Hansen's Dairy — A Legacy of Real Food, Real Family, and Real Iowa Roots

For more than 150 years, Hansen's Dairy has been woven into the rolling landscape of Iowa agriculture, a place where generations have grown up with the rhythm of milking time and the comfort of real, honest food. What began in 1864 as a modest, diverse family farm slowly evolved, shaped by curiosity, hard work, and the kind of stubborn dedication that keeps traditions alive. By the time the Hansen family opened their on-farm creamery in 2004, they [illegible] re carrying forward a legacy.



Today, visitors who trav[illegible]el down the gravel road to the Hansen farm quickly sense what makes the place special. The milk, butter, cheese curds, ice cream, heavy cream, eggnog, even Wagyu-Holstein beef—all of it comes from the same 150-cow herd grazing just beyond the creamery windows. Nothing is outsourced. Every product feels like part of the land it came from. Their milk, left non-homogenized so the cream rises to the top, surprises first-time customers with its rich flavor and old-fashioned simplicity. "Milk is where it all begins," Jordan Hansen often says, and for many, that first sip helps them understand the heartbeat of the whole operation.

Jordan has a unique vantage point on the farm's evolution. While the creamery may be a newer chapter, dairy has been part of the Hansen story since the 1950s, when her husband's grandfather first specialized in milking cows. Two generations later, sons Blake and Blair studied dairy science and envisioned a future where the farm wasn't tethered to commodity prices but instead could craft its own destiny. They called their brothers home—one to help with processing, another with delivery—and together, they built the creamery that would secure the farm for generations yet to come. Jordan joined in to manage the business side: bookkeeping, finances, HR, marketing, and tourism, but often finds herself in the barn, too! To this day, the entire operation feels deeply personal, a team effort shaped by family hands.

Of course, with so many beloved products, some farm favorites still catch customers off guard. One of Jordan's favorite "hidden gems" is the oatmeal chocolate chip ice cream sandwich—soft, homemade cookies baked in Cedar Falls with Hansen's own butter, wrapped around a scoop of their soft-serve ice cream. Those who try one rarely forget it. And while the dairy products are what draw people in, the kangaroos—yes, actual kangaroos—tend to surprise everyone. Families arrive expecting cows; they

leave with photos of kangaroos and a back seat full of milk and cheese curds. “People come for the kangaroos, but they stay for the dairy,” Jordan likes to joke.

What grounds the farm even more deeply is the pride the Hansen's feel in being part of Iowa agriculture. Jordan speaks warmly about the respect Iowans have for local food and the curiosity of visitors who tour the farm, eager to see where their milk comes from. She encourages everyone, no matter where they live, to choose local when they can. Buying from neighbors strengthens communities, she says—it keeps dollars nearby, supports families, and honors the land.

Looking to the future, the Hansen's are working with a business consultant to guide the next stage of growth. After nearly a generation of running the creamery, they know the operation is ready to expand. A new barn—large enough to house more animals—sits on the horizon, though they’re careful not to rush. Growth, like good milk, takes time.



Jordan often reflects on how grateful the family is for initiatives like Choose Iowa, which connect producers with people eager for local food. Programs like this, she says, help farms like theirs continue doing what they love.

And so, as visitors stop in for a tour or step into the Waterloo or Cedar Falls stores for a gallon of cream-top milk, a tub of ice cream, or maybe one of those irresistible ice cream sandwiches, they’re welcomed not just into a business but into a family. Hansen’s Dairy—rooted in heritage, fueled by authenticity, and driven by a deep love for Iowa—continues to pour pride and care into everything they do, offering a taste of real food and real tradition with every bite and every sip.

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