

# case study

Ter Beke Fresh Food Group

**Protime and SD Worx**  
**Across national borders**



**Progressive and flexible**  
**‘One system for all branches’**

Ter Beke has eight branches throughout the Netherlands and Belgium. It has staff of around 1800. “We regularly have to deal with changes in Collective Labour Agreements, time schedules, benefits, employees and product lines”, explains Marianna Aquarius, HR Manager for the Netherlands. “For us, it is therefore essential that a time registration system can be quickly adapted to new circumstances. Moreover, we aim to have one system for all branches in the long run.” Two of the Ter Beke branches in Belgium switched to Protime in 2009. In 2010 and 2011, we transferred to Protime in the Netherlands, in combination with the payroll programme of SD Worx.

## Who?

Ter Beke Fresh Food Group

## What?

Ter Beke was founded as a family business in 1948. The company has expanded into a market player in the meantime, with eight branches in Belgium and the Netherlands. Ter Beke has three specialities: meat products, ready-made meals and service slicing. The latter speciality consists of slicing and packaging meat products for supermarkets. The services provided by the group also include value-added activities, such as customer-specific packaging or labelling.

Ter Beke employs a total of about 1,800 people, of whom 15% are temporary workers. The number of temporary employees is related to peaks in the production caused by seasonal products, for example. Ter Beke markets various brands, such as l’Ardennaise, Pluma, Daniel Coopman, Come a casa, Vamos and newcomer Oligústo. Ter Beke has been stock-market listed since 1986, and the turnover of the group amounted to € 403.7 million in 2011.

## Info?

[www.terbeke.com](http://www.terbeke.com)

The Ter Beke products – fresh meat products and ready-made dishes such as lasagne, pastas and pizzas – are sold from the shelves of many European supermarkets. The group has six factories in Belgium and two in the Netherlands. For many years, these branches used various time registration systems and/or Excel sheets for monitoring the employee payroll administration. The need to update the system arose in the headquarters in Waarschoot (B) in 2007.

This turned out to be the right occasion for the implementation of an integrated process: the introduction of Protime. Compensation & Benefits

**‘The reporting for Belgium and the Netherlands is comparable and understandable for everyone.’**

Specialist Linda Baelen is involved in the employment conditions, payroll and insurance aspects within the Ter Beke group on a daily basis. She explains: “The former system was already old then. Any adjustment took us hours of searching. It was often impossible to automate changes. In some branches, we had to enter a lot of information

into Excel sheets by hand, and then enter them separately into the payroll programme. In short, it was time for something new.”

## Comparable reporting

An update of the existing system turned out to be very expensive. “Moreover, the group had expanded considerably as a result of several mergers, and this caused a wide variety of time schedules, benefits, CLAs, etc. We therefore looked for a partner who would be able to automate all this”, explains Linda Baelen. We compared several providers, and decided on the Protime time registration system. Technicians implemented the Protime software at the branches in Waarschoot (B) and Veurne (B) in 2009. When the new location Wijchen (NL) opened its doors in 2010, the HR department immediately implemented Protime and SD Worx there as well. The other Dutch factory – in Ridderkerk – switched early in 2012. Marianna Aquarius: “The system in Ridderkerk could do with an update. Switching over to Protime appeared to be the better solution. Because it enables us to



**Compensation & Benefits Specialist Linda Baelen and HR Manager NL Marianna Aquarius are thoroughly familiar with Protime. They are responsible for the roll-out of the system in Belgium and the Netherlands respectively.**



obtain reports from a single system. These are comparable and understandable for everyone, including the offices in Belgium. All HR departments that are working with Protime refer to the same reporting system.”

### Linked to the payroll

Both ladies find good time registration indispensable. “After all, this is the basis for correctly paid salaries. For this reason, we have linked Protime to SD Worx. That makes the work smooth.” Other Protime benefits are naturally a welcome bonus. “We both travel a lot. It is therefore a real plus that, as a result of the SaaS solution, we can now log in from any location.

The team leaders can also easily log in from various locations in the Netherlands, allowing them to make corrections at flexible times as needed”, explains Marianna. “Moreover, the number of mistakes is minimised with Protime. The information on the payslip is taken directly from the timesheets. In this way, any questions from the staff can be answered more quickly. Communication with the interim agencies is also more streamlined. The whole process has become transparent, and that creates calm.” Marianna Aquarius adds to this list: “The fact that we can implement adjustments independently and fairly easily is a relief. We are able to remain flexible, and that is very important in our market. But it is important in this context that the HR personnel receive good training, possibly at the Protime site.”

### Phased implementation

It was quite a challenge to streamline all the processes in such a short time. But we succeeded thanks to the good cooperation.” Marianna Aquarius about the introduction of Protime in the Netherlands: “The time pressure was somewhat less here. We made a deliberate decision to roll out the project in phases. That went fine.” Where necessary, Ter Beke can fall back on the Protime Support Desk. “Before we carry out a major adjustment, we check our plans with the Support Desk. Little by little, our knowledge of the system is improving within the organisation.”

### Progressive when it comes to processes

Ter Beke the Netherlands involved its IT analyst in the roll out of the time registration system from the very start. “He is thoroughly familiar with the processes, and is even more analytical in looking at our needs. It is important to take the time to prepare. For each process, you ask yourself the following: could we do this better, quicker, smarter?” As a result, the introduction of Protime also entailed process optimization.

#### ‘We are responding to the trend: Self-Service’

“When we implemented Protime in the Netherlands, we took time to consider all the HR processes, and made use of Self Service solutions for the employees”, Marianna Aquarius tells us. “Protime is progressive. The company is a leader in the field of developments, and keeps us up-to-date. But the major benefit is that Protime staff share our thinking when it comes to solutions. The system completely covers our needs.”

### Across national borders

Five Ter Beke branches have been provided with Protime software in the meantime. It is expected that also the remaining factories will switch to Protime in the course of time. “But we are not only renewing for the sake of renewing. If the current system operates well, we keep it running for the time being. Naturally, the aim is for all sites to use the same system in the future”, says Linda Baelen. She sees benefits in the application of Protime across the national borders. “As a result of the clear reports, the management is able to quickly target efficiency, one of the main pillars in our company. Moreover, the communication also benefits. We can mutually exchange experiences and tips.” The HR department is also busy rolling out the time registration system within the branches, also via ProTeam and ProNet. “Our aim is that, in time, our employees will be able to adapt and retrieve information independently. In this sense, we are responding to the trend: “Self Service.”

### The Protime time registration system contributes to the improved flexibility of the Ter Beke Fresh Food Group

#### Bottlenecks

- Implementing changes was very time-consuming, or was not possible
- No uniform reporting, reduced focus on efficiency, little transparency in the reporting
- The manual implementation of requests for leave/vacation was time-consuming
- Complex communication with the interim agencies

#### Causes

- Time registration system not up-to-date
- Time registration system could not be adjusted easily
- No centralised system for various branches
- No automatic holiday applications possible

#### Benefits

- Time-saving thanks to a flexible time registration system
- Unambiguous reporting, focus on efficiency
- Time-saving thanks to automatic holiday applications
- Data can be retrieved from anywhere (SaaS)
- More efficient payroll process

#### Solution

- Protime e-Premium (SaaS):
  - ProTime: registration and performance management
  - ProTeam: overview of schedules, working hours and absences
  - ProNet: automation of leave applications and transparency regarding the hours worked and holidays
  - ProCost: overview of production costs per order
  - ProAccess: access control