

TO SPREAD THE NEWS

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IN PROCESS

The plant's Benhil fillers are being rebuilt.

The first cycle of what will be an ongoing project is nearly complete; a second rebuild is in process. One Benhil is slated to be rebuilt annually.

The recently installed rebuilt Benhil on Line 9 is of particular strategic importance due to its unique versatility; with a changeover, it can run 1-pound and 2-pound Blue Bonnet stick SKUs, both of which are very popular. This versatility is important to operations

as only one other line has the capability to produce 2-pound product. Line 9 provides a failsafe and flexibility that will facilitate other projects.

The Line 9 project has completed commissioning and qualification and is now in the final stage, verification.

As will be the case going forward, the rebuild was performed off-site by a contractor in Milwaukee.

"The whole machine was stripped down to the frame," Project Engineer Caleb Hadar said.

The machine was rebuilt with all new components and technology, including changeover parts that give the machine its versatility.

Rebuilding and installing Line 9's Benhil took a year, but he believes a great deal was learned during the first rebuild, which will allow for greater efficiency in the future.

"Patience was important during the project, and the changes are ultimately for the better."

-Production Associate Cherelle Cousin

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Williams takes new role

Formerly the CSD Pillar lead and interim Reddi Wip Cell 1 lead, Jermell Williams' new role as AMD Pillar lead combines a love of helping employees develop and working in production.

His goal is to get all of the plant's machinery to AMD Step 3 within two years. Presently, 20 percent of machines are at that level. He's confident the goal can be attained.

"I have a lot of faith in the capabilities of all of our people," Williams said. "It's simply a matter of staying the course."

He noted that he's worked both hourly and salaried roles at the plant and has a familiarity with all work groups.

"The people here, both salaried and hourly, are better than anywhere

else I've seen," Williams said.

He called AMD a top priority not just for the plant but for the company as a whole. Williams said that adds to his confidence because he knows he and his teammates will be granted the resources necessary to meet AMD goals, including line time.

He also is excited about the AMD activity planner, which has been helpful in ensuring that meetings and activities are as productive as possible. Williams said coaches also have helped guide the process as well and that teams have collaborated to generate ideas for meetings.

"There's nothing stopping us," he said.

In addition to leading the CSD Pillar, he led a pillar through Phase

1 in the bakery. It's in the bakery that Williams saw firsthand the potential of AMD.

"It's a game-changer,"



he said. "The expectation is you start up a line and it runs."

The bakery now is running at 93 percent efficiency and Williams believes AMD has been a key part of that success.

While Williams is excited to be in the thick of production again, he still savors mentoring and guiding employees.

"If I can steer people toward a solution, that's a win," he said.

New round of AMD kicks off

AMD is being started and restarted on numerous lines.

AMD teams of six to 10 individuals have been formed on a volunteer basis and include salaried and hourly employees. Involvement offers employees the ability to enhance their skills, change their routines, make a difference and take ownership.

The teams meet weekly for drumbeat sessions and four hours of AMD activity.

Line 9 began Step Zero recently; the step provides background and preliminary information and is slated to take two weeks; each subsequent step requires two months to complete.

Step 1 focuses on getting equipment back to base condition, which entails cleaning and finding and addressing defects.

AMD is being restarted on Lines 14 and Line 30 (filler). Line 15 will start at Step 2 and Line 30 at Step 3. Step 2 is focused on eliminating source contamination and addressing hard-to-reach spaces. Step 3 focuses on lubrication standards, which aids machine longevity and performance.

Lines 1 and 2 (capper) are currently at Step 2.

Postings for sustainment teams are coming soon. Sustainment is for lines that already have reached Step 3. The goal is to prevent regression of machines and skill sets.

Internal audit COMPLETED

The plant recently completed an internal audit, which will help the team prepare for April's SQF audit.

While the plant did not score at the highest level, it did score higher than it has the previous two years.

Vice President of Scientific Affairs Steve Hermansky visited the plant along with two auditors for the internal audit. Before issuing the official score the visitors noted that the plant was in better shape than it had been the previous year and pointed out opportunities for enhancement.

The score can be improved by storing tools and hoses correctly, cleaning up cream and emulsion spills and filling out F-tags for leaks and broken equipment.

The internal audit accessed the plant based on SQF and Conagra standards and included program reviews and floor observations. It was intentionally more stringent than SQF to help the team maintain an audit-ready performance every day that exceeds requirements.

A successful SQF audit is crucial to the plant as major retailers generally require it of manufacturers.

Quality Team Lead Sarah Throckmorton said that it's important to be audit-ready every day, which includes being on top of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and knowing critical control points (CCP). A high level of awareness from staff drastically can reduce hazards.

