



SAFETYCHAIN CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY:
HOW BLUE BELL CREAMERIES USES
A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO QUALITY PROGRAMS



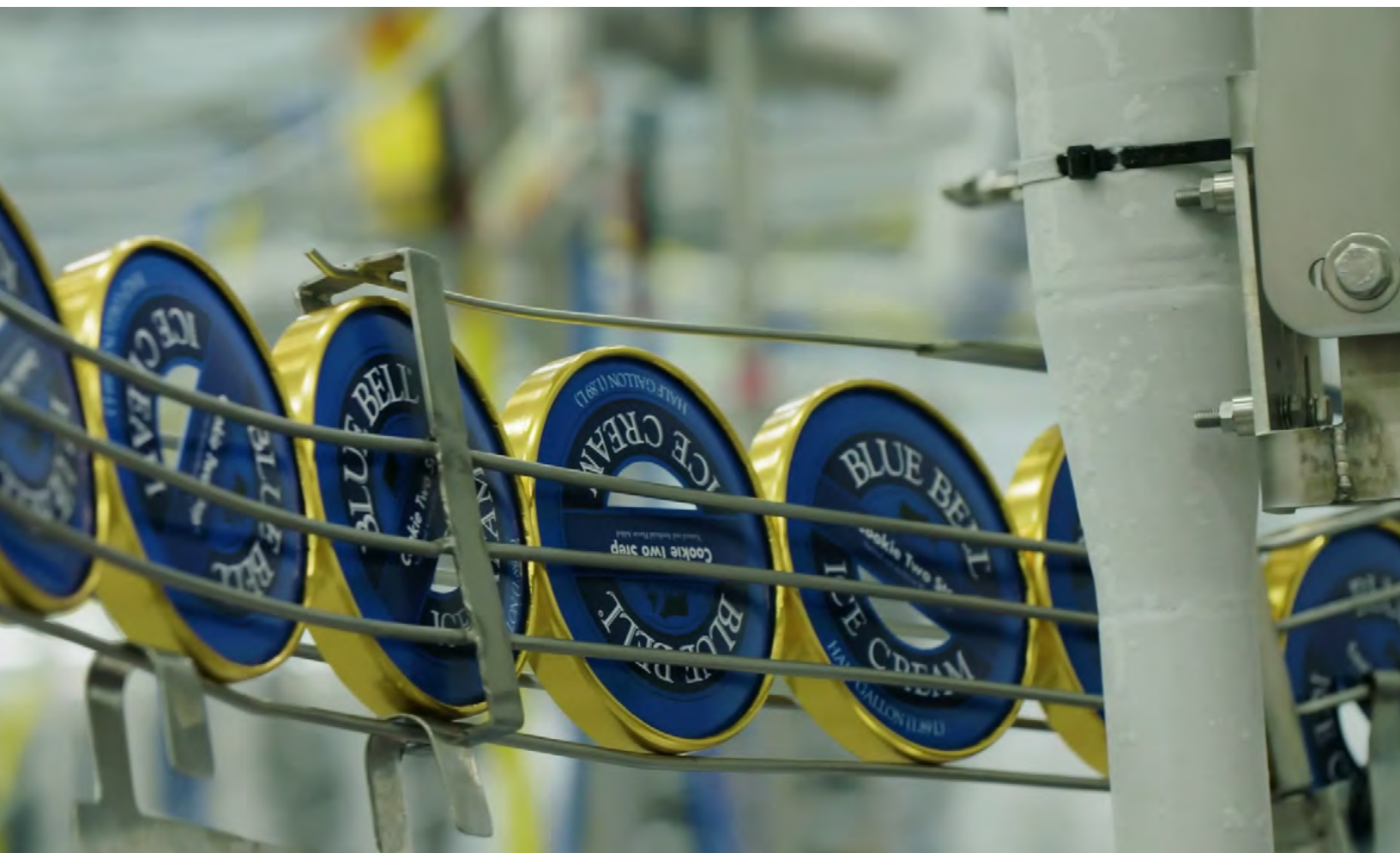
Like many other Food & Beverage companies, Blue Bell Creameries has a wealth of operational data at their disposal. Yet, while they were collecting it consistently on paper, and in some cases, by computer, the data went mostly unused after it was gathered. There was a tremendous area of opportunity to put the pieces together by actually tracking and trending data.

