

Mark Davis
Chairman
Davis Family Holdings

EARLY LIFE

Mark Davis, the oldest of five, was born in 1941 in Frost, MN, where his Father managed a small cooperative creamery. Shortly after Mark's birth, the family moved to Lamesa, TX, for a new position Stanley accepted as a buttermaker. In 1943, Stanley Davis bought the St. Peter, MN Creamery and returned home. Mark grew up working in the creamery and also as a corn detassler. When he turned 18 he drove a can milk truck delivering farmer's milk to the creamery.

EDUCATION

Mark graduated high school and enrolled at Gustavus Adolphus College, where he was recruited to play football. After football season, college life wasn't a fit and Mark returned to milk truck driving. A back injury suffered in a truck accident was an incentive to return to college. He transferred to Mankato State (now Minnesota State) University, and, worked his way through school as a milk truck driver, starting his days at 4 AM. While in college he married, at 21. His wife Mary worked in an insurance office and they had 2 children while finishing Mark's education. The family lived in upstairs apartments, eventually buying the house his Mother's family had lived in.

CAREER

Following his college graduation in 1963, Mark went to work full time for his Father's creamery in St. Peter, MN. In 1968, after 5 years as a buttermaker, the Davises joined forces with a family owned cheese business in neighboring Le Sueur, MN. By then, Mark and Mary had 5 children. The Le Sueur Cheese Company became a growing processor of the regions milk, becoming the largest supplier of cheese to Kraft Foods Company. In 1978 Mark began to explore value added uses for cheese whey, which was, historically, a costly disposal problem for cheese manufacturers. Investigating a tip from a potential customer for whey protein, Mark visited a small group of investors in Wales who were struggling with a new technology to extract protein from cheese whey. He developed a joint venture in the technology, which over the next 25 years became one of the main pillars of what would become a \$1.2 billion dairy company. Eventually he acquired all the European assets of the venture, as well as the intellectual property assets, becoming the sole owner of this technology and products. This innovative technology launched the company into a position of global leadership in the field, and onto the world stage as a dairy processor and manufacturer. In 1986 the St. Peter Creamery, Inc., Le Sueur Cheese Company, Inc., and Nicollet Foods Products, Inc. merged to form Davisco Foods International, Inc. Davisco Foods grew into a manufacturer of 1 million pounds of cheese per day, 10 million pounds of whey protein isolates annually, from processing 11 million pounds of milk per day from factories in Minnesota, South Dakota and Idaho. Headquartered in Le Sueur, MN, the company has sales offices in Geneva, Shanghai, and Singapore. Mark Davis served as the

company's President and CEO until 2012, at which time his son, Jon Davis, took over the day-to-day operations and Mark became chairman.

CIVIC AFFAIRS AND PHILANTHROPY

Inducted into the Minnesota Business Hall of Fame in 2006, Mark Davis is the sponsor of scholarships to underprivileged children and also gives generously to Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Camp Cambria, for children with juvenile arthritis; the Minnesota Historical Society; and the Mayo Clinic – to name a few.