

**Editor's Note: Here's Part 2** of a comprehensive article about the comparisons of production, processing and promotion between the Irish and the United States dairy industries.

The American Dairy Assn. and Dairy Council sponsored a dairy tour to Ireland in April. That provides the background for this article.

**Promotion That Works**

Dairy Promotion in Ireland, as in the U.S., stresses refreshment and health. While the U.S. advertising theme is "Milk...America's Health Kick," in Ireland a glass of milk is "A Healthy Handful." Both have advertising campaigns aimed at women of all ages about the importance of calcium in dairy products to prevent osteoporosis.

The cheese campaign in Ireland features a cartoon character called "The Big Cheese" who appears in TV promotions for cheese as a versatile, tasty and nutritious food -- "Cheese, Make More of It." In the U.S., 1988's fall and winter campaign featured TV celebrity Willard Scott in point-of-sale material; the spring promotion is now "Cheeseburger Days."

The Irish TV and campaign for butter calls it "The everyday miracle, fresh from nature--pure delicious goodness with a unique taste--nothing else tastes like it," and ends with the line "Easier to spread." The U.S. butter ad stresses that butter has no more calories than margarine and says, "Give them all a little pat of butter."

The Irish dairy industry has been very dependent on butter for years. Now consumption has fallen for two reasons: 1) preference for a refrigerator-spreadable product and 2) health concerns about cholesterol, the same reasons that have eroded butter consumption in the U.S. While Ireland's butter consumption is just over 16 lbs., U.S. butter (4.7 lbs.) and margarine (12 lbs.) combined intake is also about 16 lbs.

Ireland's per capita milk consumption is the second highest in Europe at 399 lbs. U.S. fluid consumption is about two-thirds of Ireland's with a per capita consumption of 244 lbs./year.

U.S. cheese consumption (23.9 lbs.) tops Ireland's (8.1 lbs.) by almost three times and UDIA forecasts a rise in the U.S. cheese consumption over the next five years of 4.24%, bringing per capita consumption to as high as 28.31 pounds/year by 1992. Italian cheese varieties will lead American and other types of cheese in consumption gains.

Dairy promotion in Ireland is organized by the National Dairy Council. According to Aidan McCarthy, Chief Executive, "NDC's function is the generic promotion of milk and dairy products on the Irish market." Their objective is to maintain or improve the image of milk, butter, cheese, yogurt and cream as perceived by consumers. He explained, "NDC's generic measures are a support, not a substitute for branded products." They are the Irish equivalent of ADADC. Their medium to long-term strategy is two-fold: 1) directly through advertising and promotion, and 2) indirectly through influencing opinion formers within the medical profession and the media. "The key," McCarthy stressed, "is health, as we project a positive image for dairy products and counter misinformation."

Funding for Irish promotion is from producers through a co-

responsibility levy of 2% established by the EC to promote dairy products and to dispose of the surplus. A portion returns to Ireland. The Irish advertising budget is \$1.88 million divided approximately into thirds: 35% for milk advertising, 33% for cheese, and 32% for butter. The U.S. puts about the same proportion of advertising into cheese, with more for milk and less for butter.

**Alternative Farming Ideas**

Because of the cap on the amount of milk Irish dairy farmers are allowed to produce, many farmers are seeking ways to maximize the value of their milk or alternative ways to add to their on-farm income. One example is the Cooleeney Farmhouse Cheese operation started three years ago by Breda and Jim Maher near Thurles in County Tipperary. They milk 80 cows with about half of their milk quota going into their 220-gallon tank twice each day to make Camembert cheese.

Cheesemaking is a very precise skill; temperatures have to be conformed to and of course hygiene is paramount. Breda started her cheesemaking in her kitchen, but having won awards and a market for her cheese, has since built a separate facility and hired three employees. To make her cheese, she first heats it slowly, starting from cold milk; then adds lactic acid to sour the milk; next rennet to form a curd. After the curds form, she places them into round tile containers. When the whey is drained off, curds are placed in a ripening room for two weeks. Each cheese is turned every second day and kept at 20 degrees C at night. When ripening is complete, the Camembert cheese is wrapped in foil and stored about a week until a wholesaler takes it to market.

Breda Maher is one of about 30 to 35 farmhouse cheesemakers in Ireland compared with 420 in Holland. Her husband Jim, who milks the cows for the cheese, says they have "more satisfaction, more control" since they started their cheese business. They hope eventually to use all their milk for cheese, not just half. If they can't make more milk because of their quota, their goal is to make that milk more valuable.

