

job cuts



GAME PLAN: Chief executive Jerry Henchy says the Mallow plant will be utilised for the production of Whole Milk Powder (WMP), at peak times.

The rationalisation process of Dairygold, for now, is over, but there is no guarantee that further job losses at the Co-op could be forthcoming.

A spokesman for the company told the *Evening Echo* the major rationalisation was now in the past and the company could look forward to a turnaround in its fortunes in the coming months and years.

There is a fear, however, that the Mallow plant which has had its hours cut to seasonal activity only may be operating on borrowed time, with more jobs on the brink if the co-op decides to close it.

However, for the moment its role

within Jerry Henchy's game-plan has been outlined.

"The Mallow plant will be utilised for the production of Whole Milk Powder (WMP), at peak times.

"A food ingredients capability will be bolted on to our WMP business in line with our innovation needs for the future," he said.

Mr Henchy added that the unified Mitchelstown facility will produce commodity cheeses, casein and whey.

And he concluded: "The Mogeely plant will be occupied completely with the production of non-commodity Continental style cheeses

including Regato, the market leader in Greece and the production of Jarlsberg Cheese for the European market."

And the company now looks to add a new string to its bow.

It has been in talks with Enterprise Ireland over the establishment of a Food Sciences research and development facility in Mitchelstown and it hopes to have its proposals fully developed within the next six months.

Elsewhere, the company's 4HOME DIY stores venture is thriving and Dairygold has plans to have 30 stores in place with a turnover of €100 million by June 2007.

Shaping up for the future

TWO years of rationalisation, reorganisation and, Dairygold would say, revitalisation have put the company in a position to look positively to the future.

Here are some of the landmark events which have shaped today's Cork Co-op over the period.

MARCH 1, 2003: Jerry Henchy, from Ballincollig, takes up the position of chief executive of Dairygold.

MAY 20, 2003: Mr Henchy announces five-year development plan which will include 'difficult decisions'.

JULY 1, 2003: Dairygold AGM is told of rationalisation process which will include up to 1,500 jobs — to date that total is closer to 1,100.

JULY 3, 2003: Dairygold shareholders give a vote of no confidence in directors. Nine of the 10 directors resign.

JULY 10, 2003: Unions told that up to 1,500 of the 3,000 jobs will go.

JULY 26, 2003: 170 jobs lost in the transport sector.

JULY 28, 2003: Dairygold reveals it is looking for a buyer for its meat processing unit in Charleville.

JULY 28, 2003: Dairygold board elections held. Seven of the old board are re-elected.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2003: Dairygold announces sale of its beef processing plant in Charleville to Dawn Meats and the sale of Kilbeggan boning



plant to Dungannon Meats. Total of 250 jobs lost.

NOVEMBER 26, 2003: Workers are told 500 jobs will go before Christmas. Eventually 525 would go in that round of cuts.

JANUARY 16, 2004: Staff vote to take industrial action against the company.

JANUARY 28, 2004: Dairygold agrees the sale of three pig farms and the lease of two others, leading to fears for its pig processing plans.

FEBRUARY 17, 2004: 24-hour strike held by workers

JUNE 10, 2004: Dairygold announce plans to create 600 new jobs in 30 DIY Homeware stores around country.

AUGUST 11, 2004: 270 jobs cut after sale of slaughtering and boning plants in Roscrea and Mitchelstown.

AUGUST 21, 2004: Public hold a protest in Mitchelstown.

NOVEMBER 10, 2004: Announcement of plans to transfer 120 back-office jobs to Cork from Mitchelstown and Mallow. That was eventually changed to a transfer of 80 to Cork Airport and 40 to Mallow. An office will be built in Mallow for all the back-office staff in three years.

NOVEMBER 12, 2004: Minister for Employment Micheál Martin visits Mitchelstown and promises he and Enterprise Ireland and the IDA will do all they can for the stricken town.

NOVEMBER 22, 2004: In letter to shareholders, Jerry Henchy claims the rationalisation process is nearly complete and the company is on a better footing. However, he also says the rationalisation process will continue and admits more jobs will go in dairy sector over the coming years.

FEBRUARY 2, 2005: Deal emerges between Glanbia and Dairygold. Glanbia has bought CMP brand for €10m subject to sanctioning by the Irish Competitions Authority. Separately, from March Dairygold will supply a volume of cream to Glanbia to create Dairygold-branded butter. In return, from 2006 Glanbia will supply Dairygold with a volume of milk to manufacture into Glanbia dairy products.

