

Weis Markets Celebrates Bottling 200 Million Gallons Of Milk

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with a receiving dock where trucks deliver tankers from the farm.

Each tank of milk is given a physical check including odor, the temperature must be no higher than 40 degrees, and samples are taken and tested in the laboratory to check for growth inhibitors (antibiotics inhibit growth), the freezing point which indicates adulterations, the butterfat content, and bacteria.

If the tank load checks out, it is pumped into silo storage tanks and cooler to 35 degrees. Milk that is received at noon gets bottled by midnight.

The plant operates full shifts six

days per week. The dairy operation bottles only drinking milk, including chocolate milk, which pays producers the highest rate.

Atlantic Dairy Cooperative has been the sole supplier of milk to the plant and continues to experience a strong working relationship with the plant. Weis bottles about 350,000 gallons per week.

Anywhere from eight to 18 tankers of milk are received per day, with an average of about 12 to 14, said Berry.

In a large tile and stainless steel setting, workers all wear hairnets to operate machinery and monitor and clean and maintain equipment.

The milk comes from storage

and is homogenized. They plant has two homogenizing machines, the fat is separated and it goes on its way through the line until it is bottled in either plastic gallon jugs that are manufacturing in the plant

also, or in the traditional paper containers.

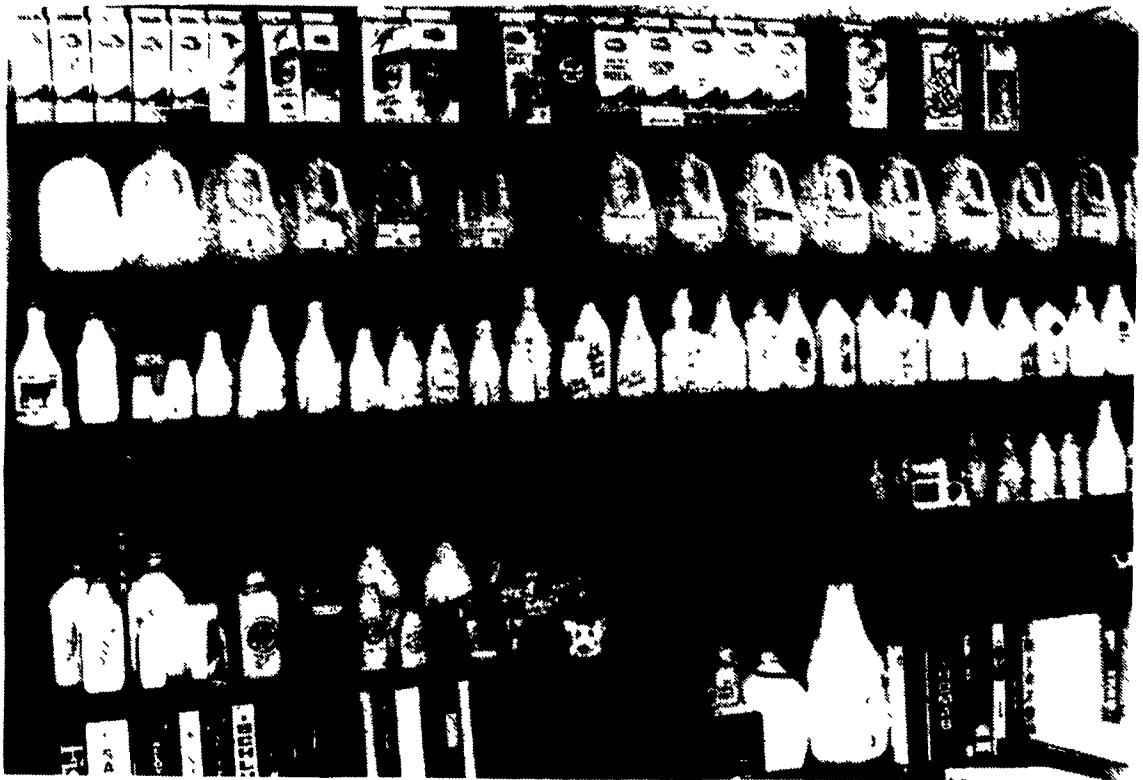
About 60 percent of the milk bottled is in the gallon plastic jugs, Berry said.