Deer farming is another alternative farming idea that some farmers are turning to. The ADADC group visited the Red Deer farm of Seamus and Frances O'Donnell near Limerick, one of 75 in the country accounting for 3000 farming deer. The Shannon Development Corporation helped with start-up costs and training for deer farming. First thing was to build a 6'6" fence. The goal is to establish a gourmet market for venison at home but primarily for export. About 1500 New Zealand Red Deer are being flown in this June in a specially fitted-out Jumbo Jet to add to the total Irish deer population in this alternative farming choice.

Another alternative business is agri-tourism, with many farmhouses becoming Bed and Breakfast homes and stops for a planned agri-tourism industry in Ireland. Sponsorship in part for this concept comes from Magna na Feirme, the Irish Young Farmers Organization which operates Community Tours, excellent hosts and tour guides for the ADADC tour.

In addition to the dairy highlights of the trip, the group toured the largest crystal factory of its type in the world, Waterford Crystal. Craftsmen must start as intern

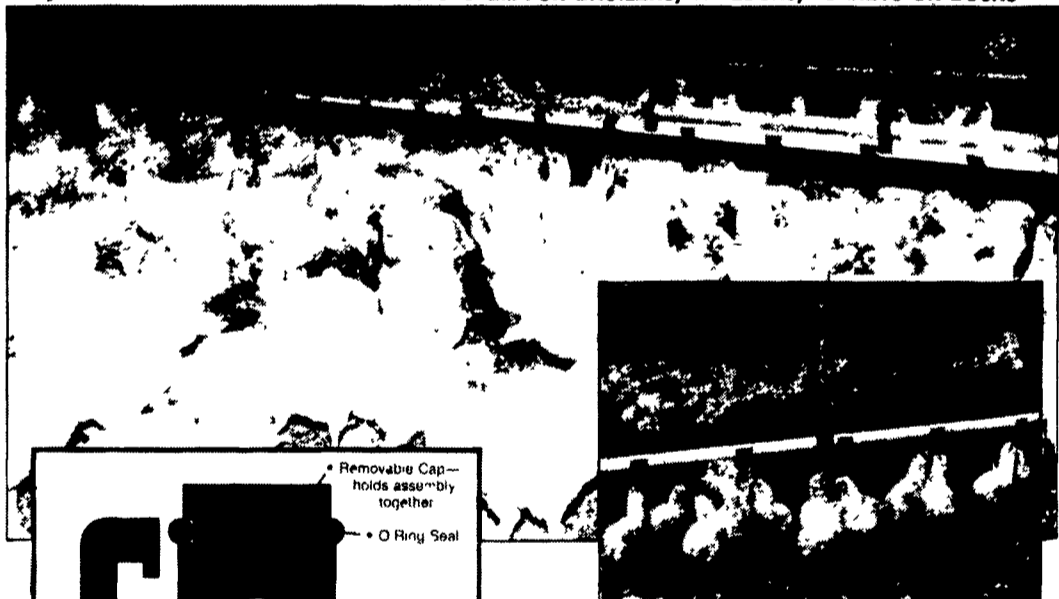


Padraig Walshe, Irish dairy farmer, (right), hosted Brian Ward, executive vice president of the American Dairy Association and Dairy Council (left) and Wally Willig (center), milk marketing manager for Hershey Foods on a recent dairy tour of Ireland organized by ADADC. Walshe, president of the Irish Young Farmers Organization, explained that many Irish farmers, including himself, will pay a "super levy" or penalty for overproduction of milk allowed under quota system. The super levy can be 75% of the value of the milk -- or more.

**ARE YOU LOOKING TO UP**

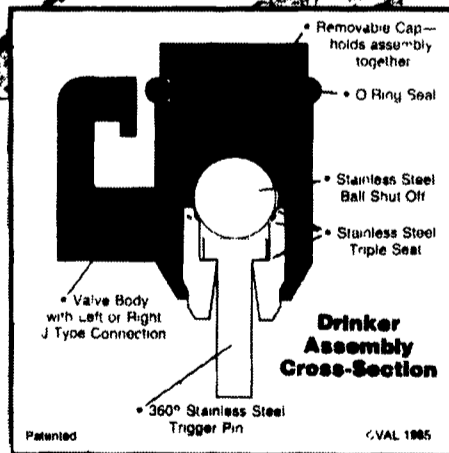
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