

Blue Bell Creameries One of Oldest Industries in Lee County Area

An industry which has been in Lee County about as long as any other is the Blue Bell Creamery of Giddings, managed by H. C. Wiese. The Blue Bell Creamery has been in Giddings since 1930. Wiese, who worked for the company in Brenham before it set up operations in Giddings, has been with the firm for 28 years. The company has been in existence for over 50 years.

Blue Bell distributes ice cream from Taylor to Huntsville to Palacios, but the branch plant at Giddings serves mostly Lee County and vicinity. It buys cream locally, and makes butter right at the station here. The butter churn will hold 1000 pounds of butter, and would cost at present prices \$4,000. Another piece of equipment, costing approximately \$2,500, is the heating and cooling vat. There is also the \$7,500 vault and refrigeration unit.

The Blue Bell provides a market for cream produced by Lee County farmers, and also a source of quality butter for consumers locally at a reasonable price. Wiese said butter was now wholesaling at 65 cents per pound, whereas it once sold, about two years ago, at 90 cents wholesale. The firm did buy whole milk, but they stopped that last year, because there was not enough of it available. They make both sweet cream butter and the sour cream variety.

The manager and four employees, sometimes six, sell 100 gallons of ice cream per day

and 250 on Saturdays, on the average. The ice cream is made in Brenham. They also dispense about 6,000 dozen confection sticks and cups per month, also made in Brenham.