

INTRODUCTION

According to the dictionary, "Milk is the opaque, whitish liquid secreted by the mammary glands of female mammals for the nourishment of their young." No one knows, of course, when, how, or where man first began the use of milk as a food. It probably began some eight or ten thousand years ago among the migratory herdsmen of western Asia. Ancient campsites of these people, excavated by archaeologists, indicate that the horse, cows, and sheep or goats had been domesticated in that far-off time, so we can only assume that these people had already made use of milk in their dietary intake.

Today it is known that among some races and people, milk has never been used after the nursing period of babies has passed. To many of these adult people, milk is little short of a poison, as they seem to have no mechanism for its proper digestion and assimilation. This is particularly true of some African races, and most East Asians. The American Indian, also, never made use of milk after infancy.

To the American, milk is one of the basic foods and is in such general use that it is taken much for granted.

In an earlier era, almost every family had its own cow, or depended upon near neighbors for its milk supply.

No one worried as to whether these animals were tubercular, or had other health problems, because most generally their feed was largely derived from pastures and in this natural environment they were probably healthy.

Today, most people are dependent upon the large commercial dairy. Cows have become milk producing machines and are fed for maximum milk production.

Shortly after the turn of the century, it was discovered that some cows were tubercular, and a massive movement was begun to protect the public against this health hazard. Pasteurization was adopted as a sure method of preventing this hazard. No attention was paid to the possible unsanitary conditions under which many dairies produced their milk. It was much cheaper to clean up dirty milk than to prevent its contamination at the outset.

In our more modern milk producing plants, every effort is made to produce safe milk. Even though it is disease-free, the pasteurization of even the finest and cleanest of milk does cause some nutritional loss. Unfortunately, the production of unheated milk is surrounded with so much red tape and legal restrictions that few milk producers have the courage to attempt production of certified raw milk. There are only four dairies in the entire country that are now producing Certified Raw Milk.

At a certified dairy every facet of the entire operation is impressive from a sanitary point of view. All employees are required to have frequent physical examinations

and the cows are scrubbed and rinsed, then wiped dry with sterile towels before milking. The milking is done entirely by automatic milking machines.

It must be noted that Certified Milk is a grade, not a brand of milk. Certified Raw Milk is produced in the U.S. in accordance with regulations and standards of the American Association of Medical Milk Commissions and under the direct supervision of local, county or state medical milk commission. The American Association of Medical Milk Commissions believes that certified raw milk produced according to its methods and standards, and similarly defined by the U.S. Public Health Service Milk Ordinance, is the highest grade of milk obtainable. It has not been heated and is free from added coloring and preservatives. Certified raw milk minimizes nutrient loss, but it is not fortified. (Amer. Assn. Med. Milk Comm. 1970).

Certified raw milk subsequently may be pasteurized and may be processed for special milks including fat-free (skim), cream, half-and-half, vitamin D, homogenized or low sodium, provided it is done according to standards of the AAMMC and the product is so labelled. Although certified milk production constitutes only a small percentage of total U.S. milk sales, from a historical standpoint and in light of the recent natural foods movement, it is a product of great interest to some researchers.

There are five basic objectives that will be covered in this thesis. They are:

1. To provide an historical context of Certified Milk Production in earlier years.
2. To give up-to-date facts on the Certified Milk industry as it exists today.
3. To discuss the result of a consumer survey that was conducted to discover their current opinions about Certified Milk.
4. To determine vitamin content of Certified Raw Milk.
5. To compare and contrast Certified Raw Milk to regular milk and to explore both the true and the as-yet-unproven claims made about Certified Raw Milk.