

Maungatapere Dairy Factory Timeline of events

1865	The road link between Whangārei and Maungatapere was established by settler William Hawken's company Hawkens Roose and Land. The road connected Maungatapere to Whangārei through Maunu. Prior to this the main transport route had been through the Northern Wairoa River.
1896	Maungatapere's first dairy company was set up by Murray and Company. It produced condensed milk from milk produced by local farmers from Maungatapere, Kara and Maunu. The Maungatapere factory was then used as a creamery for a butter factory Murray & Co had set up in Whangārei.
1907	The Maungatapere Co-operative Dairy Company was set up to produce butter and opened on October 15 1907.
1915	Maungatapere Co-op had 67 farmers supplying milk and produced 68 tonnes of butter. The company had also established a retail /trading department.
1915	Disgruntled farmers set up a separate cheese factory on the corner of Aponga and Mangakhaia Road. By 1917 it had closed after serious flooding.
1916	The Springhead Co-operative Dairy Company was established and a cheese factory was built just down the road from the Maungatapere plant
1919	A fire completely destroyed the buildings and contents on the 20th December 1919. The company decides not to rebuild the trading department and supported the Farmers' Union Trading Company to open a store nearby.
1932	Agreement was made that the Twin Brigdges on the main Mangakahia Road was the boundary between with Maungatapere and Kaikohe dairy companies.
1936	The butter factory was rebuilt and expanded including a new office block using assistance from the Unemployment Board's B2 Scheme. It officially opened in December 1936.
1937	Maungatapere Co-op finally purchased the Springhead Co-op after trying for many years - and then closed that factory down
1941	At the request of the government as part of the war effort during WWII, Maungatapere changed a portion of its production from butter to start producing cheese. It reopened the nearby Springhead Factory for this purpose.
1942	By July 1942 the cheese was no longer required for the war effort, so the cheese factory was closed down again – this time permanently.
1949	The Whangarei-Maungatapere Dairy Veterinary Service was established between the Maungatapere Co-op and their Whangarei counterpart. It was run from Whangarei and served the farmers in the greater district until 1963.
early 1950s	The Co-op started drying the butter milk to produce milk powder. Prior to this the butter milk was used to feed pigs on a local pig farm.
1954	The Mauntatapere Co-op purchased the limeworks on Kaigoose Valley Road (now called Otaika Valley Road) for sum of £2875. They also bought the Maungatapere Farmers Union Trading store for £2400 and bought retail back under their umbrella. They also underwent plant upgrades including a new boiler and boiler-house, new workshop and chilling-room, and stainless steel butter churns were installed as part of a major plant upgrade.

1956	Flooding closes the Kamo Coal Mine and the company was forced to bring coal up from the Waikato. So they bought the rights to the closed Whareora Mine and reopened it to supply the Maungatapere factory.
1962	The annual meeting approved building a new 6000 square foot trading store for approximately £20,000 on a two-acre block next to the factory. The store would sell groceries, hardware, farm supplies, stockfood and home appliances.
1963	Maungatapere, Maungaturoto and Whangarei combine to create the Mid Northland Co-operative Dairy Company making them the second biggest dairy company in New Zealand. Albertland (Wellsford) and Ruawai joined at a later date.
1967	The Mid Northland Co-op moved towards whole milk collection providing vats to all suppliers, but they had to pay for agitators and refrigeration over a period of 2 years. During the same year, the Maungatapere factory was gutted to create a new milk powder plant which was up and running in 1965.
1981	The Mid-Northland Co-op merged with Kaitaia and the Bay of Islands to form the Northland Co-operative Dairy Company.
1983	An announcement made that the Maungatapere, Whangārei and Morewa factories would be consolidated into one new building at Maungatapere or Kauri.
1986	There was much discussion about which site would suit best, but in the end Kauri won out.
1986	A new butter factory was completed at the Maungatapere site. The Morewa and Awanui butter-plants were closed and milkfat shipped south to the new factory.
1988	Maungatapere retail store was closed.
1989	The newly-built Kauri plant was opened. The Maungatapere factory was closed, although it reopened the following year to make skim-milk powder for a period.
??	Jack Crow purchased the 'newer half' of the Northern Co-op Dairy Factory at Maungatapere and started moving his collection of machinery and cars for storage.
2009	The Office Café was opened in the old Maungatapere Dairy Factories office buildings.
??	The Crow family decided to hire a manager and opened the Packard Museum to the public.

Sources:

The Northland Co-operative Dairy Industry by Gordon McLauchlan

The Maungatapere Co-operative Dairy Company, a golden jubilee 1907-1957, compiled by K.W. Inder