Recognizing this opportunity, Blue Bell Creameries sought out a solution that would provide them an easy way to access their data across all three of their manufacturing plants.

In this guide, we'll take a close look at how Blue Bell has leveraged SafetyChain to achieve data visibility, along with the additional benefits they've realized. With a firsthand account from Josh Kalich, Food Safety & Projects Manager for Blue Bell, we'll cover:

- ▶ What Blue Bell looked for in a solution and which challenges they had to overcome
- ▶ Which considerations they addressed when selecting a solution
- ▶ How SafetyChain's dashboards have helped Blue Bell make faster, data-driven decisions

We'll start by looking at some of the software prerequisites Blue Bell had in mind.





What Was Blue Bell Seeking in a Solution?

The Blue Bell team knew that whatever solution they settled on would have to be easy to learn and train. In order for the software to be leveraged to its fullest potential, it would have to be accessible to everyone from management teams to employees on the plant floor. This also means it would need to have a user-friendly interface on any device – including tablets, workstations, and desktop computers.

Overcoming Key Challenges Across Quality, Lab, & Production Teams

Lab testing would be a major area of focus for the software implementation. The Blue Bell team hoped to access, track, and trend data quickly, and ideally, have data at their fingertips to make audits quicker and easier. To achieve these goals, they knew they'd have to go paperless.

Supporting Programs & Applications

The right software would also need to satisfy all of Blue Bell Creameries' programs. First, it would need to support BRC, FSMA, and SSOP, their core food safety programs. It would also have to align with quality programs such as finished product, product variability, metal detection, and condensation checks. Finally, the company has internal programs specific to their products, including butterfat measurement, lab data quality checks, and temperature checks. Data from failures and corrective actions would also need to be accessible.

What Was Blue Bell Seeking in a Solution?

In addition to turning data into actionable insights and supporting their existing programs, the software Blue Bell chose would also have to satisfy a few more requirements.

Usability & Training

Not only would the software need to have a clean, easy-to-use interface, but it would also have to be implemented quickly. They wanted to be able to train their employees on it quickly and with minimal intervention from IT.



Initial Rollout with One Facility

Instead of rolling out the software across all three facilities at once, Blue Bell wanted to start in their Brenham location and build forms there first. Then, they could standardize their forms across all three plants for a smoother rollout. They knew having different processes in each of their facilities would prevent them from being able to compare data easily. Standardization would make trending and analysis much simpler.

Data Analysis & BI

To power quick decisions and ensure everyone remained well-informed, Blue Bell management also wanted access to real-time data. It turned out that their employees felt the same way.

As SafetyChain was being rolled out, employees bought into and even approached Josh with ideas to further simplify forms and processes. For instance, they suggested using the Attachment feature to include pictures with records, which would provide photo evidence and a richer understanding of any issue that would arise. Getting others involved to gather feedback and ideas can be a useful exercise early in implementation.

Dashboard Control

Tracking and trending data was a critically important goal for Blue Bell, and would enable them to run operations more efficiently. For this reason, they knew they'd need dashboards that could be accessed and interpreted easily.

How SafetyChain Dashboards Have Helped Blue Bell Become Data-Driven

Blue Bell soon discovered that SafetyChain was able to deliver on all of their needs, and that the software would help them see into their data in ways they couldn't have anticipated. Fortunately, SafetyChain was not only user-friendly and easy to train employees on, but it could also be accessed from any device or operating system. It fit with the company's existing IT infrastructure, which meant the IT department was welcome to it. Plus, its intuitive dashboards made the company's biggest priorities much easier to manage.

