

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **AUG 14 1985**
date entered **SEP 12 1985**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company

and or common Prentek Corporation

2. Location

street & number 700 Main Street not for publication

city, town Prentice vicinity of

state WI code 55 county Price code 099

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Leo Heikkinen, President Kallmatt

street & number 700 Main Street

city, town Prentice vicinity of state WI 54556

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Price County Courthouse

street & number Lake Street

city, town Phillips state WI 54555

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1977 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town 816 State Street, Madison state WI 53706

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Jump River, a tributary of the Flambeau River, is directly north of the Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company, a building constructed in 1906 by the U.S. Leather Company to serve as a hide house. The central part of the brick utilitarian structure is a one and a half story rectangular block measuring 30x150 feet. From this main section a one and a half story addition extends north at approximately the mid point of the block. A second, smaller addition, attached to the first and forming part of the east (or main) facade, is one story high and demarked by a tall brick chimney. Steep gable roofs cover the building, with large metal vents (two), features commonly associated with dairy operations, located astride the roof peak.

The majority of openings in the former creamery building are rectangular, the exceptions being the main entrance (It has been partially filled in to accommodate a smaller door), a window in the one story addition (This may have been another entrance), and windows on the building's north side, all of which are segmentally arched openings. Prominent lintels (These accent less than one third of the openings), pilasters, and small vents (square holes) above the windows on the south side are additional details. Exterior alterations, all completed in the 1970s, include a large metal addition at the southwest corner of the brick structure and three frame dormers built to increase the space in the half story.

The interior of the building features office space on the upper story and a combination of office and industrial space on the ground floor, the original location of the churn room and warehouse.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

1906¹

Specific dates 1915-1935 (period of **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) (significance)

The former Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company is an historically significant property, representing both the agricultural development of southern Price County and the industrial development of the community of Prentice. Beginning operations in 1915, the cooperative establishment played a crucial role in the growth and improvement of area dairy farms, which in the early twentieth century were being created from the county's cut-over lands. In Prentice itself the creamery contributed to the community's industrial sector as a stable and financially successful enterprise.

Agriculture

Incorporated in the spring of 1899, the Village of Prentice originated as a lumber town created by the organization of the Jump River Lumber Company in 1882. Portage businessmen, including Alexander Prentice for whom the community was named, established the firm which milled up to 100,000 feet of lumber daily until it ceased production in the late nineteenth century.² Like companies throughout northern Wisconsin, the Jump River concern closed because the timber supply once thought to be "inexhaustible" was, in fact, exhausted. To offset the loss of such enterprises and, more importantly, to utilize the vast tracts of cut-over timber lands, various groups and individuals encouraged the development of agriculture in the state's northern counties. Prominent among the groups actively promoting the northern district were the state through its Board of Immigration located in Rhinelander and the University of Wisconsin, the latter responsible for the publications of the pamphlet, Northern Wisconsin: A Handbook for the Homeseeker, written by William A. Henry, Dean of the College of Agriculture. In the Prentice area (southern Price County) this promotion appeared effective for settlers moved into the area, established farms (The number of farms in the county rose from 380 to 1890 to 885 in 1900 and 1352 in 1910³), and, again with assistance from the state and the university, created cooperative enterprises such as the Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company, organized in 1915. (Note: Creameries are listed as a resource type in the Dairying Study Unit (Agriculture Theme) included in the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Plan.)

The community of Prentice had supported a creamery as early as 1903, but this firm--the Prentice Creamery--and a later establishment of the same name were privately owned, part time producers. In contrast, the Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company was organized as a year round business under Wisconsin's Cooperative Law which was passed in 1911 and subsequently used as a model for similar legislation in other states. Following the provisions of the law, the cooperative creamery was formally established in the spring of 1915 with the former hide house of the U.S. Leather Company, a substantial brick building constructed in 1906, renovated to house the operation. (The hide house was built after the tannery fire of February 1906 and in use only a few weeks before another fire destroyed the rebuilt complex. The fire proof hide house escaped this last conflagration.) The official dedication took place on September 15, 1915, and included an address by G.H.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Carstenson, Vernon. Farms or Forests: Evolution of a State Land Policy for Northern Wisconsin. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1958.
Prentice Centennial Album, 1878-1978. Park Falls: F.A. Weber & Sons, Inc., 1978.
Prentice News. (various dates)
Prentice News-Calumet. (various dates)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Phillips, WI.

