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1. Woolwich Dairy Breaks Ground for New Goat Cheese Plant in Lancaster

LANCASTER – More than 200 people - including local school children, city council members, state legislators, industry officials and even members of the high school color guard - cheered on Woolwich Dairy owners Tony & Olga Dutra at an official ground-breaking celebration yesterday. The couple ceremoniously shoveled the first few spadefuls of dirt to build a new 27,000 sq. ft. goat cheese processing plant in Lancaster, Wis., making this southwestern Wisconsin community home to the new Woolwich Dairy U.S. Headquarters.

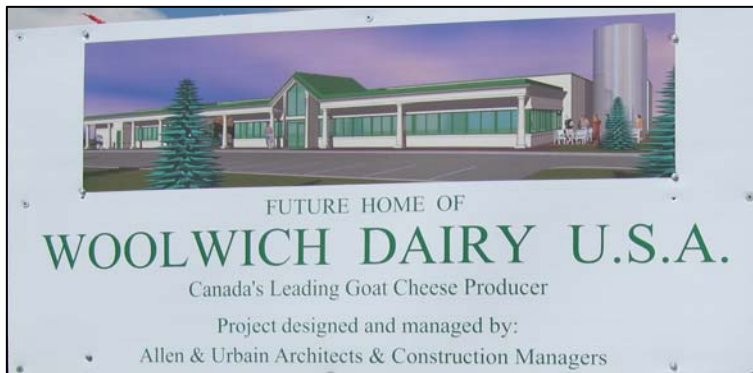


From left: Lancaster Mayor Jerry Wehrle, Woolwich Dairy Owners Olga & Tony Dutra & Commerce Secretary Mary Burke.

"In the next few months, you're going to see a class act, state-of-the art goat cheese manufacturing facility built right here in Lancaster, Wisconsin,"

Tony Dutra told the crowd. "We looked at California, New Mexico and Virginia, but eventually landed in Wisconsin. We are proud to be here, because Wisconsin is the best state. It is the heartland for dairy."

Lancaster Mayor Jerry Wehrle welcomed the Dutras to the city, noting the couple has already purchased a home near Lancaster's new Arrow Ridge Business Park, which also celebrated its grand opening yesterday. Department of Commerce Secretary Mary Burke presented the city with a check for \$156,000 to be used to provide the infrastructure necessary to support the Woolwich business expansion in the city's new business park.



"This project is a great example of where Wisconsin needs to be heading - we are proud of our dairy heritage, but we must realize dairy has changed and we need to make sure we're changing with it," Secretary Burke said. "It's with the help of organizations like the Dairy Business Innovation Center that we are helping attract innovative companies such as Woolwich Dairy to locate in Wisconsin."

Tony and Olga Dutra urged dairy producers in the crowd to consider entering the dairy goat industry, or if they are already dairy goat producers, to consider expanding their herds. "If you give us good quality milk, we'll be happy to expand this facility in the future," the Dutrass said. The couple also announced they are now hiring for three positions: Plant Manager, Human Resources Director and Field Representative.

Woolwich Dairy has production facilities in Ontario and Quebec and is Canada's leading largest goat cheese producer. The company has exported cheese to the U.S. since 1986 and has a 20 percent share of the U.S. market. The Lancaster plant will bring up to 30 jobs to the area.



Olga Dutra, flanked by Woolwich Dairy staff, announces the operation will soon be hiring three positions: Plant Manager, Human Resources Director, and Field Representative.



2. DBIC Team Member Monthly Message: Dan Strongin

This month we hear from Dan Strongin, DBIC Business Operations & Marketing Consultant. Dan discusses: "Solving a Modern Problem with a 1950's Solution."

After years of making consistent but unexciting cheese, and lowering prices to remain competitive, the American Cheese Industry is in turmoil. Unfortunately, it seems to keep applying the same medicine, in spite of the fact that the cure plainly isn't working. Bigger factories, cheaper production, or tricks like cutting the same stuff differently, only work short-term.

When you try and fool consumers, sooner or later it backfires. Even if most consumers don't know the difference between a natural rind and a rindless made to look like one, once they taste the real thing, they will, and they will feel betrayed. Until we commit to make the change to better cheese, how we merchandise isn't helping. And all the while, the European Specialty Cheese Industry has been dominating the most profitable cheese sales in our markets, right in front of our eyes.

In the last decade we have witnessed long standing but American cheese companies forced to sell to European-based companies, who turn them around in a hurry by being better operators. With subsidies being phased out in Europe between now and 2013, it is going to happen even more. I am not talking Artisan and Farmhouse here, but cheeses like Jarlsburg, Brie, St. Andre, Cambozola, and others. Why can't we compete for this lucrative niche as well? The old Reny Picot factory doesn't count: it's owned by Europeans.

