

Make Dairy Products

(Continued From Page 22)



Mrs. Paul G. Martin holds two pounds of fresh butter as she sits by her butter churn.

Swiss Cheese

Swiss cheese may not qualify as an authentic Pennsylvania Dutch product, but it is an interesting dairy product produced here in the county. The Lancaster County Swiss Cheese Company, located at Gordonville RD1 on the Centerville Road, processes nearly 10,000 pounds of milk daily, six days a week, according to the owner, Walter S Poyck. Poyck has lived in the county nearly all his life, having graduated from Hempfield High School and Franklin and Marshall College. His college major was sociology and business, but he seems to be at home making swiss cheese, and he said he really enjoys it.

Poyck recently took over the company from Alois Heer, a native of Switzerland who had operated it for nearly 10 years. Poyck, Heer and David Musser are the three full time employees

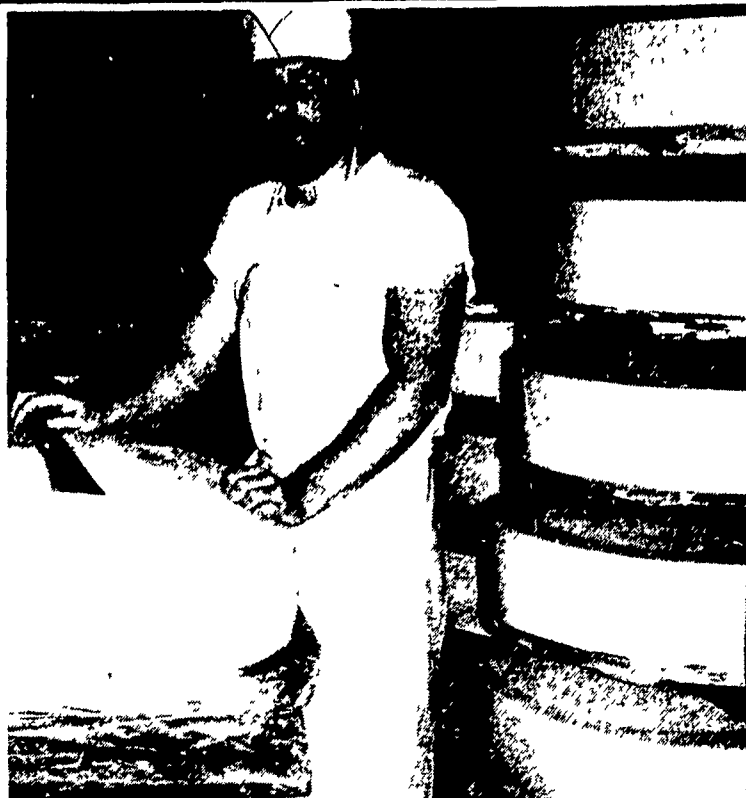
who turn out the swiss cheese and butter. Poyck says all the cheese and butter is sold in Lancaster, mostly by standholders at the city markets and at Meadowbrook.

It takes about 300 to 500 gallons of milk to make one cheese. There are just two ingredients added to produce cheese - first a culture is added which will produce the characteristic swiss cheese flavor and form the holes. The milk is heated and stirred and then rennet is added. Rennet aids in coagulation and forms the milk into a semi-solid state, like junket. When the junket is firm, it is cut with a cheese harp into curds about the size of kernels of wheat. The small curds and whey are then heated and stirred, and then removed from the copper kettles. To dip the curd a large cheesecloth on a metal frame is passed along inside the bottom of the kettle. The bag of cheese is

hoisted out and put into a wheel or black cheese form.

The cheese is wrapped in a cheesecloth and pressed into the form. The cheesecloth absorbs moisture and holds the cheese together. During the first day the cheesecloth is changed and the cheese turned repeatedly. When the new cheese is solid, it is removed from the press and cheesecloth and floated in a brine vat for two to three days. The brine solution draws more of the moisture from the cheese and the cheese becomes more solid. The young cheese is placed in a cold cellar for a week, then moved to a hot curing cellar. Here the aging process takes place and holes form after about two weeks from expanding carbon dioxide.

Each cheese is taken off the shelf twice weekly, turned and scrubbed with water and raw salt. This cleans the cheese and forms the outer rind. The turning also makes sure holes are formed evenly. After six weeks in the curing cellar the cheese is moved to the cold cellar. The entire process is complete in nine weeks, and the cheese is ready to be eaten.



Walter Poyck, owner of the Lancaster County Swiss Cheese Company, slices a piece of swiss cheese from the huge round. In the background are other cheeses aging.

Poyck says his product is a mild swiss cheese because this is what customers in this area prefer. A stronger swiss cheese would be achieved by a longer aging process.