Metal Detection

The company now has a dashboard designated exclusively to metal detector checks. Previously, they'd have to wait for someone to inform them when an issue arose, and precious minutes would have gone by. Now, alerts are triggered immediately, and the dashboard will display in red which metal detector check has failed and needs immediate corrective action. Management will have the information they need to quickly make the determination whether a line should be shut down or not. It also gathers metal detection checks by the hour so managers can make sure everything is running as expected with just a quick glance.



Blue Bell's Metal Detection Process for Ice Cream Sandwiches.

Butterfat by Plant & SPC

Blue Bell has also been able to use SafetyChain to power SPC. Short for statistical process control, SPC is the best way to understand precisely how variables are running in any process. With run rule alerts, SafetyChain software has allowed Blue Bell to define their own upper and lower control limits. In doing so, they've been able to tighten their specs and watch SPC data more closely. Everything is done automatically, and they've saved time that they'd otherwise spend entering data into Excel and creating graphs.

This clear and concise SPC data also helps inform their corrective actions. For instance, they can dive into their records to see which corrective actions were put in place if control limits were previously exceeded. By adding a note, they'll maintain thorough records to look back on which can be reached through the dashboard.

Exceptions

Blue Bell has also leveraged the exceptions dashboard, which lets them quickly identify any out-of-spec records over a set period of time. SafetyChain lets them slice and dice this data to further drill down and see how long an issue has been going on and what the values are so they can take appropriate corrective actions, such as adjusting specs. Instead of laying out stacks of paperwork or sifting through emailed Excel sheets, Josh and his colleagues can direct their focus to the issues that need their attention most.



Temperature Checks

SPC is also useful for Blue Bell's temperature check dashboard. The SPC charts gives operators a clear path to stay on spec. Products must maintain a certain temperature, and while any process will have some variability, using upper and lower control limits helps to ensure everything stays within an acceptable range. If it doesn't, alerts are generated immediately so an operator or manager can look into the issue right away.