Is it because we have so much invested in current equipment that the cost of changing our whole operation seems daunting? It only takes a small amount of total production diverted into a truly value added product to change dramatically the profitability of even the biggest producer. It is what I demonstrate to companies on a regular basis. So what is stopping us?

3. Holland's Family Farm Creamery to Celebrate Grand Opening on May 22

THORP – Holland's Family Farm Creamery, a new Wisconsin farmstead cheese plant, will host a grand opening celebration May 22. Rolf and Marieke Penterman, and their three children Luna, Joyce and Dean, are a first generation Wisconsin dairy farm family. The Pentermans moved from the Netherlands to Thorp, Wis. in 2002 to pursue their passion for dairy farming. In late 2006, after earning her Wisconsin Cheesemakers' License, Marieke began making Gouda in the style of her home country in the facility's new farmhouse creamery.



Marieke Penterman, Cheesemaker at Holland's Family Farm Creamery, recently won a gold medal at the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest for her Foenegreek Gouda.

Milk from the Pentermans' 480-Holstein dairy herd is piped direct from the milking parlor to the creamery through a pipeline, so milk arrives warm for cheesemaking. Marieke then handcrafts her Gouda cheese in

16-pound, 5-pound, 2-pound 1-pound and 1/2-pound wheels and carefully ages it on wooden shelves. Varieties include: cumin, mustard yellow, black, mélange, burning nettle, burning mélange, onion/garlic, Italian herb, smoked, garden herb, black pepper, Foenegreek (a nut tasting cheese) and just plain Gouda. Each carries the label of "Marieke™...A Wisconsin Farmhouse Cheese." Marieke's Foenegreek Gouda recently earned a Gold Medal at the U.S. Championship Cheese Contest.

The May 22 grand opening will give the public a chance to see the farmstead operation and will include a presentation by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, congratulating the Pentermans for their commitment to investing in Wisconsin's dairy industry. Stay tuned for more details and activities to take place during the May 22 open house.

4. Industry News

- **Artisanal Cheese Maker—Step by Step Handbook Now Available:** Are you an artisan cheesemaker wondering if you are doing everything you can to produce a high quality, safe product? Do you have a food safety plan? Do you have a HACCP plan? Diane Wright Hirsch and Patrice Sulik, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension, have produced a "Food Safety Plans for the Artisanal Cheesemaker" workbook to lead you step by step through the process of creating your own food safety plan. Topics include: practical concepts, such as sanitation and cleaning and how to develop a sanitation plan; information on specific food safety issues in cheese making; recall plans; seven steps to developing a personalized HACCP plan, including sample plans for a raw milk cheddar plant, as well as plans for facilities that make pasteurized or unpasteurized goat milk feta cheese. Bill Wendorff, University of Wisconsin food scientist, took a look at this resource and decided that, "At \$20, it's a steal! And a lot better than a recall." For a copy of the book, contact Diane Hirsch at dianne.hirsch@uconn.edu or call 203-407-3161.

- **Goat Field Days Planned Statewide:** Goat farmers and milk processors should plan to attend upcoming five goat farm field days scheduled across the state. The specific focus of each field day will vary but most will cover aspects of goat herd health and nutrition. Each field day will include presentations by the farm owner and a veterinarian. The first farm field day will be from noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 12 at the farm of Gary and Molly Phillips in Juda, Wis. The day will focus on kid-raising and general goat herd nutrition with a special presentation by veterinarian Chris Duemler, DVM. Other on-farm field days scheduled include: June 15, Gerstner Farm, Crawford County; July 17, Serenity Springs Farm, Iowa County; Aug. 23, LaClare Farm, Calumet County; Oct. 10, Zimmermann Farm, Dodge County. All field days are free to the public but advance registration is required. Register at least one week in advance. For more information and to register, contact Jeanne Meier or Anne Pfeiffer at 608-224-5121 or jeanne.meier@datcp.state.wi.us



- **Value Added Producer Grants - Applications Due May 16:** Applications for the 2007 Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG) are due May 16 - creating a short window for producers apply for funds. Grants may be used for planning activities and for working capital for marketing value-added agricultural products and for farm-based renewable energy. Eligible applicants are independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives, agricultural producer groups, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures. For more information, visit: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm> or contact Barb Brewster at 715-345-7615, extension 134 or email barbara.brewster@wi.usda.gov.

