

Co-op breaks ground for cheese plant

WAVERLY, N.Y. — Alex P. Mercure, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development Programs, was the main speaker at the groundbreaking ceremony of a mozzarella cheese plant in Waverly, N.Y. on last Saturday.

The occasion was another milestone in the history of Eastern Milk Cooperative and the northeast dairy industry. It was the culmination of a joint venture between the 4500 dairy farmer member cooperative and Leprino Foods of Denver, Colorado.

Mercure said the joint endeavor would not only benefit dairy farmers in the northeast, but would improve the lives of its rural communities through increased employment and spending ability of its citizens.

One of the largest plants of its kind, the Waverly facility is expected to employ over 200 people and handle as much as 1.5 million pounds of milk per day. It will produce approximately 140,000 pounds of mozzarella cheese daily, upon completion.

Arden Tewksbury,

President of Eastern Milk Producers and a dairy farmer from Meshoppen, Pa., keynoted the festivities.

"Upon completion, this venture will ultimately benefit every Eastern member as well as dairy farmers throughout the northeast for many years into the future," he said.

Nearly 500 people including local, state, and national legislators; cooperative and Leprino officials; members of the news media and a large contingent of dairy farmers were present.

The \$15 million structure will be built and equipped by Eastern. Leprino Foods will lease the plant where it will process, package and distribute the mozzarella. A smaller facility in Horseheads, N.Y. has been in operation since October 1978 under the same Eastern-Leprino banner.

Among other guest speakers were: Rev. Vincent Langan, St. John's Catholic Church, So. Waverly, Pa.; Tom Wilson, Administrator of Federal Milk Marketing Order #2; Dan Leary, Mayor of Waverly; Joe Yanuzzi, Mayor of South Waverly; Frank Grove, Vice President

of First Pennsylvania Bank of Philadelphia; Wesley Allen, President of Leprino Foods; Richard Harrington, Assistant Deputy Commissioner of New York Department of Commerce; Roger Madigan, Pennsylvania State Representative; George Winner, New York State Assemblyman; Michael Russin, representing U.S. Congressman Joseph M. McDade and Howard McDonald, General Manager of Eastern Milk Producers. Charles Obermeyer, Vice

President of Leprino, was master of ceremonies.

Reportedly, the Waverly plant will be completed by July 1, 1980. However, the present plant is expected to handle large volumes of milk similar to that handled during the first six months of 1979.

This is important, according to an Eastern official, because milk production is forecasted to increase substantially causing a surplus during the upcoming spring months.



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Legislative roundup

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before the committee, and land use is certainly one of those measures that makes people anxious."

Thomas noted that he had met with proponents of the deed restriction measure for "fruitful" talks some weeks ago.

Another measure introduced into the House last week, HB 2103, could have smoother sailing than HB 1983 or any other land use measure.

HB 2103 would allow for the use of any PennDOT road in times of crucial need, Thomas said.

The measure was introduced to combat losses fruit and dairy farmers may suffer when PennDOT posts

weight limits on deteriorating roads.

"We feel that no farmer should suffer just because PennDOT is letting a rural road go to pot," Thomas said.

"When milk or fruit has to go to market, that's a crucial time for the farmer. HB 2103 would let drivers get to farmers as long as a road was passable, regardless of PennDOT's posted weight limits."

And it the Capitol Building, Governor Richard Thornburgh signed HB 1011, the alcohol fuel bill. It reduces the fee for on-farm stills from \$2500 to \$25.

The Governor has called the bill the "Floyd Horst" law.



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