



Case Study: Ben & Jerry's

Background

Burlington, Vermont-based Ben & Jerry's, a subsidiary of Unilever, produces a wide variety of super premium ice cream and ice cream novelties for the consumer market. The company emphasizes a three-part mission statement focused on product quality, economic reward and charitable outreach. Ben & Jerry's products are distributed in national and select international markets in grocery stores, convenience stores, franchise Ben & Jerry's Scoop Shops, restaurants and other venues.

Challenge

The ice cream manufacturer was looking for a fast and reliable way to collect and analyze the vital quality data of their product as it was coming off production lines. Ben & Jerry's was measuring, monitoring and controlling four main product attributes – weight, volume, air addition and add-in amounts. The paper-based system they had previously been using to track this data was proving to be cumbersome for operators and data administrators. Using a paper and pencil, operators would take individual readings and calculate an average of those readings to plot on a chart. Quality Assurance personnel would then perform manual calculations to compute trending and reporting. The system was not only slow and inflexible, but also costly in terms of man hours needed for calculation and analysis.

Solution

Using ProFicient™, InfinityQS' real-time Statistical Process Control (SPC) software, Ben & Jerry's was able to streamline their quality control procedures. ProFicient automates data collection and analysis on the shop floor. The software's powerful data analysis functions now allow Ben & Jerry's quality department to make quick and accurate decisions based on the data coming off the line. Rather than spending valuable time calculating averages, operators are executing quality objectives and focusing their efforts on improving production-related issues.

Results

Ben & Jerry's is saving time, resources and money using InfinityQS software to track weight, volume, air addition and add-in amounts during production of its super premium ice cream. Reports now run in seconds as opposed to the 8-10 hours that quality assurance personnel previously were spending calculating data. Operators have dramatically reduced paper usage and are able to better focus on production issues. Moving forward, Quality Assurance will continue to use ProFicient's real-time SPC capabilities to drive further cost savings. Most importantly, Ben & Jerry's is keeping customers satisfied and continues to produce the finest quality, all-natural ice cream on the market.