6. Upcoming Important Dates

- **April 30-May 3: The World of Cheese from Pasture to Plate. Madison, Wis.**
A class for culinary professionals, end users, brokers, distributors, retailers, and marketers, this four-day hands-on course is aimed at educating participants in the art and science of cheesemaking. Featuring lectures covering cheesemaking, cheese handling and display, packaging fundamentals, cheese economics, basics of cheese grading and evaluation, and more. Hands on sessions include cheesemaking, grading lab and cheese functionality demos. At the end of the course attendees will receive a participation certificate. For more information, visit http://www.cdr.wisc.edu/courses/pasture_to_plate_07.html or call Dean Sommer at 608-265-6469
- **May 4: Wisconsin Specialty Institute Meeting. Madison, Wis.**
The next WSCI meeting will be held on Friday, May 4 at the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, 8418 Excelsior Dr., Madison, Wis. Prior to the meeting, UW Provision, 2315 Pleasant View Rd., Middleton, will provide a tour of their operations. The tour will begin at 9 a.m. with the WSCI meeting following at 10 a.m. at the WMMB offices. Guest speakers include: Suzanne Isige, Market Research Manager, WMMB, who will discuss "Specialty Cheese Trends," Lu Ann Lodi, WMMB, who will talk about new website options, and Bob Green, Cheese Monger, UW Provisions, who will discuss "Distribution Opportunities for the State of Wisconsin." RSVP your attendance to info@wisspecialcheese.org or call 866-740-2180.

- **May 9: Dairy HACCP Workshop. Madison, Wis.**

This one-day workshop at the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research is an introduction to HACCP in a plant setting and will include breakout exercises such as the design and modification of flow diagrams. Open to all dairy and food processors, suppliers and regulators. Learn more here: <http://www.cdr.wisc.edu/courses/haccp.html> or call Marianne Smukowski at 608-265-6546.

- **May 14-15: Future of Farming Conference. Madison, Wis.**

U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, a national leader on federal farm policy, will deliver the opening-day keynote address at the Future of Farming and Rural Life in Wisconsin statewide conference May 14-15 at Monona Terrace in Madison. Registration information for the conference, "Our Future, Our Heritage," is available on the Future of Farming Web site at www.wisconsinacademy.org/idea.

Conference participants will have opportunities to share information and learn about topics in four key areas: food systems and production agriculture on May 14, and community and land use/conservation on May 15. The conference will also be a celebration of culture and art in rural Wisconsin, with gallery exhibits, performances and artists' discussions of their work. The Future of Farming Project is the current Wisconsin Idea public policy program of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters.



- **August 1-4: The American Cheese Society Annual Conference. Burlington, Vermont**

Considered one of the world's most influential and prestigious competitions in recognizing the art of artisanal and specialty cheesemaking, the American Cheese Society's annual judging competition is held in conjunction with the American Cheese Society's 24th Annual Conference - held this year in beautiful Burlington, Vermont. Watch the ACS website for more announcements regarding conference schedules and competition entry dates: <http://cheesesociety.org/index.cfm>

- **August 21-22: Affinage - The Aging of Cheese Short Course. Madison, Wis.**

This course, offered by the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research, will cover the art and science of aging cheeses to develop the texture, flavor and aroma of each unique finished cheese. This short course is intended for all cheesemakers interested in production of unique aged cheeses and for cheese affineurs that finish artisan or specialty cheeses. It is also of value to brokers and distributors handling artisan or specialty cheeses. Learn more by visit: <http://www.cdr.wisc.edu/courses/affinage07.html> or call Bill Wendorff at 608-263-2015.

- **November 13-15: Turning Chaos Into Control - Continental Style Cheeses. River Falls, Wis.**

This three-day conference is for cheesemakers who want to make artisanal cheeses. While Continental Style Cheese has many connotations to many people, it may mean a typical Edam or Gouda from the Netherlands, Saint-Paulin from France, Manchego, a sheep milk cheese from Spain or any other number of European style cheeses. In any case, the manufacturing technology is basically the same. Attendees will examine the most important steps in the cheese making process. Making small manipulations at critical times in the process can result in a unique cheese. Join Neville McNaughton - Consultant Cheesemaker and Ranee May - University Wisconsin-River Falls, Dairy Specialist as conference coordinators for an enlightening technology session that can put you in control of your Cheesemaking. For more information, visit <http://www.uwrf.edu/food-science/institutes/artisanalCheese.html> or call 715-425-3704

The Dairy Business Innovation Center offers technical assistance to dairy producers and processors in developing value-added dairy products, business planning and market development. For more information, visit www.dbicusa.org or contact Jeanne Carpenter, 608-358-7837.