

Quebec firm opens food plant using new system

A Quebec company has opened a plant that will use leading technologies to convert cheese by-products into food concentrates.

Sodispro Technologie Limitée of St. Hyacinthe, Quebec has built the new facility that will be the first of its kind to produce both lactose and protein concentrate under one roof. The 69,000-square foot plant is located in an area that produces 55 per cent of all the cheese in Canada and will absorb 50 per cent of the surplus by-product from the cheese factories in the St. Hyacinthe region.

Long-term contracts

Sodispro has its raw material supplied under long-term contracts and has contracts to sell all that it can produce in the next seven years, primarily to Japan and the Republic of Korea. The company will employ 50 workers in the new plant, with an expected increase to 73 in the second year of operation.

Sodispro converts surplus cheese by-products into protein concentrate and lactose, using technology that was developed in Europe but which the company has refined to a more efficient and faster system that uses less energy and takes less floor space. The company still has technological exchange agreements with European firms. The new plant will also encompass an ultramodern quality control, research and development centre.

An extra benefit of the process is that

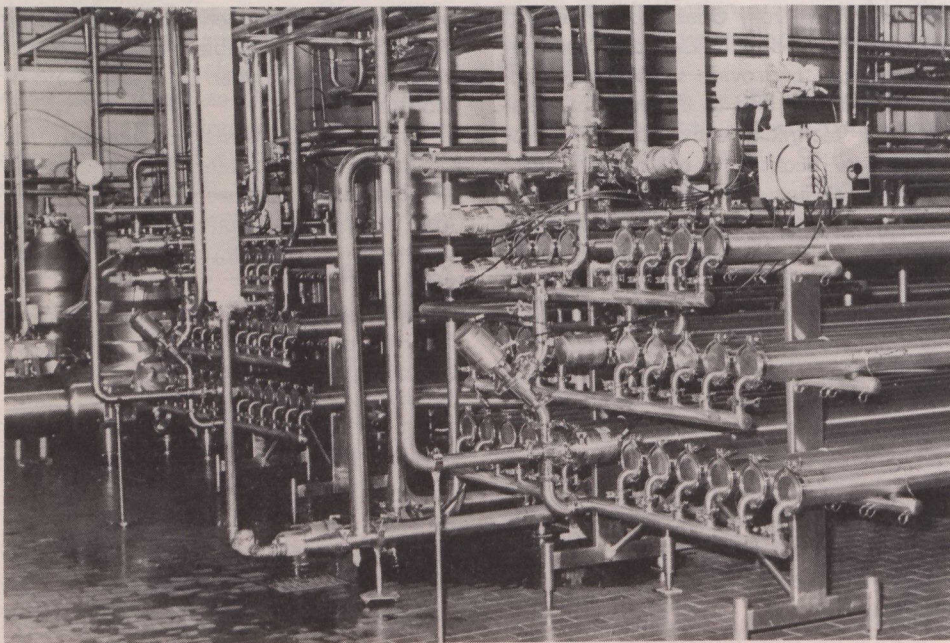


The new Sodispro plant in St. Hyacinthe.

it relieves a major pollution problem in the region of Quebec caused by the dumping of surplus by-product from cheese factories.

Total investment

The total investment by Sodispro in the plant is more than \$20 million of which \$12 million is for processing equipment. Of this total, the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion has contributed \$3.5 million, the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce has also provided loan insurance of \$2.25 million.



The ultrafiltration system used at the Sodispro plant.

Microelectronics centre proposed

An Ontario government task force has recommended the establishment of a microelectronic technology centre in the province.

After a year-and-a-half of study, the task force said it is "cautiously optimistic" about Canada's prospects in high technology. It said that speed is essential if various levels of government are to exploit the industrial benefits of microelectronics.

The proposed centre would co-operate with industry to monitor the Canadian supply of integrated circuits (the basic building blocks of microelectronics-based products). It would absorb the cost of design, development and testing of silicon chips, related tools and software for small- and medium-sized Canadian companies.

The task force also recommends the establishment of centres based on computer-assisted design, manufacturing and robotics technology.

The report also outlined a number of recommendations designed to enable the work force to adjust to the implementation of microelectronics in the workplace. These include retraining programs, health and safety measures, public awareness and education efforts.

Libraries and information centres should provide public access to microelectronics-based information services, said the force. It also recommends that another task force be established to complete the analysis of the impact of microelectronic products in the home, schools and workplace.

Canadian bank opens in China

The Royal Bank of Canada has become the first Canadian bank to establish a representative office in China.

About 15 foreign banks have already established representative offices in Peking, with about 54 more applications pending. One of these is an application by the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, which expects to open a representative office officially before the end of this year.

The bank first established contact with the Bank of China in 1958, and shortly afterward set up an office in Hong Kong.

The main service the Royal Bank office will have to offer is in the syndicated Eurodollar and Eurocurrency loans.

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