



Benefitting farmers and consumers alike, the Maple Leaf Mills Research Centre develops and tests new livestock feed products. Left, chief laboratory technician Barbara Onyskew uses an atomic absorption Spectro-photometer for mineral analysis. Inset, administrator Dr. Richard Welton. (Herald photos)

Farmers aim for top quality with help from research centre

The Maple Leaf Mills Research Centre on Trafalgar Road draws only passing curiosity from the hundreds of motorists that drive by it every day.

But there's a good chance that the eggs and bacon they had for breakfast were that much more enjoyable because of the work that goes on behind the elongated, mostly windowless buildings.

When farmers buy Masterfeeds products, they're buying feed developed and milled by Maple Leaf Mills.

"We do research to produce scientifically-balanced animal rations," the research centre's administrator, Dr. Richard (Dick) Welton, told The Herald in a recent interview.

Interestingly enough, animal feeds are much more scientifically developed than many foods for humans.

Farmers in the business of raising poultry, beef or hogs need to ensure that the meat from their animals is top quality. At the same time, they want to keep their feed costs reasonable.

BALANCE DIETS
By mixing a variety of grains, vitamins and minerals, researchers at the centre are developing fascinating feed products with the right balance of protein and food energy ingredients for animals which are just starting out, growing or being "finished" for the market.

Besides the administration and laboratories building, there are

seven of the long, light blue buildings on the 152-acre property north of Regional Road Nine.

Two of the buildings are for pigs and five are for poultry—laying hens, pullets, broilers and roasters and about 3,000 turkeys.

What they're fed depends on a number of

variables including age, type of animal, and the conditions simulated in the barns.

An experimental feed is rigorously tested, several times under any number of conditions before researchers consider it to have a promising future, Dr. Welton, an animal nutritionist,

explained.

For the individual farmer to assume such research, it would take an enormous amount of time, money and record-keeping.

Salesmen for Maple Leaf Mills and Masterfeeds aren't simply sellers of feed, they are feed "consultants", Dr.

Welton commented, highly trained to provide farmers with feed programs to improve productivity.

"The farming business today is very sophisticated," he said. "We're not only in the business of selling a product, but management systems as well."

Big menu for Christmas turkey

By the time a turkey is ready for the Christmas dinner table, it may have been fed as many as six different diets developed at the Maple Leaf Mills Research Centre on Trafalgar Road.

Other livestock growing in the warm barns of the centre may also be fed a number of different feeds designed to improve growth and maintain a high-quality meat without effecting the taste.

A program for turkeys at the research centre includes three diets when the turkeys are in their first several weeks of growth. Turkeys then graduate to two growing diets and ends with a finishing diet.

Maple Leaf Mills is a division of Canadian Pacific Enterprises. In turn, Maple Leaf Mills is made up of a number of divisions, including the grain division which produces the highly-developed feeds for livestock.

In produce and groceries, Maple Leaf Mills shouldn't be confused with the folks who produce Maple Leaf hams and bacon. But Maple Leaf Mills poultry division

markets products under the Tend-R-Fresh label and countless deserts and afternoon socials have featured cakes made from Maple Leaf Mills' Monarch products.

There are about 3,600 egg-laying hens at the research centre being fed a variety of diets. In addition, 8,000 pullets (young hens on the way to becoming "laying hens") are raised, 4,800 broilers, 6,000 roasters and 3,000 turkeys.

At any one time, as many as 65 sows are under special feeding programs and about 1,000 pigs a year are sent to market from the research centre.

Despite the large area—seven buildings in a 152-acre site—an enormous number of personnel

One barn of livestock may be differently lit than its neighbor. The varied lighting is

Herald stories by Chris Aagaard

isn't needed at the centre. About five people work in the barns, there's administrative personnel and two laboratories technicians.

meant to simulate seasons, which in turn affects the eating and reproductive habits of the animals and is important in the feed testing process.

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Maple Leaf Mills computer develops high yield feed

What goes on at the Maple Leaf Mills Research Centre is classical scientific research. A barn of laying hens, for example, may be divided into experimental groups and control groups.

The new feed is fed to the experimental groups, while the control groups are fed with a proven product.

A new feed shows promise if the yield is improved—with laying hens, the number of eggs per amount of feed used.

It may be advantageous to the farmer to pay more initially for a high-yield feed.

He may find that he uses less of the new product to produce the same amount or more eggs than he used to get from his old feeding program, Dr. Welton pointed out.

The ingredients of the feeds developed at the research centre lie secreted in the microchip maze of a Maple Leaf Mills computer.

The feed business is a highly-competitive field with its share of secret formulas and production techniques one company doesn't want the others to have.

TAP WEALTH

Dr. Welton can sit behind a computer terminal at the research centre and tap into a wealth of formula information from Maple Leaf Mills feed division headquarters in London, Ontario.

By punching in what he's looking for in a given tonne of feed—what protein to energy ration he has in mind—and the costs involved, the computer can work out a recipe in a few blinks of an eye. It will list the ingredients in terms of their percentages per volume of feed, and break it down further into vitamin, mineral and protein content, crude fibers and so on.

Dr. Welton can also ask the computer to list the ingredients in terms of how much each will cost him to make up the final price of the feed.

The person who really benefits from the research centre's work is the farmer, Dr. Welton said.

By adopting one of the company's feed programs and working with a consultant to make it successful, the farmer can devote more time to raising livestock for the market.

Otherwise, he may end up losing valuable hours grinding and mixing his own feeds and keeping track of how well they work.

There are also programs available, Dr. Welton said, in which the farmer can grow part of a feed program, while Maple Leaf Mills provides the remaining ingredients to complete the package.



Correction

In the A&P insert in today's paper, the following errors appeared:

- The 2.5 kg size was missing on Five Roses Flour
- The regular price and saving on Heinz Strained Baby Foods should have read our regular price .44 each-buy 3-Save .33.
- Copy on A&P, Japanese Mandarin Oranges should have read 10 fl oz tin .79—SUPER BUY
- Retail on Jano Parker Fruit Cake 900 g ring should have read 6.99
- Retail on Medium Size Cheese Basket should have read 15.99
- Size of pkg. of Fresh Spinach should have read 10 oz.

A&P apologizes for these errors and any inconvenience they may have caused their customers.

Zellers NOTICE

Toys and games that are advertised in our "GREAT GIFT VALUE" Flyer of November 29th to December 3rd. Will be sold on demand while quantities last. There will be no rainchecks issued on toys or games advertised in the above named flyer.

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