

SWIFT & COMPANY AND THE FAIRMONT PRODUCT

Garden City, Finney County, Kansas

Written by Bernice Crooms

Consultants: William B. Erdman, Fairmont manager, and Mr. T. G. Chaplin, Swift manager

** Additional information and photograph added*

On 11 Aug 1930, Swift and Company opened their factory in Garden City, Kansas. It is a large (85 by 140) concrete building three stories high. The rooms have many windows on all sides. This keeps the rooms well lit and ventilated. It is more up-to-date than other Swift Plants in Kansas. They have plants in Salina, Hutchinson, Parsons, Sabetha, Wichita, and Kansas City.

Swift & Company buys chickens by what they call "classes." The first-class chicken is in good condition and ready to be shipped. The second-class chicken is reasonably good quality and has to be fed only a few more days before it is shipped. Then, there are the third-class chickens that are poor and thin. Swift & Company fatten them up, and there is an area on the third floor used to feed the chickens. It can take care of 18,000 hens a week. They also sell baby chicks.

All of the Swift and Company products are graded. That includes eggs, poultry, and cream.

Swift's service covers Kansas, Eastern Colorado, Northern Oklahoma, and Northern Texas. It ships products to New York, Michigan, and Massachusetts.

They hire more workers during the winter than in the summer, which ends up about forty in the summer and sixty to sixty-four in the winter. All of the employees are local people.

The Fairmount product began in Garden City, Kansas, in 1884. It is one of the oldest companies in Southwestern Kansas. Fairmount is another chain company like the Swift Company; it goes from coast to coast. They built their first factory in Fairmont, Nebraska.

Fairmont is the buyer of poultry and eggs. They sell vegetables, fruits, chickens, eggs, and cheese. They also make delicious ice cream, sold in Garden City and surrounding towns. They have just (1936) completed a new ice cream parlor on Main Street in Garden City.

Additional Information

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SWIFT & COMPANY WORKERS

About 1931

*Front row four women, 2nd from the left, is Marie Becquet
The names of the other women are unknown*

Mae “Marie” (Frizzell) Becquet began working for Swift and Company in Garden City, Kansas, soon after her marriage in 1931 to William F. Becquet. Her job was to “pluck feathers” from turkeys, preparing them to sell. She was later hired as a bookkeeper for Fairmont Dairy in Garden City, Kansas, working there for several years.

*Photograph and information about Marie Becquet from “Our Becquet Family History”
Researched and compiled by Kathye Snyder-Knight*