The other swiss cheese manufacturer in the county is Arthur Lengacher on Route 30 east at Gap.

You may not be anxious to make swiss cheese, but why not make it a point during Dairy Month to try some of Lancaster County's unique, delicious dairy products?

FFA Week Activities June 27-29

Training for rural leadership, and understanding of the agricultural industry, will be among the objectives of the annual FFA Activities Week June 27, 28, and 29 at The Pennsylvania State University.

Attendance is expected to total 1,500 FFA members and teachers of agriculture from statewide high schools, says Dr. Norman K. Hoover, coordinator of arrangements from the department of agricultural education at Penn State. Under new membership rules, some 90 girls will take part for the fourth straight year.

Goals of FFA Week will be achieved in educational demonstrations and tours, individual conferences with College of Agriculture faculty members, 17 judging contests, and meetings of the State Association of the FFA.

The judging contests, a major event each year, will be held the morning of June 28. The top few teams in each of the 17 events will receive trips to compete in contests at the eastern, regional, or national level.

Contests this year feature dairy cattle judging, dairy foods, livestock judging, poultry judging, meat judging and identification, agronomy, land judging, forestry, floriculture, ornamental landscape, small gasoline engine, safe tractor operation and maintenance, agricultural mechanics, public speaking, chapter procedure, agricultural salesmanship and an employment interview contest.

Sixty delegates and 11 officers of the State Association of the FFA will meet daily. New state officers will be announced at a final general session at 9:30 a.m. on June 29 in Schwab Auditorium. Contest winners will also be announced at this time.



Here are authentic utensils used in making traditional dairy products, courtesy of the Pennsylvania Farm Museum at Landis Valley. On the bench is an egg cheese mold, which dates from the last half of the 19th century, and two butter prints. The center one has an 1896 date carved on the back, and the other dates from 1850. On the ground is an ice cream freezer, circa 1890-1900, and a less common butter churn, circa 1860.

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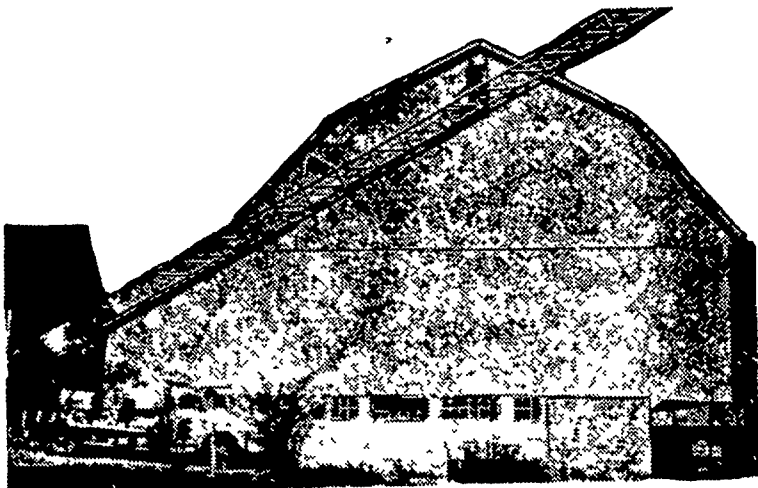
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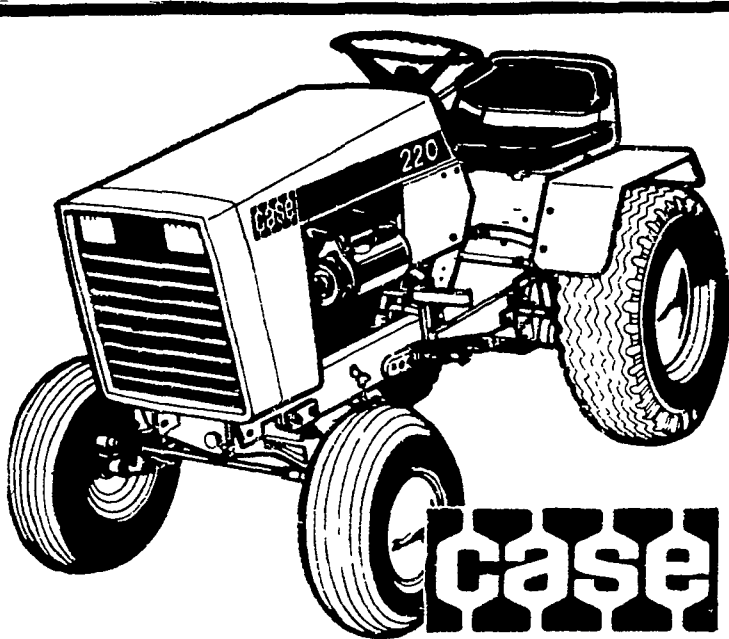
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