



# THE COMMUNITY PAGE

## Reed's Dairy: "An Idaho Tradition"



**Alan Reed** Part Owner/Operator Reed's Dairy

Steeped in the discipline of hard work and a strong love of farming, D.B Reed came to Idaho Falls in 1910 and established "Reed's Corner" with his three sons: Roy, Dave, and Larry. Their love of the land and dedication to quality laid a foundation that has not only benefited their family, who inherited the business, but our entire community as well.

Originally, Larry ran the dairy while Dave and Roy kept busy farming the ground. Milk was first hand bottled on the farm in 1955. Larry installed the first milk-processing equipment in 1962.

Today, ownership is divided between Alan Reed, Roy's son; Mike Reed, Larry's son; and long-time employee Coco Cervantes, who all head up the operations on the dairy. While many things have changed over the last 95 years, the spirit of D.B. Reed's love of hard work and quality products lives on. Reed's Dairy is one of the last producer-handler dairies left in the entire country and the only one in Idaho. In addition they now offer beef jerky, Salt City Candles, honey, and sacks of potatoes, in addition to their full line of dairy products.

### Fresh Milk—The Old Fashioned Way

To understand what makes Reed's Dairy different, you have to understand how milk gets to your table. Typically, it starts at the farm, where milk is collected and shipped miles and miles to where it is bottled. It then takes a cross-country trip to your local grocery store, where you take it home. All in all, the process takes a few days, and exposes the milk to light, which can sap the vitamin A and riboflavin (vitamin B2) from the milk.

Reed's dairy is different. They produce over 2,200 gallons of milk every day, and have it delivered from the cow to your door in as little as a few hours. Reed's Dairy milk is pumped from the milking barn to the bottling area, then loaded on their trucks and delivered to your front door, all without needless handling or exposure to excess light, ensuring you get the healthiest, best-tasting milk possible.

### Worry-Free Dairy Products

There's been a lot of talk lately about synthetic hormones in milk, such as rbST (recombinant bovine somatotropin), which is a hormone fed to cows to increase milk production. Currently, there are no guidelines or milk labeling standards requiring dairies to indicate whether or not the milk came from cows given synthetic hormones. As the only dairy in Southeastern Idaho that bottles its own milk, Reed's Dairy is in the unique position of being able to guarantee all their customers that there are absolutely no synthetic hormones in their milk or dairy products.

Reed's Dairy takes the sterilization process seriously. Reed's sanitizes the milk without compromising the nutrients that exist in milk. The process heats the milk to 170 degrees Fahrenheit for 15 seconds to ensure all products are absolutely safe to ensure all products are absolutely safe.

Proper pasteurization and handling remains the most important operation in the processing of milk.

Reed's Dairy take pride in their processes ensuring the finest quantity products every time.

"Reed's Dairy is a part of the Idaho tradition. It adds to the Idaho experience. Their old-fashioned approach to quality products and customer service is unparalleled. Fresher milk, homemade ice cream, home delivery, friendly service – **if you're not using Reed's Dairy, you're not experiencing Idaho.**"

—Frank VanderSloot



### A "Family Business"

While there are a few more last names on the payroll than there were in 1910, Alan and Mike Reed still consider their team of employees, many of whom have been with the company for more than twenty years, to be part of the "family."



**Milan Miller** is the Plant Manager at Reed's Dairy. He started in April of 1980. His working days begin at 1 a.m. and continue until "the task is completed." Milan enjoys the fast paced atmosphere of the plant. "Christmas season is probably our

busiest time of year. The demand for eggnog, chocolate milk, and ice cream are huge. But with all the flavors we offer, vanilla is still my favorite."



**Coco Cervantes** is originally from Mexico and is part owner in the company. He has served Reed's Dairy for more than twenty years and is currently the "herdsman." His job, as he puts it, "is to produce the milk and put it into the tank." Coco says

he has his hands full making sure there are cows to milk. "Thirty to forty new calves are born every month to keep up with demand," says Coco.



Once the milk is processed, the task is then passed to "**Mike the Milkman**," which is how he is known by his customers, for delivery. Mike has been with Reed's Dairy for more than fifteen years. "I love my job! I am in the perfect

situation. I take care of my responsibilities and everyone wins. My boss wins, the customer wins, and I win." Mike used to work through the night on deliveries but technology has made delivery service more efficient. "All the change orders and routes are now downloaded onto my laptop, which is hooked into the truck. It works great."



**Mike Reed** has been with the family business since he was twelve years old when he would assist in milking the cows. His current job puts him in charge of all the wholesale distribution and delivery to stores. Mike has a strong desire to continue

the legacy his father, Larry, had. "Work can be fun. I love creating the names of the various ice cream flavors. For instance, Brianna—Banana is one of my favorites."



**Lori Hunt** is the Office Manager. She ensures the company flows smoothly. "I love Reed's Dairy. It is fast-paced, busy, and a great place to work. Alan creates such a wonderful working atmosphere."



**Patty Deardon** has been the Store Manager for more than nine years. On a typical hot summer day, Reed's Dairy will have more than 600 customers come in for ice cream. Patty says, "People come from all over the country for our ice cream. One

gentleman travels every year from Florida for it. The ice cream growth has been tremendous."

### The Spirit of Community

Once a year, the Reed spirit of family is extended even wider. As Alan Reed puts it, "Once a year we have what we



call 'Family Day.' We invite all the community out to take tours of the plant, see the cows, register for free prizes and just have a great time seeing what goes on here and seeing how the farm is. We usually get three to four thousand people out each year." Children and adults enjoy petting the farm animals, riding the horses, and savoring the various flavors of ice cream. It is an educational way for families to spend their Saturday.

Reed's Dairy doesn't do this for money, however. Instead, they ask for food donations to the Idaho Falls Community Food Bank. Alan says the cans keep coming in. "We have received over 4,200 cans of food. We think it's something that really helps the community and those down on their luck," Mike Reed says. "We are indebted to the community. Our goal is to provide great products and friendly service. Family Day is our way of saying thank you."

While automated systems have replaced hand milking, and laptop computers have replaced the milk truck's bell, Reed's Dairy still holds on to what made them successful in the beginning. They still offer the freshest, best tasting milk and dairy products around. They still greet you with a smile when you walk in. And you can still get it all delivered directly to your door. In a world obsessed with disposability and profitability, Reed's Dairy's old-style, reusable milk jugs and personal service are welcome additions that benefit the entire community.



### Reed's Dairy

is located at 2660 West Broadway in Idaho Falls. Their store hours are Monday thru Saturday 8:00 am to 9:00 pm. Their phone number is (208) 522-0123.