

Central Alberta Dairy Pool

Founded as the Central Alberta Dairy Producers' Association in Alix in 1924, the Central Alberta Dairy Pool (CADP) owned and operated dairies and other agricultural processing businesses across central and southern Alberta. The CADP founded and ran the Alpha Milk condensery and processing plant in Red Deer from 1936 to 2001.



S13750

Search terms/key words/parallel names:

- Central Alberta Dairy Pool
- Alpha
- Alpha Milk
- Alpha Jersey Dairies
- Condensery

History:

The Central Alberta Dairy Producers' Association was formed as a co-operative association in Alix, Alberta in 1924 to coordinate the marketing of dairy products in the region. In December 1928 the Board bought Meadow Creamery to help facilitate processing. They renamed themselves to Central Alberta Dairy Pool (CADP) in 1929. It was supposed to be Central Alberta Dairy Pool Ltd., but that was lost due to a clerical error.

They built and opened a milk condensery at 5302 Gaetz Avenue Red Deer in 1936, enabling the production of evaporated milk in central Alberta. The first cans of milk were labeled "Alpine milk." The name changed to Alpha in 1938 after the Alpine Milk Co. / Alpine Co Ltd. was shut down in August 1937 due to too close a relationship with Safeway, and after Nestle claimed that "Alpine" (when associated with milk) was their trademark.

The CADP expanded throughout central Alberta with different facilities producing different products. For example, fluid milk for CADP was first produced in Ponoka (at the Ponoka Creamery) in 1944, and Bassano produced honey.

In 1953, the CADP amalgamated with Co-operative Milk Co., Calgary, Ltd. and created the new name The Alpha Milk Company. Shortly after the merger, the dairy pool bought the Whitehills Jersey Dairy in Red Deer, re-naming it Alpha Jersey Dairy, and selling its first fluid milk in Red Deer. In 1964, the Alpha Milk Company moved the liquid milk production from the Whitehills building to the condensery site after stopping the poultry production there.

Products produced in Red Deer by the pool included evaporated milk (1936-1976), egg production (1956-1970), poultry processing (after 1939 - 1964), skim milk powder (starting 1967), and making yogurt (between 1970 and 1988, under Director Ted deJong). Red Deer had the organization's headquarters as well as several units referred to by numbers. Red Deer No. 1 is the creamery department, Red Deer No. 2 was the condensery. Red Deer No. 3 was the Alpha Jersey Dairy for fresh milk (4764 49 St), Red Deer No. 4 is the poultry and egg department, with Red Deer no. 5 as the egg drying plant.

In 1985, the head office moved out of the main plant but stayed in Red Deer. In 1992, Alpha Milk Company merged with Fraser Valley Milk Producers and Northern Alberta Dairy Pool to form Dairyworld. And finally, in 2001 Dairyworld was purchased by Saputo. Saputo continues to use the plant, primarily to produce skim milk powder and butter.

Other Notes

There were many other creameries and dairies in Red Deer and surrounding areas. For example, the Red Deer Dairy Association was formed in 1892 and opened the Red Deer Creamery in 1895 in Riverlands (west of the CPR lines). They later moved downtown to 4902 Ross Street. Other creameries and dairies in the area included the Trimble Creamery, in the Clearview district and near Pine Lake and the earliest creamery in the area; and the Markerville Creamery, which continued production into the 1970s

The Johnstone family was involved in the CADP for at least two generations, and Johnstone Park neighbourhood was named for Ellis Johnstone.

Citations:

- Advocate staff. "CADP reviews highlights of industrial giant's growth" *Red Deer Advocate*. June 8, 1965, page 3)
- *The Alpha Heritage: a history of the Central Alberta Dairy Pool*. Central Alberta Dairy Pool, 1992.
- *Alpha: A Good part of your Alberta day*. Central Alberta Dairy Pool 65th Annual Meeting, 1990.
- Alpha Dairy heritage signage (1980s, 2010s).
- Council Agenda Monday January 8, 1990, page 30 (Red Deer Archives K13362).
- Opinion. "A look at the history of Riverlands" *Red Deer Express*. August 3, 2016.
- Richards, Harley. "Saputo proposes upgrading of plant" *Red Deer Advocate*. October 23, 2007.

Key dates:

- 1926 Central Alberta Dairy Producers' Association founded
- 1928 purchased Meadow Creamery in Alix
- 1929 renamed to Central Alberta Dairy Pool (CADP)
- 1936 built a milk condensery in Red Deer at 5302 Gaetz Avenue. Produced milk under the label "Alpine milk"
- 1938 changed label to Alpha and moved headquarters to Red Deer
- 1944 produced fluid milk for the first time (in Ponoka)
- 1947 to 1964 built and operated a poultry processing / production plant in Red Deer
- 1953 amalgamated with Co-operative Milk Company (Calgary) and purchased the Whitehills Jersey Dairy in Red Deer
- 1953 to 1976 honey production in Bassano
- 1956 to 1970 purchased egg-drying plant at the Red Deer condensery site
- 1967 built a skim milk powder plant at the Red Deer condensery site
- 1976 moved the Red Deer evaporated milk operations to Wetaskiwin
- 1985 moved head office to a new office building in Red Deer
- 1992 merged with Fraser Valley Milk Producers and Northern Alberta Dairy Pool to form Dairyworld
- 2001 Dairyworld was purchased by Saputo, continuing to use the plant primarily to produce skim milk powder and butter

Primary Records in Red Deer Archives:

Restrictions: Some records have copyright restrictions.

- 2020-131
 - o Accession with many Central Alberta Dairy Pool annual reports. Most include a history section.
- 2023-077

- Photographs and publications of Alpha Dairy / Saputo, including recipe books, booklets, postcards, annual statements, and books.
- 1990-096
 - Alpha calendar (1990-1991)
- MG 334 Botterill, Ives family fonds
 - 2016-434 – milk price lists from Alpha Jersey Dairy, Silverwoods Dairies, and Alpha Milk Co.
- MG 193 Wells family fonds
 - 2020-212 – Alpha Jersey Dairy calendar with recipes

Related books in Reference Library:

- *The Alpha Heritage: a history of the Central Alberta Dairy Pool*. Central Alberta Dairy Pool, 1992.

External sources:

- Provincial Archives of Alberta
 - <https://hermis.alberta.ca/paa/Search.aspx?DeptID=1&CollectionID=2&st=central+alberta+dairy+pool>
- Glenbow Archives:
 - Jane Bentley fonds: <https://albertaonrecord.ca/jane-bentley-fonds>
 - Fred V. Stone fonds: <https://albertaonrecord.ca/fred-v-stone-fonds>