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	5
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5	0	4	7	0	5	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification An irregular parcel of land located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 1, Town 35 North, Range 1 East, described as follows: Beginning at a point 150 ft. west of the center point of Town Street and Main Street, proceed west 180 ft., south 45 ft., west 75 ft., south 75 ft., east 255 ft., and north 120 ft. to the point of beginning.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary E. Taylor/Consultant

organization _____ date _____

street & number 8269 Doolittle Rd. telephone (715)356-2555

city or town Minocqua state WI. 54548

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *[Signature]*

title DIRECTOR OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION date JULY 10, 1985

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature] Entered in the National Register date 9/12/85
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company,
Continuation sheet Price County, Wisconsin

Item number 8

Page 1

Benkendorf, Professor of Dairy Husbandry at the university and co-author of a bulletin entitled Organization and Construction of Creameries and Cheese Factories, a publication which quite possibly spurred the development of Prentice's cooperative venture.⁴

From the time of its opening, the creamery and every facet of its operation received great attention from the local newspaper, with important information such as production data often appearing as front page headlines. Also "boosting" the new dairy was the county agricultural agent who offered technical advice to farmers and admonitions to all to support the fledgling enterprise. With such support the creamery increased its number of patrons and went from a first day's production of 500 pounds of butter to over 9000 pounds in a six day period less than two years later (July 1917). At the same time, the creamery began distributing its own product, which was already known for its consistent high quality and good flavor.⁵

The Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company remained in operation until mid 1931 when economic conditions forced its closing. Within a couple of months, however, a private owner, R.J. Peterson, purchased the creamery and opened the Price County Dairy. This company continued to produce butter until August 1933 when the Price County Co-operative Dairy Association, an organization of southern Price County farmers, took control of the dairy and returned it to a cooperative enterprise known as the Price County Co-operative Dairy. Operating under the slogan "Yours for a Bigger and Better Dairy", the new cooperative served more than 200 area farmers, producing during its first nine months (August 1933 to May 1934) 100, 632 pounds of butter and 153,832 pounds of cheese, with a return of \$30,000 to its patrons.⁶

The creamery closed in the 1940s. Later occupants of the structure included the Heikkinen Machine Company, the Prentice Wood Products Company, La Font Corporation, and currently the Prentek Corporation, a manufacturer of hydraulic equipment.

Industry

In the first decade of the twentieth century the Village of Prentice, a community established by a thriving lumber industry, was facing the loss of its second major industry. The closing of the Jump River Lumber Company in the 1890s had already reduced the village's industrial sector to a reliance on the tannery operated by the U.S. Leather Company. The loss of this large facility in 1906 after two fires destroyed nearly the entire complex was thus a major setback for the Price County community. In this depressed environment, the opening of the Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company in September 1915 was a much heralded event. Located in the almost new tannery hide house, the cooperative creamery, though a small operation, was seen as an important element in the growth of local agriculture, which if successfully developed, would revitalize Prentice. This view was most often put forth by the local newspaper, a "booster" publication that printed numerous articles containing sentences such as the following: "Everyone is urged to boost for the farmers creamery because it is a small industry which will help to do wonders to help develop the farming community, the prosperity of which causes the town to improve."⁷

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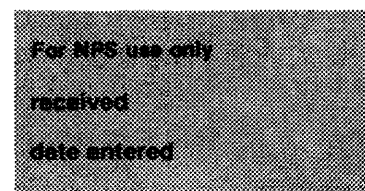
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Prentice Co-operative Creamery Company,

Continuation sheet Price County, Wisconsin

Item number 8

Page 2



With encouragement from the press, the expertise of a trained butter-maker, and the patronage of area farmers, the creamery did, indeed, become a successful business, operating year round and producing thousands of pounds of high grade butter which brought "top Chicago prices" and, in turn, profits to the farmer. This situation continued until the depression and its disastrous effects on agriculture temporarily closed the creamery in 1931, but as stated above, a private owner took control within a few months and continued production until August 1933 when the operation was returned to cooperative ownership. Throughout this time the creamery was Prentice's primary industry and the focal point of its evolution from lumber town to agricultural center.

¹Prentice Calumet, 29 March 1906.

²Prentice Centennial Album, 1878-1978 (Park Falls: F.A. Weber & Sons, Inc., 1978), pp. 15-16.

³Vernon Carstenson, Farms or Forests: Evolution of a State Land Policy for Northern Wisconsin, 1850-1932 (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1958), p. 130.

⁴Prentice News-Calumet, 1 October 1915.

⁵Prentice News-Calumet, 29 June 1917.

⁶Prentice News, 14 June 1934.

⁷Prentice News-Calumet, 1 October 1915.

JUMP RIVER

Prentice Co-operative
Creamery Company

MAIN ST.

TOWN ST.

Prentek Corp. Complex

--- Property Boundary