The company also announces that a further 90 jobs through the sale of CMP and the restructuring of the dairy sector.

FEBRUARY 2, 2005: Jerry Henchy, Dairygold chief executive, has also revealed plans to establish a food science research and development facility in Mitchelstown. Dairygold also reveals it has completed a long-term contract for supply of Jarlsberg cheese.

O'Shea on Monday

ROBERT O'SHEA demonstrates how to flip a pancake properly

TOMORROW is basically a day of preparation for Lent — traditionally a 40-day period of abstinence from luxury foods.

Tomorrow is Shrove Tuesday, or as it's also known, Pancake Tuesday, because making pancakes is one way to use up fat, eggs and dairy products that fill our fridge, just like Jesus did all those years ago.

Some people might, if asked to pick their favourite day of the year, choose Paddy's Day or Christmas Day, or, if they are selfish, their own birthday.

My favourite day has always been Pancake Tuesday.

The fact that it is not on a set date like the others, and can fall on any day in early spring might play a part, because I like life to be a little bit mysterious, and not having days of celebration set in stone is all part of that mystery.

That's also why I am unusual in liking Friday the 13ths. If a Friday the 13th fell on the same date as a Pancake Tuesday you'd see some major celebrations at my house.

While I really like the taste of pancakes (a sprinkle of castor sugar and no Jif lemon juice, please) it is also the ritual of the occasion that delights me. By ritual I mean, of course, flipping.

Some people take a very casual attitude to the whole issue of flipping a pancake. This is sad, because it is a unique skill, a skill, however, that once mastered, will bring many years of enjoyment.

In a couple of lines' time I will give you some tips on flipping. This will give you the basics behind the skill. Once learned, it usually only takes a weekend of practice before the big day to refresh your memory and get that arm working again. But let's say you are in the kitchen waiting for an egg to boil in deepest winter; it'll do no harm to get out that frying pan and do a few practice flips, using a computer mousepad as a stand-in pancake.

Three things before we get down to the brass tacks of pancake-tossing (tossing, flipping — it doesn't really matter what you call it, it's all throwing fried dairy into the air and catching it again.)

1) I've heard some nonsense that lefty-handed people cannot flip. This is just what I've said it is: nonsense. Lefty-handed people can do almost all things that us normal people can do, and I include flipping in that.

2) A word of warning: never let kids under the age of 12 near the frying pan. Once, while acting as the responsible adult in a kitchen, I allowed a small child to toss the pancake. Although it may seem amusing now, at the time, no one was laughing when the pancake landed on his head.

3) There is no need to go to the trouble of making the pancake mix with ingredients from your own

fridge and larder. While some traditional flippers may turn their noses up at the idea of readymade supermarket mix, I think these people might be better spending their time worrying about something else. Anyway, the less time you have to concentrate on the preparation of the pancakes, the more time you have to psyche yourself up for the flipping itself.

Before starting the tossing, I like to rub a little bit of flour onto my cheeks, forehead and nose-tip. This helps you get into the role of being a chef, but also, flour will have accumulated on your palms, and that's going to be a big help in the gripping procedure.

So to begin. You've poured the mix into the pan that is placed on a scorching hot hob.

15 seconds have passed: The bottom of the pancake is nearly ready, you think. **20 seconds:** Should you not be getting ready to flip? **25 seconds:** Flip it. Flip it. **30 seconds:** It's burning you madman! BURNING!

Thirty-five seconds, my friends, that's how long you should leave the pancake before optimum flip-time.

Before you can start flipping, of course, you must make sure your grip is right. A lot of people may favour the one-handed grip. This, I think, should be left to more experienced flippers.

The best grip for a beginner or intermediate is always a double-handed grip with interlocking fingers. Try this now. If the intersection of the thumb and forefinger of your leading hand are forming a V-shape, then you've got it.

In attempting the flip, never take your eye off the pancake. Not on the pan, not on the hob, but on the pancake. The flip action is then all in the wrist. A short, sharp flick upwards should have the pancake airborne. Follow through with the pan (not taking your eye off the pancake, remember) and within a split-second your dinner should be making its descent back to the pan that is coming up to meet it.

The most important consideration in pancake-tossing is getting the pan-to-ceiling distance ratio correct.

Never let the pancake hit the ceiling, because you just don't know what sort of food might have been up there before.

That's it. Simple. Safe flipping.

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Do a few practice flips, using your computer mousepad as a stand-in pancake.”