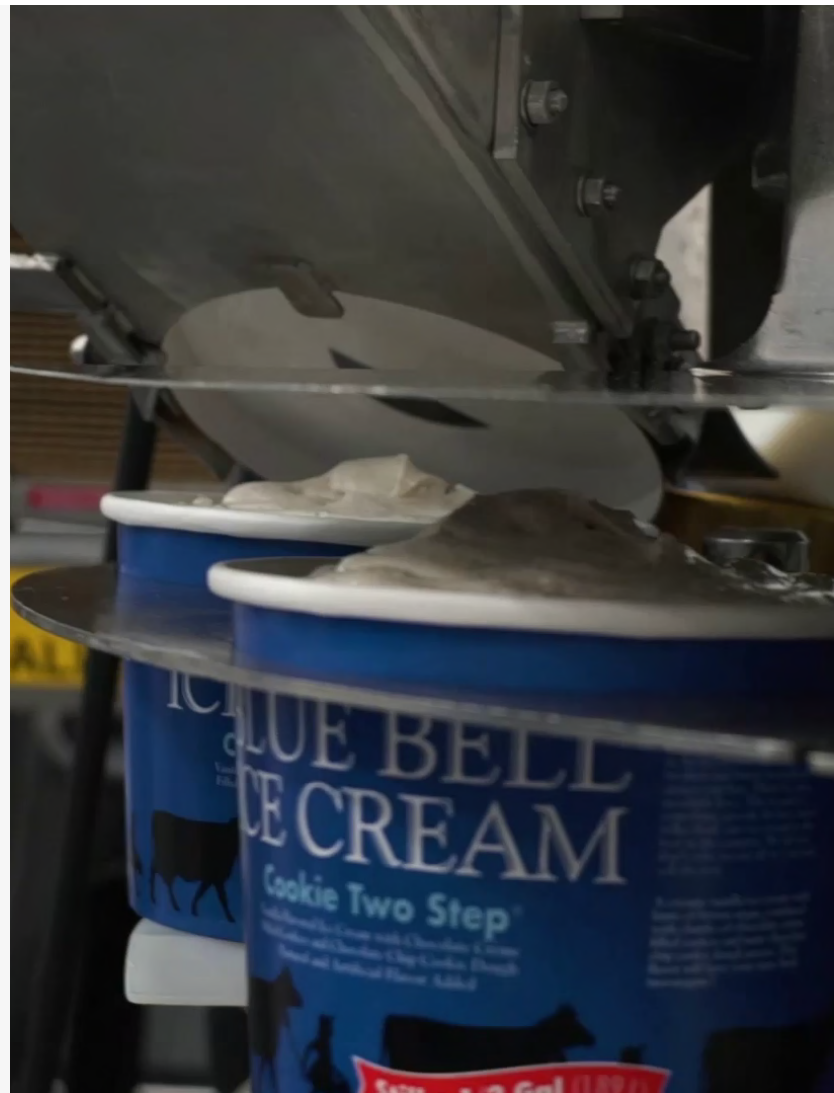
Benefits & Impact of SafetyChain

SafetyChain has helped Blue Bell Creameries in ways beyond what they had originally hoped. For instance, **the platform's task scheduler reminds them when checks are due so that they now have no missing or late checks.** Managers can also see real-time data, so there's no need to go searching for information. Plus, with a paperless system, they can also bypass the extra step of printing out forms.

The software has also exceeded the expectations they initially set. For instance, the well-designed interface facilitated quick learning and adoption, and employees were eager to share their input to make implementation as successful as possible. With data standardization, they've been able to harmonize their processes and reporting across three plants. And, SafetyChain's analytics and business intelligence features provide real-time data that ensure decisions are quick and well-informed.

With the platform's dashboards, tracking and trending data has become simple and effective. This visibility has not only helped them improve operations, but **Blue Bell is also spending less than half the time they previously did to find and address quality issues and non-conformances.**

Finally, having data standardization and access to digitized records has also made audits more efficient. Previously, auditors would ask for records from a specific date range, and a request would be put in with other departments to find and provide the necessary paperwork. Now, the Blue Bell team can simply enter a date range in the system and immediately retrieve data from that period. This has saved considerable time and hassle, and ensures that the auditor only sees the information they need.





Conclusion

While Blue Bell Creameries set out to unlock their plants' data for better trending and analysis, SafetyChain has helped them do that and much more. They now have an easy way to access the most critical insights from all three of their plants in real time. Beyond that, they've been able to provide resources for their teams to help them better fulfill their roles, such as real-time SPC charting. Audits now require minimal prep, tasks can be scheduled conveniently, and data has been standardized across their facilities.

Most importantly, management can now make decisions based on real-time, concrete information that they can access from anywhere. The clear, convenient dashboards and automated notifications have helped them address issues promptly, save time, and optimize their quality programs.

About SafetyChain

SafetyChain gives over 2000 process manufacturers the flexibility to rapidly address urgent challenges while offering scalability to expand and drive long-term value.

Capture All Critical Data

- Gain real-time visibility into what is happening throughout the facility
- Eliminate organizational silos made worse by competing data sources
- Feel confident your teams are relying on consistently accurate data

Gain Plant-Wide Insight

- Know at-a-glance whether you're hitting your metrics
- Pinpoint areas of improvement to reduce waste, increase yield, and maximize throughput
- Better understand how your teams are performing to create labor efficiencies

Take Rapid Action

- Save time and ensure you're always audit-ready
- Eliminate guesswork so everyone knows what they need to do and when
- Increase efficiency and foster a culture of problem-solving

Plan Scalable Growth

- Drive change, not disruption, throughout your plants
- Ensure the short-term and long-term success of your implementation
- Justify current and future technology investments by reducing waste and increasing productivity

Explore the Plant Management Platform and see how digitized plant management can meet your needs.

Learn more at <https://safetychain.com/digital-plant-management/>