Benhil rebuilds in

in PROCESS

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The new technology, which also facilitates the machine's ability for changeover, has been challenging to adapt to. But there are a lot of programming opportunities and room for enhancement.

"We've learned a lot and already are applying what we've learned," Hadar said. "We will keep working on it until we hit the performance criteria."

Line 9 already has had periods of high efficiency and Mean Time Between Failure (MTBF), which bodes well for a closeout to the project occurring soon. One challenge to closing out the project is that CQV had to be performed separately for the 1-pound and 2-pound setups to maintain production schedules.

Hadar noted that many employees have assisted with the project, including Production Associates Donovan Adkins, Denise Bledsoe, Cherelle Cousin and Victoria Smith; Maintenance Technicians Zachary Austin, Christopher Bradley, Zackary Cox and Dennis Craig; Controls Engineer Ronnie Sneed; Senior Principal Electrical Engineer John Tashijan and Engineering Manager Vince Stout.

Hadar said production associates have had a great impact on the project



Line Tech Dennis Craig helps troubleshoot the machine and make modifications.

by communicating issues and sharing their nuanced familiarity with the line. Collaboration with production associates and technicians has helped the team make adjustments and develop training materials, CL and ClLs.

"I'm proud of the team sticking together through some of the issues we've seen," he said. "With everyone's dedication, we're starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel."

In addition to installing the rebuilt Benhil on Line 9, the line's case packer had to be rebuilt to ensure it met safety standards.

The plant owns 11 Benhils and runs them on 10 lines. The Benhil presently being rebuilt will be installed on Line 10.

Liddell's effort results in major cost savings, waste reduction

With four decades of service, Donell Liddell is one of the most tenured people at the plant.

His experience and work ethic led to major cost savings and food waste reduction, according to Cell 2 Process Engineer Dustin Morris, who credits Liddell with helping spur a project that resulted in a major yield loss enhancement.

Liddell communicated that a large amount of mix was going down the drain during batch tank/ mix tank flush sequences used to clear out the lines. This led Morris to investigate the issue. He confirmed that about 25 seconds of good mix, as measured by duration of flush sequence, was being sent to the drain; that represents an expensive yield loss.

The timing of the flush sequence was too short. After analyzing the programming that controls the mix sequence, it was reprogrammed to prevent the loss.

Morris said trial and error as well as observations from operators helped the team find a solution.

"It's good to have communication with operators on the floor day in and day out," he said. "The more people involved, the better we are able to identify problems or find opportunities for improvement."

Morris added that Liddell's observation required a high level of awareness and attention to detail because the tanks in the mix room drain in an area under the mezzanine.

The project started in early January and lasted three weeks.

After 40 years of service, why do you take an ownership attitude?

"I like to run things and be responsible. I've been that way since I was a child. My parents were an influence and taught me to always do the best that you can."

What do you like about making a difference?

"It's good to know that you're helping. That's what we come here for. It was hard to see that much go down the drain that should end up in the can."

- Mix Room Lead Donell Liddell

Table Spreads team CUSE

While Table Spreads Operations Manager Scott Jenson is new to Indianapolis, he has familiarity with the team.

He transferred from the Conagra Chicago office where he was operations business manager for frozen and refrigerated product; however, Indianapolis was also within his purview so he already has a strong working relationship with plant leadership.

Jenson aims to reduce equipment downtime and minimize breakdowns by enhancing preventative maintenance. The overall goal is to enhance operating efficiency and first-time quality while remaining dedicated to continuous improvement.

"It's a journey, and the only way to get there is to work together," he said. "I look forward to working with the entire team."

Jenson describes his management philosophy as servant leadership and says that collaboration and input from all members of the team helps him make informed decisions.

He believes finding the root cause of issues and combating them with preventative actions will allow the team to continue to optimize operations.



Table Spreads Operations Manager Scott Jenson

Fast facts:

- · A Solon, Ohio, native.
- Married to wife, Julie, for 26
- Son, Larry, attends Ohio State University and majors in chemical engineering, just as his father did.

Employees step up in emergency

When a co-worker needs help, Indianapolis team person's aid, including Sanitation Associates Will McKind members are there.

An employee recently experienced a medical emergency at the plant and multiple employees came to the and Samuel Thompson.

The employees were praised by their teammates for their quick action and recognized by Human Resources.

What do you have to say about being there for others?

"I am always willing to help someone. I've worked here seven years.

> It's a good place to work. I like the people here. We work together and should look out for one another. If you see something, you should take action. We're like a

> > family." -Sanitation Associate Will McKind

You've worked at the plant for 11 years — what stands out about your experience?

