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## Adohr Milk Farms

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# Adohr Milk Farms

A model dairy farm operated on a practical basis

Ralph Reese, '45

PEOPLE from all over the world have visited the famous Adohr Milk Farms at 18000 Ventura Blvd. in the San Fernando Valley of Southern California. Although it is a local organization serving only Southern California, it is known to dairymen throughout the world. The institution was founded in 1916 by Mr. and Mrs. Merritt H. Adamson with a herd of 50 Guernsey cows. It was a small dairy as compared to others in Los Angeles County, but from the start, quality was emphasized in the milk and dairy products produced. The organization, since that time, has established a remarkable dairy record and is now one of the foremost producer-distributors of fine milk. The idea of "quality first" is probably one of the principal factors which contributed to making Adohr the truly great institution that it is today.

## Dr. Maynard Rosenberger

The story of Adohr is not one of a great corporation, but one of the hard labor and efforts of its founders and the other outstanding dairymen who have worked with the founders. Perhaps the most outstanding was well-known Dr. Maynard Rosenberger, a graduate from the Division of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State College in Ames, Iowa. He received his degree in 1903 and started his successful career as scientist, student, dairyman, and veterinary authority. Doctor Rosenberger was a professor of veterinary medicine at Washington State College at Pullman, a member of the Bureau of Animal Husbandry, United States Department of Agriculture, the Chief Milk Inspector for the City of

Los Angeles, and he held numerous other important positions before he came to Adohr in 1920. Under Dr. Rosenberger's direction, Adohr milk soon attracted national recognition for outstanding quality. Dr. Rosenberger was a firm believer in vaccination of young animals against brucellosis long before the dairy industry accepted this measure as a successful method of combating the disease. He conducted many experiments to prove his theory, and, as a result of his work, the Adohr herd is one of the cleanest in the state. Dr. Rosenberger proved, also, to be a real farmer; development of the various Adohr farm lands have been due largely to his knowledge and supervision. It was, indeed, a severe blow to the dairy industry and veterinary profession when Dr. Rosenberger died a few months ago.

Adohr produces a variety of different kinds of dairy products, but its most famous product is Certified Milk. Certified Milk is a milk that has been produced under a long list of exacting conditions which result in a milk so pure and good that the County Medical Society is willing to certify to its safety. They justify their certification by continuous painstaking inspection of every step in the production of the milk. This inspection is performed by trained experts (physicians, veterinarians, laboratory directors, and technicians), who are under the direction of the County Medical Milk Commission. Employees are placed under medical supervision and are examined regularly. A veterinary doctor is in constant attendance to safeguard the milk by eliminating any diseased animal from the certified



View of Adohr's Certified Farm

herd. It is the most carefully produced milk known to science—every precaution is taken in every process for the production of Certified Milk. Holstein certified milk is especially recommended for babies by doctors because of its close resemblance to mother's milk, its easy digestibility due to small fat globules and soft curd. Adohr's farm on Ventura boulevard produces only Certified Milk—the three other Adohr farms are organized to produce the other types of milk, i.e., pasteurized and raw.

#### Monthly Testing Practiced

Cows in the Adohr certified herd are tested for brucellosis every month in addition to the regular tests for tuberculosis. Before a cow is added to the milking strings at the certified farm, her milk is tested to make certain that pathogenic bacteria are not present. If disease organisms are isolated in a cow already in the milking strings, she is immediately discharged from the herd.

The foundation of the Adohr herd was

60 Guernsey dairy cattle which had come largely from Wisconsin. Since that time, whenever an animal has been purchased, it has been a high ranking individual. Herd sires have been selected for type and production—close culling has removed low producing cows and bulls whose daughters were low producers. All of Adohr's bulls are registered purebreds. The record of Adohr's herd has created a market for their animals, and buyers have come from all parts of the hemisphere to purchase them. With as severe a culling as is in practice, Adohr, of course, must buy animals from other herds to maintain replacement of culled animals.

Adohr's herd is made up of both Holstein and Guernsey cattle—there are about 5500 animals in all. About two-thirds of the herd are Guernseys. Of the total number, about 2100 are heifers and about 130 are bulls.

In the Guernseys, some of the best blood of the breed is found. One of these is Imported Darby Valentine, a bull imported

from the Isle of Guernsey. Darby Valentine proved one of the most dependable sires of high production in any herd, and he left many excellent sons and daughters at Adohr.

Another outstanding Guernsey sire was Sangwater Surrogate, son of \$25,000 Langwater Steadfast and Imported County Flower of Langwater. Langwater Surrogate had 12 Advanced Registry daughters which are now proving themselves. One of his sons, Surrogate's Supreme of Adohr, is sire of Adohr Supreme Calico who recently finished a record of 920 lbs. of fat in E (second calf), which is second highest in the United States.

#### **Other Noted Animals**

Fantine's Brilliant of Adohr Farms was another champion Guernsey sire—he was a grandson of Langwater Holliston and Brilliant Lassie, the latter being champion "long distance" record cow of the breed.

Adohr's Holsteins show largely the blood of two excellent sires—Echoland Sir Bess and Marathon Bess Burke. The first sired 23 Advanced Registry daughters and many proved sons that are known for both production and show ring achievements. Marathon Bess Burke sired 80 Advanced Registry daughters, as well as 26 proved sons. He was leading Honor List sire of the United States in 1932; his blood has spread throughout many fine herds in the nation.

