



scientific methods of preparation, control produce standardized quality and flavor in today's **sausages**

BY RICHARD WESP

In his 45 years in business, Frank Wardynski has literally bound himself to the eating habits of Western New Yorkers with an endless chain of sausages that conceivably could stretch from Buffalo to Kazimierz, Poland.

It was in Kazimierz that the business success story of Frank Wardynski & Sons, Inc., had its beginning. There the firm's founder was born and there he acquired his appreciation for quality sausages and his techniques for producing them.

When he arrived in Buffalo in 1914, it was an immediate case of mutual affection. It was a city that liked good sausage and that was what Wardynski knew how to make. His choice of Buffalo as his family's home in the new world has rewarded the city in more ways than good sausage, however. His charities have been felt widely throughout the community and in 1958 he was Buffalo's "Good Fellow of the Year."

On that occasion, he made a statement which is cited today by his family and employes as a key to the character of the man, the firm he established and the 60 or more products it manufactures. Said the "Good Fellow" of 1958: "Often I give more time to charity than to my business. I have always felt it is my duty to help those less fortunate. Quality is essential in a product and it is also essential in a community. I try to make my contribution in both fields."

Quality in sausage-making is all-important for success in the extremely competitive Buffalo area, according to E. H. Posluszny, sales manager of Wardynski's and son-in-law of the founder. This is one of the best sausage markets in the nation, he explains, and here sausage eaters have become accustomed to the best—and demand it.

Newspaper records support the argument that Buffalo is an unusually discriminating city when it comes to sausage. The industry first appeared here in 1825,

when there were three butchers producing some 15 varieties of sausage from meat supplied by surrounding farms. Sausage consumption in the area grew until in 1846, it became necessary to construct animal pens to have a steady supply of fresh meat for a growing population of sausage-eaters. By this time, the introduction of more nationalities in the community had widened the available selection of sausages to more than 30.

The meat business, generally — and sausage making in particular — continued to grow in importance and, in time, became the third largest business in Western New York. Before the Civil War, Buffalo was the biggest sausage producer east of Chicago. Old newspaper articles, which glowingly describe the deliciousness and exotic variety of Buffalo-made sausages, make it clear that the local industry prospered on a quality of product in which the whole community took delight and pride.

It was into this tradition that Frank Wardynski came to practice his trade. His success with a market of demanding sausage eaters strongly indicates that his sausage-making standards and Buffalo's sausage-eating traditions always have been on good terms. One reason he advances for this fortunate situation is that his company is a decidedly family affair. Every major function of the business, from bookkeeping to sales and, particularly, production, is directed by a member of the Wardynski family.

After nearly a half-century in business, Wardynski still is one of the busiest people in his bustling plant. He holds the office of president and his wife, Lottie, that of treasurer. Their son, Raymond, is vice president and his brother, Edmund, is secretary.

It is the senior Wardynski who still makes certain the meat being used in the making of his firm's sausages is the finest available. "Without good meat, you can't make good sausage. It's as simple, or as complicated, as that," Wardynski explains. "The manufacture of any product has a basic key, and meat is that key in the sausage business."

On a tour of the immaculate Wardynski plant at 336 Peckham St. — the original company site, now much expanded — Wardynski leaves a visitor no doubt that he is in the presence of an authority. With a practiced hand, he inspects the meat awaiting the day's sausage production. Any of it, says Wardynski, would satisfy the best of chefs. "If it doesn't measure up to our standards," he explains, "we send it right back to the supplier we got it from."

As did most of the major sausage companies, Wardynski's started as a butcher shop. Sausages were only part of the shop's full line, but they quickly became

the most popular products and Wardynski began wholesaling his sausages to other butchers. It was only a matter of time before Wardynski was in the sausage business exclusively.

His success as a Buffalo sausage maker sent him back on many visits to Poland, in search of old formulas and new techniques for improving his products. Time has made its changes, mostly for the better, in both his industry and his own company since those early days of business, Wardynski explains. The basic requirements for good sausage still are the same, but the production methods are modern enough to mystify most men who started in the business 50 years ago. However, they don't mystify Wardynski. His pioneering was responsible for many of the changes that have gone into the industry's production techniques in the past two decades.

Explains his son and vice president, Raymond: "One of the great developments in sausage-making has been scientific quality control. In the old days, so long as sausage was good most of the time, everyone—even the most particular makers and the most critical customers—had to be satisfied. Today, the product must be top quality all the time."

Sausages now are mixed to exact formula, formed in their casings under the most hygienic conditions, smoked and cooked at precise temperatures and refrigerated right up to when the customer is ready to serve them, Raymond Wardynski points out. This makes for a vastly more dependable product than could be produced until the last decade or so, provided the old quality and flavor standards still are met.

The fresher the sausage the better it is, according to the Wardynskis. To keep their products fresh, they maintain a virtual Cannon Ball Express between their plant and their suppliers, so that basic ingredients—meats, casings, etc.—are delivered as they are needed in production. Explains Plant Production Supervisor Edmund Wardynski:

"Absolute freshness is essential in both basic materials used in the plant and in the finished products themselves. Here, perhaps, is one of the most important reasons for the success of our products. Everything used in the manufacture of our sausage is shipped in as needed. In addition, the production is so rigidly controlled that the sausages are produced only as needed on a day-to-day basis. Shipments sometimes are held up because the product still is in production and often sausages are shipped to our customers still warm from the ovens."

One of the first problems which faced the early sausage-maker was a package to hold the chopped meat. The natural casings from meat animals—elastic, di-

gestible and virtually moisture-proof — proved ideal for the job. Today, artificial casings are used for many types of sausages, but the Wardynskis still prefer the more expensive animal casings for most of their products.

Every plant has a man with most of the answers—and who knows where to go to find the ones he doesn't have. In the brewing business, he's called a brewmaster. In sausage manufacturing, he's called, logically enough, a sausage-maker. The Wardynski sausage-maker, a veteran in his craft, is Otto Plinzke. He supervises the complicated processes that produce some 60 varieties of Wardynski sausages and meat products.

Starting with the giant, razor-sharp blades which chop the beef, pork or veal into a fine mixture, Plinzke follows the development of the sausage through a blending process which he conducts somewhat like an orchestra leader—just enough of this flavoring, not quite so much of that. When the mixture is chopped into a sort of paste, it is placed in a machine which forces it into the casings. Once the casing is tied and hung on a rack, the product begins to resemble a sausage, but the job still is a long way from completed. The sausage must be smoked at precisely the right temperature and, depending on its type, may be cooked under conditions so controlled a housewife couldn't imagine them. Then come refrigeration and packing.

Sausage-making is one of the oldest fields of food preparation, Wardynski points out. Historians believe it first was eaten by Babylonians some 1,500 years before Christ. The Romans called it *salus*, meaning salted or, literally, preserved meat.

Certain of the early sausage-makers became so adept in spicing and processing sausages of distinctive types that the fame of their products spread throughout Europe. A sausage originated in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and became known as the frankfurter. Another, produced in Bologna, Italy, was called bologna. Rome became famous for its romano, Genoa for genoa salami, Berlin for berliner and Braunschweig for braunschweiger. Polish sausage has become an international favorite.

Today, all of these sausages and most of the nearly 200 other known types are manufactured in the United States and are available to the American consumer with standardized quality and flavor.

"Buffalo can hold its head up with the best sausage-making communities in the world," Frank Wardynski says, and he hasn't had an argument on the subject yet. After all, he makes a large share of the sausages turned out in the city, so he obviously knows what he's talking about.

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