The plant is clean and efficient

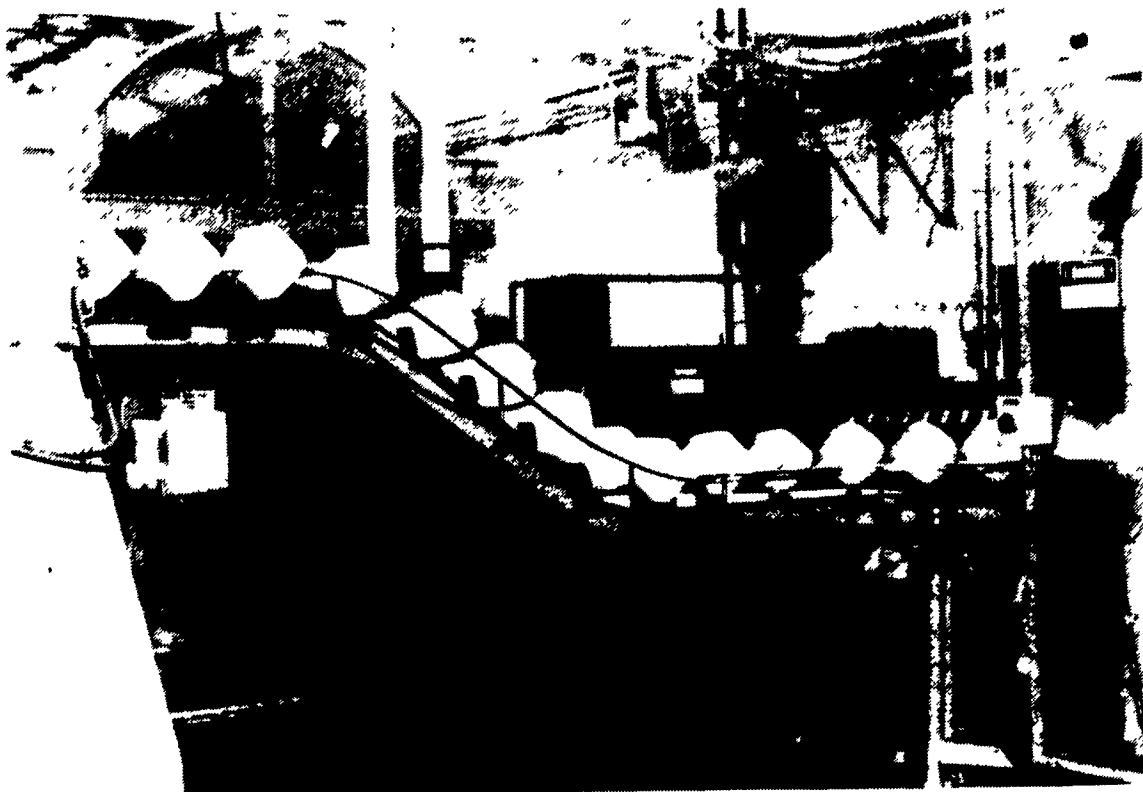
and has grown.

Weis Markets built its dairy in 1980, and it has expanded the plant twice, adding a second pasteurizing system and a second gallon

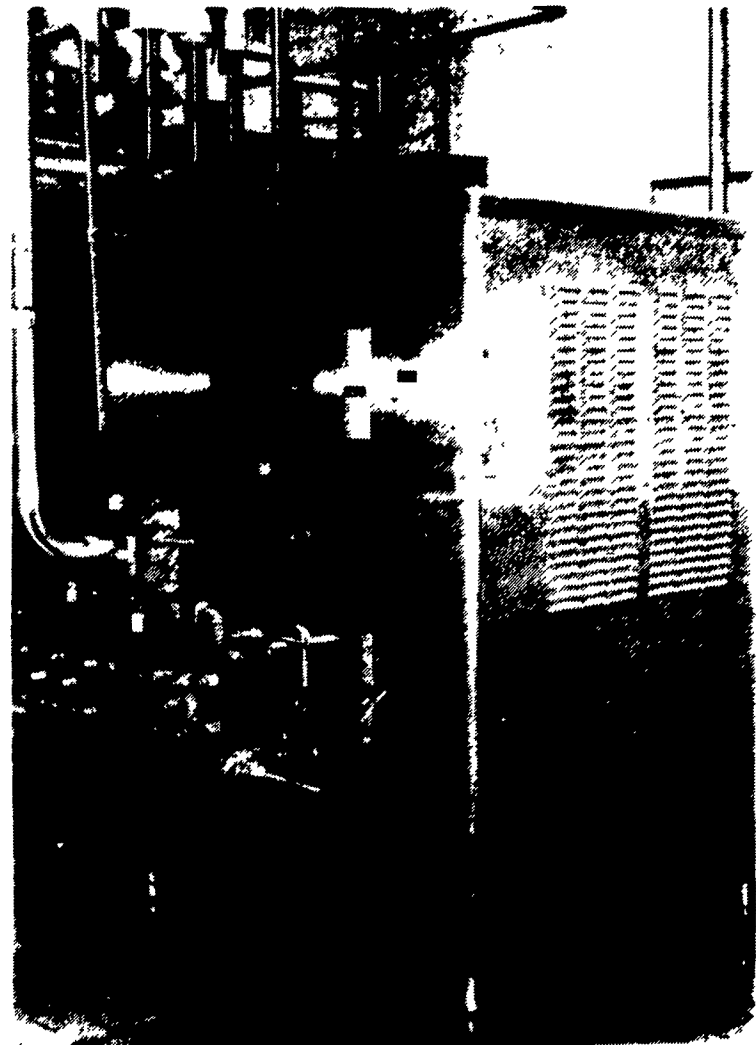
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These milk bottles and containers are on display in the office of Bryan Berry, director of dairy manufacturing for Dutch Valley Food Co. Inc., a subsidiary of Weis Markets Inc.



These just-made plastic gallon milk jugs travel down the line for finishing. The plant bottles about 350,000 gallons of milk per week, and 60 percent of that is in the gallon jugs.



This is one of two homogenizers the Weis Markets dairy plant has operating. The plant double its capacity in 15 years of operation.



After the milk is pasteurized and homogenized, it goes through the separator — this large stainless valve-looking machine with stainless milk lines attached.



Bottling and retailing milk in paper milk containers is a large part of the product marketing done by Weis Markets Inc.