#### **Herd Wins Many Ribbons**

The show record of Adohr is indeed impressive. Their animals have competed at several National Dairy Shows besides the numerous California State and County Fairs. The herd swept the 1939 National Dairy Show at Treasure Island—they owned the aged cow which was Grand Champion Guernsey Cow, the Reserve Grand Champion Bull, the Senior and Junior Champion Cows, and they won the Premier Exhibitor Award for winning more awards than any other exhibitor at the show from coast to coast. In the show held in conjunction with the Texas Centennial, Adohr received the Governor's Trophy for having the best 10 head of

dairy cattle at that national show; in addition they received medals for both Reserve Grand Champion animals and four blue ribbons. They also did well at Columbus in 1938, and have always been up in the winner's bracket at the state and county shows.

Perhaps the most outstanding individual in the show herd is Dimple of Hughes' Place (often called Linetta), who climaxed her brilliant career as Grand Champion Cow at Treasure Island in 1939. She had been a consistent winner for Adohr.

All of the bulls on the farms are handled from the start; hence, very few become dangerous. They are broken to the lead rope as calves, and their education to their role in the herd is begun. When they reach breeding age, they are led from their own bull pen to the cow corrals for breeding. The bull handlers simply walk into the bull's pen, snap a lead rope into the bull's ring, and lead him out. This method has proved very successful at Adohr.

#### **Complete Records Kept**

In some cases, artificial insemination is practiced. A complete record of this, and all other incidences in an animal's life, is recorded in the herd book. Each cow has at least one sheet devoted to her activities and production. Her herd numbers, birth date, vaccinations, ancestors, production record, and breeding and freshening dates are all listed.

Shortly after a calf is born, she is tattooed, ear tagged, and chained for identification. When the heifer freshens, she is given an additional ear tag (her cow number) and a neck chain with the same number on it.

Calves are usually taken away from their mothers on the same day that they are born and are given a strict diet until they are past the calf scours stage. They receive milk until they are from four to six months of age, but they also have access to hay and a grain mixture of linseed meal, rolled barley, and bran. At six months of age, the calves are vaccinated against anthrax. At approximately two

*(Continued on page 113)*

## DR. WALSH

(Continued from page 67)

his regular teaching duties, Dr. Walsh had charge of the health of the cattle herds of the various state institutions of Iowa, under the direction of the Board of Control. It was his duty to see that these cows maintained high producing qualities. Information gained from the records of the herds was used for classroom study.

The latest edition of "Who's Who in Iowa" sketches the distinction which he achieved in civil and cultural activities. At the time of his death he was chairman of the committee on cattle diseases of the American Veterinary Medical Association. He was also a member of the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association, of the honor societies Phi Zeta and Phi Kappa Phi, and of the social fraternity Lambda Chi Alpha.

Dr. Walsh always maintained the highest professional standards and everything he did was prefaced with a thought concerning the advancement and good of the veterinary profession. He was generally recognized as one of the most eminent veterinary authorities on breeding diseases in this country. Dr. Walsh's students will always remember his fine philosophy and put into practice many of his suggestions in their professional activities.

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## ADOHR

(Continued from page 72)

week intervals, the blackleg and brucellosis vaccinations follow. Vaccination of Adohr heifers against brucellosis—strain 19 *Brucella abortus* vaccine—has been a regular practice for several years and has proved very effective.

Following vaccination, the heifers are pastured at one of the several large pastures operated by the dairy. There they remain until approximately 30 days before they drop their first calf. Unproved young purebred bulls are run with the heifers in pasture for breeding purposes. The heifers freshen between the ages of two and one-half and three years of age, at which time they are returned to the

home farm to have their calves. They are observed in the maternity corrals until they are about to drop the calf, and then they are placed in separate cement floored, high walled stalls which are scrubbed and kept immaculately clean at all times. There the calf is dropped and the fresh cow is observed and milked by special milkers for two weeks. If the cow is then in suitable condition, she is passed for entrance into the milking strings.

### Milking

The cows are milked twice a day except when they are on "official test"—then, sometimes, they are milked three times a day. Milking was largely done by hand, but the war has created a severe labor shortage and it is now done, for the most part, by machine. The animals are washed thoroughly before each milking and the teats are wiped with a suitable antiseptic. The milking barn, which holds 208 cows at one time, is kept clean and spotless. During milking, the cows are fed a grain mixture of rolled barley, copra meal (the meat of a dried coconut), cottonseed meal, bran, beet pulp, salt, and minerals.

Once a cow has been admitted to the milking string, she is not pastured—instead, she is kept in a corral with the other cows in her string (there are 26 cows in each string), where her feeding can be rigidly supervised. The main diet is alfalfa—green, cured, or baled. During the winter months, when alfalfa is scarce, corn ensilage is used as a substitute. Special varieties of corn have been developed for the California climate and soil; they do very well. The whole plant is harvested in early fall when it is green, and it is chopped into ensilage for storage in huge concrete silos.

Visitors who wish to see Adohr's animals and facilities are cordially received. The Adohr Milk Farms have shown that a model dairy farm can be operated on a practical basis by producing high grade milk under optimum conditions.

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