

Fresh ingredients produce delicious ice cream

BY SUZANNE KEENE

MANHEIM — If the words cookies 'n cream, chocolate almond, bubblegum and peach make you yearn for heaping scoops of ice cream, Kreider's Dairy Store in Manheim may be the place to satisfy your desire.

Every Tuesday and Thursday Deb and Connie Kreider load their 10-gallon ice cream freezer with fresh milk, cream and sugar and produce gallons and gallons of fresh creamy ice cream to serve at Kreider's highly-acclaimed restaurant and to sell at their dairy stores.

During the winter months the Kreiders make about 800 gallons a week, but during the busy summer season they have to increase their production to about 1,200 gallons.

The key to making delicious ice cream is to use only fresh ingredients, Deb said.

"You have to have a good fresh mix to start with," she said.

The Kreiders use dairy products from their 750 Holsteins to produce

the basic mix that is the base for all the different flavors. They milk 24 hours a day on their two farms located near the restaurant and dairy stores, Deb said.

Kreiders use 12.5 percent butterfat in their basic ice cream mix to produce a high-quality product. Cheaper brands of ice cream contain lower percentages of butterfat, Deb explained.

To maintain the high-quality of their product, the Kreiders use only fresh fruit in their ice cream recipe.

"A lot has to do with the quality you put in," Deb said. "During peach season we peel our own peaches."

Another important factor in producing a quality product is to make sure the ice cream is whipped for the proper amount of time, Deb said. If it is whipped too much, it will have a light, airy texture, and if it isn't whipped enough, it will be too heavy.

"It's going to affect the flavor," Deb explained.



Connie Kreider stacks the ice cream in the freezer, which is set at the proper temperature for storage.

To determine if the cream has been whipped enough, Deb weighs it on a small scale. At a weight she would not disclose, the ice cream is of just the right consistency and should be removed from the freezer as quickly as possible.

The time it takes to package the ice cream is crucial. If the ice cream is out too long before it reaches the freezer, it gets icy and is of lower quality, Deb explained.

"You want it frozen as fast as you possibly can," Deb said.

But Deb and Connie are experts at quickly scooping the ice cream from the freezer, snapping on the lids and rushing it to the nearby freezer set to the proper temperature for storage.

Deb has been making ice cream for five years and Connie has been helping her for two.

The average batch takes about six to eight minutes to complete, but some flavors, like chocolate, take longer. Sherbet takes about 15 minutes because it is really frozen sugar water, Deb explained.

The Kreiders have developed their own flavorings for their 55 kinds of ice cream and sherbet. To do that, Deb said, they contact companies that sell the ingredients and then experiment with them. She said she is working on developing pink lemonade, coffee brickle, chocolate cashew and raspberry ripple flavors for the busy summer months.

Right now the best-selling flavor

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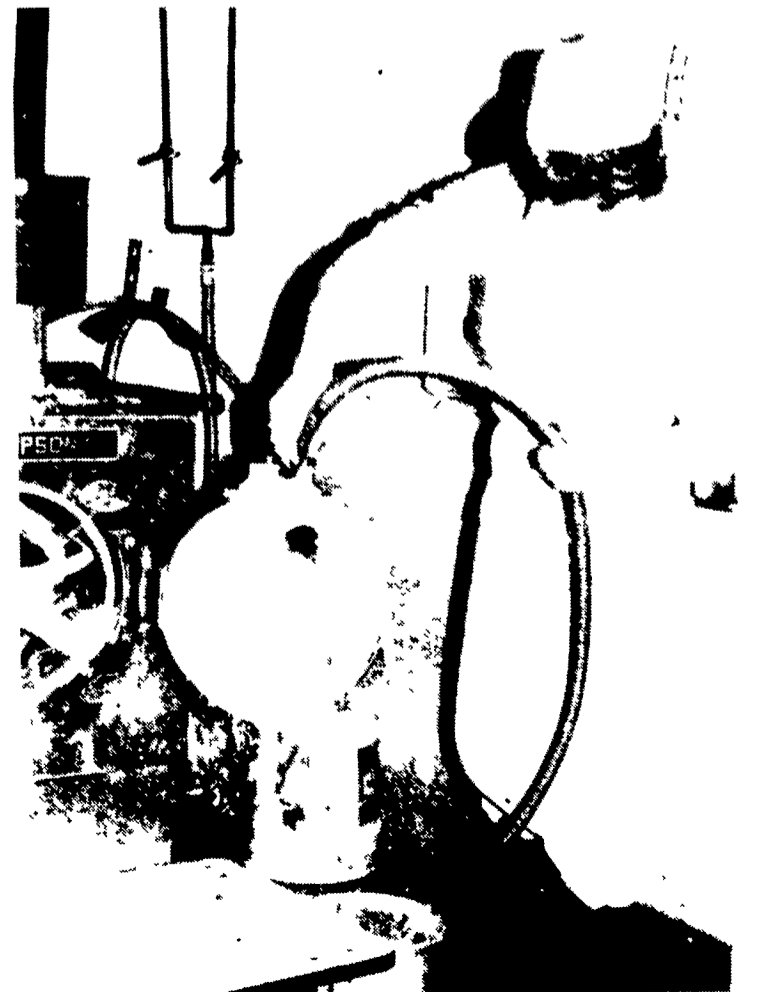
Connie tops each container of cookies 'n cream with a whole Oreo.



Deb Kreider scoops out the last bit of ice cream from the 10-gallon freezer. She confessed that this is the easiest time to cheat and take a taste.



Deb Kreider sprinkles almonds on a chocolate pie she specially prepared for her father.



Between flavors Deb Kreider rinses out the freezer so that no aftertaste affects the next batch.