

This Month in Clay County History: Foremost Dairy – Where Clay County Cows Produce the Best Milk

By Archives Specialist Vishi Garig, a service of Clay County Clerk of Court Tara S. Green

The early 1920s brought JC Penney to Clay County and eventually the creation of the town of Penney Farms. The whole community-building idea revolved around the dairy and cattle industries. Penney loved cows and he loved dairies. He had many agricultural interests while he was raising purebred Guernsey (his favorite breed) at Penney Farms.

Penney's experimental community wasn't doing that great at first. The bloom had faded off of the Florida land boom rose, so to speak. Penney and his partner Ralph Gwinn were eager to either unload the land or make it profitable somehow. So, in 1929 they reached out to Paul Reinhold, a man whose positive reputation for turning dairies into profit centers preceded him.

Paul Reinhold founded Reinhold Ice Cream Co. in Oakmont, Pennsylvania, in 1916. In 1930, he began using industrial refrigeration techniques to freeze ice cream at a plant, the first of its kind in the nation. It turned a summer afternoon porch treat into a treat available to the masses. Reinhold took over Penney's concern and named the company Foremost Dairy. "Foremost" was the name of Penney's prize bull.

Reinhold organized several dairies under the Foremost company umbrella, Shadowlawn Dairy at Penney Farms being one of them. He moved the Foremost plant from the Riverside area of Jacksonville to 2903 College Street (now the Metro nightclub). His home in Jacksonville was called Shadowlawn, hence the dairy's new name. Today, the name carries over to Shadowlawn Nursery and Shadowlawn Elementary School.

With fresh milk from Shadowlawn Dairy, the company's signature treat - the Triple Goodness Ice Cream Bar – was created. *Triple Goodness* was also the slogan used throughout the 1950's. By 1955, Foremost was the third-largest dairy company in the world with sales of \$400 million.

In order to have quality milk you had to have quality cows. The breeding program at Shadowlawn included not only Guernseys but expanded to include Jerseys and Holsteins. Some of the bulls were prize winners. However, you can't have quality cows and milk if your pastures are poor. The thin, sandy soils at Shadowlawn were carefully tested and pastures seeded with new kinds of grasses that would grow well in our specific conditions. New sorts of cattle feed were created at Shadowlawn including one made from dehydrated sweet potatoes.

Reinhold kept expanding Foremost. They incorporated dairy farm after dairy farm, dairy plant after plant. This growth and activity caught the eye of the Federal Trade Commission. After years of litigation, Foremost was directed to cease and desist - or at least slow down a little. Eventually, Foremost merged with Beatrice Foods.

Out of the 120,000 original acres that Penney bought in 1924, about 30,000 remained. By the 1960's most of the land and the dairy were reorganized into the Reinhold Cooperation. Reinhold began to give land to Clay County government and educational entities. This includes land donated for the Clay County Fairgrounds, land to Penney Farms, and land that is now Shadowlawn Elementary. Today, Reinhold Corporation is one of the biggest charities in Clay County, providing thousands of dollars'

worth of grants to deserving charitable and non-profit recipients here in Clay. They are our very good neighbor. It all started with the humble dairy cow at Shadowlawn Dairy.



Shadowlawn Dairy at Penney Farms



If you could improve soil you could improve pasture and make better milk.

New Flavor Magic on a Stick

FOREMOST

a First of Pleasures in Every Lick

WE TOOK the essential, most delicious ice cream ever created—Foremost Fresh Vanilla...

WE ADDED rich, pure chocolate of the finest quality. Combines the best in a stick and...

PRESIO

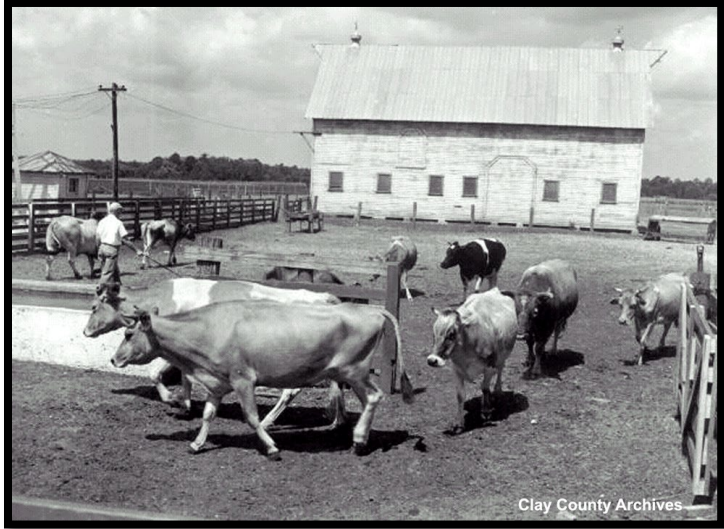
THE NEW TRIPLE GOODNESS BAR

TRIPLE GOODNESS

JUST ONE CREAMY BITE... and you'll discover that here again an ice cream bar can be Foremost just all the satisfying goodness a stick can hold in the new TRIPLE GOODNESS BAR. Try one today... it's revolutionary!

FOREMOST DAIRIES

SAVE THE 5¢ BAGS FOR SWELL PRIZES



<p>Sire:</p> <p>Foremost Royal Valor 8 Daughters over 900 Fat 11 Daughters over 800 Fat 81 AR Daughters 42 PR Sons</p> <p>•</p> <p>Dam:</p> <p>Foremost Loyalty 18229-856-CC 2 AR Daughters 3 AR Sons</p>		<p>Foremost May Royalty 65 AR Daughters, Over 100 to be tested</p> <p>3 EXCELLENT, 24 VERY GOOD</p> <p>Sire of Grand Champions in Florida, Tennessee, and Maryland</p>
--	--	---