

INDUSTRY → Food and Beverage

Unlocking Capacity with Smarter Scheduling



With smarter scheduling and automation, a leading food manufacturer became more resilient, managing disruptions with ease and positioning itself for scalable growth.

THE HIGHLIGHTS

[AFP advanced food products llc.](#) is a food manufacturer based in New Holland, PA. It is one of the world's foremost foodservice, co-pack and private label manufacturers of aseptically packed cheese sauces, puddings, dips and soups. Their leading brand, Savencia Fromage & Dairy, is known for convenience, service, and quality. With more than 400 employees and an annual shipping volume of 170,000 metric tons, AFP had grown rapidly in recent years—but growth brought challenges. Scheduling disruptions increased, production costs climbed, and customer service suffered – until AFP partnered with [Zinata](#) to turn things around.

A year after implementing Product Wheels and Redzone Scheduling, the Operations and Planning Teams continue to see sustained benefits: fewer line changeovers, better sequencing of orders, and ongoing savings in both inventory and overtime.

THE HEADLINES

6%increase in annual
volume**35%**drop in
overtime**200**fewer major line
changeovers

THE CHALLENGE

At its main plant in New Holland, PA, AFP was experiencing rising complexity and pressure in its demand planning and scheduling processes. Rapid growth created operational strain, and inefficiencies were beginning to impact cost, service, and employee workload. Although the team understood sequencing, they lacked the tools to improve it — prompting AFP to seek Zinata’s support.

The company was facing:

- Regular scheduling disruptions and yield losses, driving up production costs
- Complex operations across three lines and two processing systems with many sequencing rules
- High product complexity (e.g., retail pudding with 130 SKUs, 15 formulas, and 4 pack combinations)
- Schedules built around demand rather than production efficiencies
- Difficulty maintaining quality and customer service during expansion
- Excessive overtime, creating strain on staff and unreliable work schedules

OUR SOLUTION

Working closely with AFP, Zinata implemented a formal planning and scheduling process at AFP using [Product Wheel methods](#) and [Redzone Scheduling](#) software. Product Wheels are a regularly repeating pattern of production; it is a proven approach to bringing stability to scheduling and increasing manufacturing capacity using existing resources.

Key elements of the implementation included:

- Joint agreement and documentation of production strategies between AFP Plant Operations and Planning
- Creation of a value stream map and discussion of the factors impacting changeover time and operating efficiency
- Grouping products that ran well together into families, with families assigned to production lines
- Developing sequences of formulas and part numbers within each formula for maximum efficiency
- Aligning sequence and line assignments so upstream processing units could stay dedicated to production lines, reducing piping and valving changes
- Reserving time and placeholders for Make-to-Order and R&D requirements that could not be forecasted

As a result, the Master Scheduler could look forward to improved schedules, fewer changeovers and less overtime – freeing up time to focus on higher-value priorities.



“Zinata and Redzone Scheduling have improved our Master Scheduler’s job so that she can do more in less time. This makes a real difference when we have unexpected changeovers”

PLANT SUPERINTENDENT

RESULTS AND IMPACT

Better sequencing, fewer line changeovers, reduced overtime, and lasting knowledge transfer.

AFP realized measurable performance gains and cultural benefits through the scheduling transformation:

- **Increased throughput:** A 6% boost in volume, enabled by fewer and simpler line changeovers.
- **Reduced errors and greater agility:** Sequencing simplified batching and mixing, while allowing managers to adjust production plans without relying on schedulers.
- **Lean operations:** Weekend overtime was largely eliminated, inventory levels reduced, and schedules became easier to manage—freeing leadership to focus on higher-value priorities.
- **Enhanced employee satisfaction:** Less overtime and a smoother operating rhythm improved morale and job satisfaction.
- **Technology enablement:** Redzone Scheduling automated routine tasks and provided dashboards that gave management a clear view of progress and performance.
- **Sustained impact:** AFP now operates with an agile, repeatable model that supports growth while staying true to its mission pillars—customer service, quality, and innovation.

CONCLUSION

By partnering with [Zinata](#) to implement Product Wheel methods and Redzone Scheduling, AFP transformed scheduling from a source of disruption into a driver of efficiency and growth. The project delivered sustained improvements — from higher throughput and reduced overtime to simpler, more reliable schedules that empower planners and support employees. With an agile, repeatable scheduling process now in place, AFP is positioned to continue growing while upholding its core commitments to customer service, quality, and innovation.



“The Product Wheels methodology combines scheduler knowledge with operational needs for the most efficient scheduling outcome”

DEMAND PLANNING MANAGER

**EMPOWER YOUR PEOPLE.
TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS.**



Z I N A T A

Contact Zinata to get started.