



Dryer control room with Tom Douglas (R) and Bruce Bartholomew. These computer controls are the heart of the plant operation.

**BY BARBARA MILLER**  
**LYCOMING CO. CORRESPONDENT**  
**MIDDLEBURY CENTER** — Squirting milk into powder is big business at a small village called Middlebury Center located near Pennsylvania's Grand Canyon. This is the home of Dietrich's Milk Products who own two of the half dozen powdered milk plants in the state. The Middlebury Center plant, according to Thomas E. Decker, manager, is one of the largest powder operations in northeastern Pennsylvania. The remaining Dietrich plant is in Reading.

As accustomed as old Betsy is to squirting milk, even she would find it hard to believe that the essence of making powdered milk consists of squirting milk 102 feet into the air of a "super dome" where it mixes with 400 degree air and quickly becomes powder.

According to Decker, the process mentioned above occurs every day as part of the company's conversion of raw milk to powdered.

"The plant can convert 48,000 pounds of raw milk to 6,500 pounds of powder in about one hour," reports Decker.

Although the plant changes raw milk into powdered whole milk, powdered skim milk, or butter, Decker stated Dietrich's specializes in whole milk powder. "Our biggest market is whole milk powder," he observed.

Large candy companies who purchase whole milk powder to use in the manufacture of milk chocolate are Dietrich's biggest customers.

Situated on 22 acres, the Middlebury Center plant houses a new

vertical dryer, a large computer system and has the capacity of holding 2.1 million pounds of milk in five silos.

Two major suppliers of raw milk to the plant are Atlantic Processing and the United Dairy Ser-

vice Co-op in addition to area cooperatives.

The raw milk arrives at the plant in large tankers and is immediately tested for antibiotics, acidity, and bacteria. It must pass those tests before it goes any further, Decker



Powdered milk in bags ready for shipment.



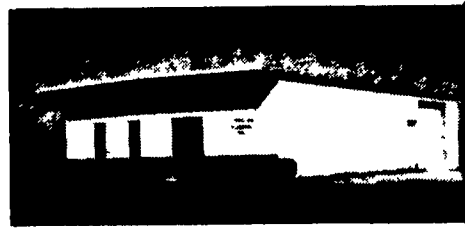
Mike Kiperli, lab analyst, removes milk powder from a moisturizer analyzer. Only 2.6 percent should remain in the powder. The test now takes seven seconds with the new equipment.

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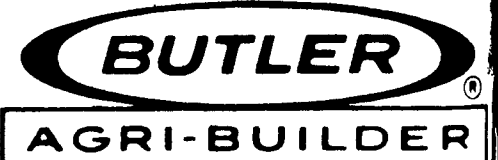
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