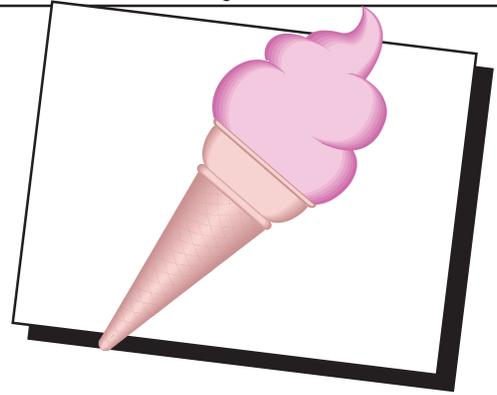


Eating Safe Ice Cream



Americans are incredibly fortunate. We pay the least for food of any industrial country on earth; yet have access to products from all over the world. But perhaps most important, our food supply is incredibly safe!

This is not by accident. Farmers, producers, manufacturers, retailers and government all play important roles in minimizing your risk of foodborne illness.

Come take a behind-the-scenes look at all that's done by your Minnesota Department of Agriculture and others to bring you safe, wholesome food — A Malted Milk.

- **The animal feed supply is monitored for safety.** Feed ingredients, pharmaceuticals (antibiotics, drugs, etc.) and pesticides must all be registered and approved for their intended use. Laboratory analysis confirms that the feed meets safety standards.
- **The farmer uses best management practices for milk production.** Dairy cows are kept healthy and antibiotic/drug usage is monitored and withdrawal times carefully followed to prevent carryover into the milk supply. Barns, cow yards, animals and dairy equipment are kept clean. Good manure management practices protect the environment and water supplies. Finally, temperature control in bulk milk tanks minimizes bacterial growth.
- **The bulk milk haulers sample individual dairy producer's milk and transport it safely.** Drivers of bulk milk tank trucks pick up milk at the dairy farm daily or as necessary and transport it in refrigerated trucks to receiving/transfer stations or to the dairy plant itself. They are tested and certified by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to show they can transfer the milk in a sanitary manner and collect appropriate samples for testing.
- **Inspectors license and inspect the dairy farms producing the milk house, milk tank trucks, dairy plants and retail facilities where dairy products are sold.** Inspectors verify that each segment of the dairy products industry, from producer to retailer, is in compliance with food safety requirements. Plan reviews are conducted before the facility is constructed. Well construction and location are checked to protect the water supply. General sanitation, pest control, employee personal hygiene, maintenance, prevention of cross-contamination, packaging and labeling, general production and storage are also reviewed.

- **The dairy plant pasteurizes milk to destroy foodborne pathogens.** The combination of high temperatures for a certain short period of time will destroy bacteria without changing the character of the milk very much. Inspectors verify the accuracy of pasteurizing equipment and records showing that all products were pasteurized.
- **Milk and dairy products are tested for antibiotic residues, bacteria, effective pasteurization, safe water and other quality issues.** Raw and finished dairy products are routinely tested for chemical and biological contaminants. Private and industry laboratories are evaluated and certified for accuracy. Farms and plants that exceed specific microbiological standards are restricted from using the milk for specific purposes or from shipping the milk or finished products in commerce.
- **Refrigeration helps control bacterial growth.** Temperature is one critical control point throughout the production, processing and sale of milk as well as other dairy products. Milk and other dairy products are generally stored below 35°F to keep bacterial growth at a minimum. Even pasteurized milk is not completely sterile and will spoil (sour) after a period of time.
- **Labeling provides information about shelf life of the product, the dairy processor and the product itself.** An ingredient statement will identify all ingredients including those which may be of concern to individuals with allergies (nuts, eggs, etc.). A “use by date” can be used as an indicator of shelf life and quality, provided the dairy product has been properly refrigerated. Any health claim such as “prevents osteoporosis” or nutrient content claims such as skim milk or calcium added must show evidence supporting that claim.

For additional food safety information, contact:

USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-800-535-4555
 FDA's Food Information & Seafood Hotline 1-800-332-4010
 EPA's Pesticide Right-to-know Website www.epa.gov/pesticides/food
 Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture's Dairy & Food Inspection 651-296-1592
 Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture's Agronomy & Plant Protection 651-296-6121
 Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture's Website www.mda.state.mn.us