

Guide to the Flambeau Valley Farms Cooperative Records, 1925-1980

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Summary Information

Title: Flambeau Valley Farms Cooperative Records

Inclusive Dates: 1925-1980

Creator: Flambeau Valley Farms Cooperative (Ladysmith, Wis.)

Call Number: Eau Claire Mss BD

Quantity: 2.0 c.f. (2 record center cartons)

Repository: Housed at the Area Research Center, William D. McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire; owned by the Wisconsin Historical Society, Library-Archives Division

Archival Locations: UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library / Eau Claire Area Research Ctr.

Abstract: Incomplete corporate records of a milk and dairy products marketing cooperative formed in 1924 as the Ladysmith Milk Producers' Co-operative Association. The cooperative dissolved in 1979. The collection includes by-laws, minutes, correspondence and related material such as loan applications from members and from the cooperative to banks, newsletters, and stock records. Few financial or dairy products' production records are present. There are also a few items from the Dairy Cooperative Institute and National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, Attorneys' and Accountants' Conference.

Language: English

Search Terms/Subject Terms

- Dairy Cooperative Institute
- National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
- Dairy products—Wisconsin—Cooperative Marketing
- Dairying, Cooperative—Wisconsin
- Ladysmith Milk Producers' Co-Operative Association

Biography/History

The Cooperative was incorporated February 29, 1924, as the Ladysmith Milk Producers' Co-operative Association, to process milk produced by northern Wisconsin farmers and market dairy products for them. The new organization took over the indebtedness and plant facilities of the financially-troubled Ladysmith Creamery. E.L. Jay was elected president of the new cooperative, with George Leonhard, Jr. as secretary, and directors Job Miller, C.E. Goode, H.J. Gavin, and George Leroux. At first, only butter was manufactured. During the first year of operations, 290,270 pounds of butter were produced for a total sales of 109,082 dollars. In 1926, the Ladysmith cooperative joined the Wisconsin Creamery Federation, a statewide marketing cooperative. At that time it was discovered that the Ladysmith butter was of poor quality and non-uniform composition. The federation's field staff helped the Ladysmith cooperative overcome these deficiencies.

The cooperative constructed a new plant in Ladysmith in 1927, and later owned processing plants at Stanley (purchased in 1939), Prentice, Fifield, and Sand Creek. Eventually, fluid milk, cream, butter, cheese, and dried milk products were added to the line of dairy products produced for the Chicago market and for markets in other states. Dried milk products were also produced and sold for animal feed.

By 1955, the cooperative was serving about 2000 milk producers and handling 14.5 million pounds of milk annually. The organization's name was changed to Flambeau Valley Farms Cooperative on November 29, 1955. Changes in the dairy industry and farming in general decreased the cooperative's business. In December 1965, the cooperative had 713 farmer members and 2 farmer cooperative associations as members, down from a high of 1280 farmers and 6 farmer cooperative associations as members in January 1958. The last date of operation of the Flambeau Valley Farms Cooperative was March 5, 1970. The cooperative officially dissolved on December 31, 1979, and held its final meeting January 25, 1980.

Scope and Content Note

The collection has been arranged in two series, of which the first series is the larger. The series are: Records of Flambeau Valley Farms Cooperative and Other Records.

The RECORDS OF FLAMBEAU VALLEY FARMS COOPERATIVE consist of corporate records, but with very few financial records, milk production records, or other records of plant operations. The by-laws were originally written for Flambeau Valley Dairy Cooperative, and apparently used as a model for the Ladysmith Milk Producers' Cooperative Association. Correspondence and related papers include original letters and memoranda, near-print circulars and form letters from various agricultural boards and associations, enclosures, loan application requests from the cooperative for its operating capital, and notices of factor's liens. Most of the letters concern requests for loans (with cooperative stock offered as collateral) from members, replies by the cooperative, and letters written to banks by the cooperative to facilitate such loans. All such loans had to be approved by the cooperative's board of directors, and notations of the board's decisions may be found in the minutes.

Individual forms completed by members requesting loans, containing the same information as found in the minutes (and much of which is also found in the letters) were discarded.

There is a lengthy run of minutes of board of directors' meetings, 1925-1980, in which are noted transactions of routine business and approval or rejection of loan applications. There are also minutes of the annual stockholders' meetings, 1941-1970; and issues of the cooperative's newsletter *Flambeauland Dairy News*. The remaining records in the collection consist of stock records, mainly stock redemption work sheets prepared during the mid-1970's as the cooperative's economic difficulties encouraged stockholders to redeem their shares.

OTHER RECORDS in the collection consist of two small files of mimeographed minutes of the Dairy Cooperative Institute, 1949-1953; and a 1954 report from an attorneys' and accountants' conference of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives.

Administrative/Restriction Information

Acquisition Information

Presented by Flambeau Valley Farms Cooperative, Ladysmith, Wisconsin, via John P. Trudelle, 1980.
Accession Number: M80-091

Processing Information

Processed by John Wright, Alex Draghicchio, and Menzi Behrnd--Klodt, 1987.

Contents List

	Series: Records of Flambeau Valley Farms Cooperative
Box/Folder 1/1	By-laws
Box/Folder 1/2-13	Correspondence and Related Papers, 1933-1979
	Minutes of Board of Directors' Meetings
Box/Folder 1/14	1925-1943
Box/Folder 2/1-5	1944-1980
Box/Folder 2/6	Minutes of Stockholders' Meetings, 1941-1970
Box/Folder 2/7	Newsletters - Flambeauland Dairy News, 1946-1958
Box/Folder 2/8	Financial and Stock Records, 1938-1979

Box/Folder	Stock Redemption Work Sheets, Preferred Stock
Box/Folder 2/9	First Issue, A-Z
Box/Folder 2/10	Second Issue, A-Z
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Box/Folder	Series: Other Records
Box/Folder 2/12	Dairy Cooperative Institute - Minutes of Directors' Meetings, 1949 September-1953 October
Box/Folder 2/13	National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, Attorneys' and Accountants' Conference - Report, 1954