

inspiring stories #1

Interview with
Kathy Dimataris



Planet

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FOREVER IS A STRATEGY

How sustainability takes shape across Lamberti's U.S. operations

Across Lamberti's global footprint, sustainability is not a fixed concept but a continuous process shaped by people, places and daily decisions. In the United States, that process unfolds across multiple plants, regulatory landscapes and technologies. At the centre of this work is **Kathy Dimataris, Environmental Product Compliance and Sustainability Manager for Lamberti USA**, whose role spans four production sites and supports product compliance across North America.

With more than sixteen years at Lamberti, Kathy brings a long-term perspective to sustainability, rooted in chemistry, operations and culture, and shaped by the belief that sustainability must be built to last.

"I actually started out in R&D in the energy sector," she explains. "What I loved, and what I still get to do, was follow a product from beginning to end, creating it in the lab, bringing it to the plant and teaching people how to make it."

That end-to-end understanding continues to shape her approach today, even as her role has evolved. *"I don't get to make it in the lab anymore," she says, "but I see the new chemistries coming through, and I get the opportunity to review them and make sure all of our plants have the correct permitting to support the long-term industrialisation of new products."*

Seeing the bigger picture

Working across plants and functions gives Kathy a vantage point that goes beyond individual projects. “Because I get to see this bigger picture, I do get a little bit different perspective on everything,” she says.

One of the most visible shifts she observes is in regulation. “Changes in chemistry regulation-wise is a very hot topic for the U.S.,” she notes, pointing to growing attention around PFAS and other substances. “The subject of chemical regulations is very much at the forefront. For me, it’s every day.”

In the U.S., regulatory frameworks require companies to actively reduce hazardous waste and emissions. “We have to look at certain chemistries that are considered toxic, the generation of waste and hazardous waste,” she explains. “The requirement is to reduce the hazard level, reduce the volume of waste, and try to find opportunities to

reduce emissions, whether it’s water, air, waste, any type of emissions of those toxic chemicals.”

These are not quick fixes. “Unfortunately, a lot of that takes more time than a year or two,” she says. “These are long-term projects. They look at how the plant runs.”

Multidisciplinary sustainability

Sustainability, in Kathy’s experience, is never isolated. “It’s really a multidisciplinary interaction,” she explains. “Working not just with R&D, but with operations, engineering and maintenance.”

That collaboration has delivered concrete results. “Over ten years ago, we added a methanol distillation column and took several million pounds of hazardous waste per year and brought it down to almost nothing for one of our plants,” she says.

“It’s been a very good, successful goal for us.”

Looking ahead, vigilance remains key. “I hope we can continue to be vigilant with new products hitting the market, limit what we’re generating and find useful options to eliminate and reduce wastes,” she says, “and move them into something recyclable or reusable.”





A different way of thinking

Certification has also played a role in shaping awareness, particularly through **ISO 14001**. *"It's not that it's difficult or impossible," Kathy explains. "It's just a different way of thinking."* That shift is visible across teams. *"We've definitely seen that change in people, which is amazing," she says. "Management of the project never stops, because it's continuous improvement."*

Attention to small details is critical. *"Stopping things when they're small is a lot easier than changing something when it's large and out of control," she reflects.*

Building networks, not silos

With the acquisition of a new plant in Rhode Island, already certified under ISO 9001, Kathy sees opportunity rather than complexity. *"It's a wonderful learning opportunity," she says. "It shows that it doesn't stop because there is an ISO."*

Beyond certifications, she highlights the importance of internal networks. *"There are other people doing the same work across different plants," she says. "Having that feedback is invaluable."*

Despite geographical distance, the sense of belonging is strong. *"It's been the people from Italy constantly reaching out," she explains. "Without that contact, emails, Teams messages,*

phone calls, it would be nearly impossible."

Thinking forever

Asked to describe what "Planet" means to her, in one word, Kathy does not hesitate.

"For me, it's forever," she says. "Because we have to find a way to make it last."

That long-term view shapes how she understands sustainability. *"You have to look at the entire lifecycle," she explains. "Where did it come from? Where is it going?"*

For Kathy, real change starts early. *"It has to start in R&D," she says. "If we can catch things early and teach regulatory awareness before customers fall in love with a product, that's where the larger impact begins."*

"Sustainability, in her mind, is not about isolated actions, but about continuity. Across plants, teams and continents. It is built through shared awareness, long-term thinking and a commitment to making progress last, forever."