"Everyone gets along. I have taken a leadership role as a union steward because I want to make a difference."

What would you like to say about safety?

"The goal is to leave the same way I came in. Everyone needs to wear PPE, such as gloves and raincoats, and use caution, especially when using chemicals during CIPs. Using two hands going up ladders is also important. It can be challenging tearing down machines and putting them back together. You have to use the correct posture and bend properly."

What do you like to do in your time off?

"I bowl and average about 220. It's both peaceful and challenging. I've also enjoyed playing basketball."

-Sanitation Associate Samuel Thompson

Roth leads Reddi Wip

Reddi Wip welcomes Operations Manager Mike Roth.

While new to Conagra, his seven years with Procter & Gamble has him versed in the tenets of Conagra Performance System (CPS). Roth also has worked for Danone, a multinational dairy food-producing giant. His experience helping the company make yogurt in a high-speed filling environment has him prepared for the safe, efficient production of Reddi Wip.

Roth describes CPS as a set of tools that systemically drive out losses through employee involvement.

"One of the best parts of CPS is that it elicits total employee involvement," he said. "Everyone is expected to be an owner and learn and grow, and everyone has a say."

While CPS and its American precursors is based on Japanese manufacturing practices, Roth believes CPS taps into the entrepreneurial spirit of Americans.

The goal is to use CPS to meet Compelling Business Need (CBN), the set of business results that drive all activity at the plant and include 85 percent machine efficiency, 3 percent or less yield loss and zero quality or safety incidents. But how Reddi Wip reaches its goals is important to him.

"I want to continue to drive culture change and ensure this is a place people want to work," he said.

Roth enjoys being part of the food manufacturing industry and wanted to stay in a field where he was able to see an end product on the shelves. After researching Conagra, he met with members of the Indianapolis team; his immediate rapport with them was a factor in his decision to pursue the opportunity.

Family also is a reason Indianapolis was right for Roth, his wife, Alex, and his son, Gavin, 2. With his in-laws in



Reddi Wip Operations Manager Mike Roth

town, a support system is available when the couple welcome their first daughter this spring.

Away from work

Roth enjoys golfing and counts playing at iconic Pebble Beach with his brother and father as a treasured memory.



Wells settles in with veteran third-shift team

Keith Wells is nearing his fourth decade as a warehouse distribution professional.

As third-shift distribution lead, he starts his day at 10 p.m. and leads a team of eight that is responsible for picking and loading. The team uses a list to select product, place it on a pallet and shrinkwrap it.

Wells appreciates the seniority of the team.

"Conagra has retained a lot of people for many years; and that tells me a lot about the organization," he said.

Most recently, Wells held a similar role at a national retailer. He credits his success to positive leadership and communication and finds it important to maintain a positive attitude and good working relationships with teammates.

He believes one of the best ways to serve customers is to follow policy and procedures, especially when it comes to safety.

"Safety procedures are there for a reason," he said. "They're all about helping us go home the same way we came to work."

Wells notes that in a work environment with forklifts, being aware of one's surroundings is always crucial.

"You have to pay attention," he said. "Never assume someone sees you because there might be blind spots. Make eye contact. Our accomplishments are hollow if anyone gets injured."

Away from work

Wells, who has two children, is a Kansas native; he enjoys camping and fishing.



Sanitation Lead Keith Wells

Hill a man of many skills and experiences

Process Engineer Tim Hill has an eclectic work history and diverse skill set.

His work history includes deep well fracking as well as production of biofuels, cornstarch, car headlamps and wet wipes. He also owned a business and traded stocks, which he credits to watching nightly business reports with his father.

"I started asking questions from a young age," he said.

Process Engineer Tim Hill

In addition to being inquisitive and ambitious, he formed a foundation for his success and developed his work ethic at his family's apple farm.

"As a kid, I was a country boy who took things apart and put them back together," he said.

His history prepared him for demanding work, such as remaining on-site at a deep well fracking site at all times to ensure that it was supplied.

While he didn't think of them as pets, it was also once his job to feed microorganisms used to produce biofuels, a process that required accuracy and precision lest the delicate creatures expire. With no established precedents, he and his colleagues developed processes by trial and error.

"It was fun," Hill said.

A former employer charged him with taking the drawings of co-workers, analyzing them and making them functional, which he also enjoyed; the end result of his work was headlamps.

Hill is used to exacting standards required in food production. While working for a wet wipe manufacturer as a supervisor and engineer, product purity standards were high just as they are at the Conagra plant.

