple because the tool is intuitive and easy to understand. . . CoInspect is not complicated.” He can review inspection reports immediately, and it doesn’t matter whether he or someone else on his staff conducted the inspection. This saves him several hours of tracking and reporting each month; this is valuable time he can instead spend training and supervising his team. Rick Roberts, Hail Merry’s COO, cannot always be on the plant floor, but Ferdinand maintains that CoInspect is great for communicating with upper management. “I really like how pictures can be easily added to inspections because a picture is worth a thousand words,” says Ferdinand, “In addition to the pictures, the CoInspect’s Dashboard allows me to concisely relay the information that Rick wants to see.”

Hail Merry has dozens of internal audits that track and evaluate the spectrum of safe food handling best practices, including everything from Daily and Weekly Sanitation Schedules to Inventory Checks and Gauge Verifications. Yet organizing dozens of physical audit checklists can be a challenging task. Blank checklists need to be printed, filled out and stored in a filing cabinet for future reference. Moreover, these checklists change frequently, and it is difficult and time-consuming for Ferdinand to keep track of the latest version.
Managing inspection schedules across a team of 30 workers can be challenging, but CoInspect’s powerful scheduling and alert features simplify workflow management. For instance, some inspections are supposed to occur once or twice daily, others only on Friday mornings, while yet others are scheduled quarterly. According to Ferdinand, “Emailing inspection reports to colleagues has never been easier and everyone is kept up to date.”

*With CoInspect, Ferdinand and his team have peace of mind knowing that important quality and safety tasks are getting done.* Ferdinand continues, “We are holding our employees more accountable because all of our work is more transparent,” giving Ferdinand and his team the confidence they need to ensure the right inspections are being conducted at the right time.

By deploying CoInspect, Ferdinand is able to stay organized by digitizing all of the company’s checklists and storing them on CoInspect’s cloud-based library. And when he wants to make an edit or update an audit checklist, Ferdinand can use CoInspect’s powerful “checklist editor” to do so in seconds.
Colinspect also provides valuable insights into past performance to help drive future improvement. In seconds, Ferdinand can review prior audits from the Colinspect dashboard and see the average duration of each check, pinpointing where bottlenecks might exist.

For example, Ferdinand recently noticed that a certain inspection was taking nearly an hour to complete when it should have been averaging 30 minutes. Without Colinspect, he may not have had realized this for weeks or months, losing hundreds of valuable hours. Colinspect’s powerful analytics have empowered Ferdinand to make his team much more efficient and effective. Ferdinand says that without question Colinspect “definitely saves us time every day.”

Additionally, Ferdinand loves that Colinspect generates enthusiasm across his team. His staff enjoys incorporating the mobile app into their operations, making them more engaged in quality assurance tasks. Ferdinand is particularly fond of Colinspect’s dictation feature, which not only engages his staff, but also saves his team even more time.
According to Ferdinand:

“The CoInspect app is an exciting and innovative tool that motivates my staff when conducting quality and safety inspections.”

By making it easier to give and receive feedback, CoInspect helps the entire Hail Merry team knows exactly where process improvements need to be made. Ferdinand is confident that CoInspect has met his team’s needs and expectations, and “is playing a valuable role in helping us maintain Hail Merry’s commitment to brand excellence.” When asked about his overall experience with CoInspect, Ferdinand asserts, “It makes my life a lot easier. CoInspect is awesome!”

Based in San Francisco, CoInspect builds powerful software to manage quality, safety, and brand standards. Hundreds of government agencies, major corporations, small businesses, and nonprofits depend on us to manage legal compliance, quality assurance, and daily operations. To learn more, visit us at www.CoiInspectapp.com.