Conagra is the largest company he's worked for; the opportunity for growth that represents is exciting for Hill. Presently, he's focused on what he can contribute to the team.

Wade prepared for continuous improvement



Continuous Improvement Specialist Robert Wade

Sometimes one person can help alter the course of a life.

"I had a really good chemistry teacher who fostered intrigue in the subject," said Continuous Improvement Specialist Robert Wade.

A chemical engineering major at University of Kentucky, he has used his love of the subject to make useful things. For Wade, it ties in to his passion for continuous improvement.

The Six Sigma methodology is a set of technologies and tools for process improvement he's studied for years. Wade integrates what he's studied into his new role while adopting Conagra's own continuous improvement culture.

He said continuous improvement is integral to how the plant operates. It relates to anything from enhancing a machine's efficiency to reducing waste. He notes how the plant has made some strides in reducing packaging loss.

Wade said feedback from employees has been

valuable, especially hourly employees who are familiar with the nuances of day-to-day functions, including machine operation to processes. He encourages all to bring their experience to bear on operations.

"When everyone is engaged, we can make things better," he said. "There's a great team atmosphere within Reddi Wip."

That spirit of teamwork is readily apparent at the start of the day. Daily Directional Meetings and CPS meetings have fostered collaboration, helped set priorities and focused the team on executing.

Fast facts:

- Worked for a multination Dutch paint manufacturer and helped produce a resin that is the main ingredient of paint.
- Born in Lexington, Ky., and a fan of University of Kentucky basketball and football.

Food production offers new perspective for Guntle

While he encourages Good Manufacturing Practices, Quality Team Lead Colin Guntle isn't afraid to get his hands dirty, so to speak.

A love of science and problem-solving has guided him academically and professionally.

"I enjoy addressing a problem until we arrive at a beneficial conclusion," he said.

The Ball State University alum's multiple majors were biology related, with microbiology being of particular interest to him. As a lab manager for a previous employer, he made bacterial cultures.

"I enjoy micro work," he said. "This work is broader and offers an opportunity to develop a lot more skills."

As he transitions from laboratory-based work, he's excited by the new perspective a food production environment offers. As with previous roles, working at the plant requires great attention to detail.

"You need to pick up on the concerns, track down issues and pinpoint the root cause," he said. "If there's a germ out there, we have to eliminate or control it. There's always a little investigation involved and planning that we need to put in place."

Guntle began working in Table Spreads but now focuses on Reddi Wip. Beyond the job's technical aspects, he believes communication with others is vital to success in a role that requires management of employees.

"You need to understand the needs of people," he said.

Away from work

Guntle is married and has two children. He enjoys watching movies and playing video games with his family.



Quality Team Lead Colin Guntle

Recent retirees

46 years of serviceBenhil Line Operator Larry Jones

45 years of service

Bottle Line/Votator Operator Fred Ward Bottle Line/Votator Operator Richard Zabicki

> **20 years of service** Sanitation Operator Gale Alley

9 years of service Controls Technician Kent Irvin

Service anniversaries

45 years

Martin Ewing Harold Pauley Richard Zabicki

> 25 years Mark Fields

Christine Fredette Michael Kellermeier David Williams Larry Williams

> **20 years** Max Simison

10 years Caleb Hadar Anita Terry 1 year

Gregory Ball
Sean Corkhill
Bryant Distel
Jim Dobbs
Robert Mays
Tamara Peeler
Alex Reyes
Dea Robinson
Troy Weber
Anthony Wilson
Ebone Wilson

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WASHINGTON NAVIGATES many 'moving parts' to staff plant

The plant's people are its greatest resource, and properly allocating that resource is Operations Support Specialist Monique Washington's job.

She likens her daily work to putting a puzzle together. She must know every person's skill set and preferences and where those skills fit — all while keeping an eye toward rules to which she must adhere. Essentially, she must be an expert on the plant's workforce.

"There are a lot of moving parts," Washington said.

Fulfilling her responsibilities takes many skills, including being a people person and having the ability to multitask. She also has to be able to adapt to change quickly, efficiently and accurately while being detail-oriented. Washington said she's developed those skills in more than a decade at the plant. She's grateful to those who helped her when she started, from supervisors to employees.

"We spend a lot of time together," she said. "We're kind of



Operations Support Specialist Monique Washington

like a family."

She says developing relationships with co-workers, including Cell 3 Lead Glen Hughes, has helped her excel.

"If he doesn't have an answer, he'll help find it," Washington said.

"He goes out of his way to help."

While quality teammates have made a difference, her work ethic has played a key role as well.

"I am the type of person who gives 100 percent or more if I can," she said.