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Morris N. Segel
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Morris Segel began his career in the grocery business in the early 1920's; but he had a vision of the future and strove to attain it. The result was Wisconsin Packing Company, which is today a primary supplier to several fast-food chains.

He was born in 1901 and died February 28, 1986. He came to America from eastern Europe with his sister, and they lived with a sponsoring family in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. The family ran a small butcher shop, and Morris helped with any tasks that needed doing. By the age of 16 he had a drivers license and would purchase cows in the surrounding countryside, tie them to the truck, and bring them back into town where they were butchered and sold.

In 1923 he married Blanche Grimson and they opened a small grocery store. However, he much preferred the excitement of the cattle business to retailing, and, accordingly, he bought into a partnership known as Ideal Packing Company in 1925. His job then was to purchase cattle at the old Milwaukee Stockyards (located near the present site of the Mitchell Domes) and herd them on foot to the nearby packing plant for slaughter. He eventually built his own slaughter plant, and it was incorporated in 1938 as Wisconsin Packing Company, Inc. It was reincorporated in Delaware in 1976 to include the separately owned businesses of the Segel family. Today, Wisconsin Packing Company is engaged in the meat, food and related industries. Floyd A. Segel, Morris Segel's son, carried on the business operation for a number of years. Today it is owned and managed by two grandsons -- Justin N. Segel and Robert G. Segel.

When Wisconsin Packing Company went into business the normal operation was to slaughter animals and sell carcasses. Packers only boned beef if it was to be used in their own sausage kitchen. The vision Morris had, and what he practiced, was really a forerunner of the boxed beef industry of today. He boned cows and sold the cuts separately -- the only difference from how the business is done now is that he didn't have vacuum packaging.

The slaughtering operation was discontinued in 1977 and the company moved steadily into value-added products. Today, portion-controlled frozen meat products are made for all phases of the food service industry. The latest technology, with state-of-the-art equipment, is employed to supply national and regional fast-food restaurants and contract food service companies for educational, business, institutional and health-care facilities.

Morris Segel was former owner of Milwaukee Tallow Company. Also, he pioneered the brine curing of hides, as well as starting the first independent edible rendering company and blood drying operation in Wisconsin. He was a founding member of the National Independent Meat Packers Association, a founding member of the Milwaukee Independent Meat Packers Association and an active member of the American Meat Institute. He established the Quality Beef Carcass Judging Contest at the Wisconsin State Fair and provided the initial funding for the project.

From a humble beginning of dealing with one cow a day, Morris Segel launched a concept and founded a business which three-quarters of a century later is manufacturing more than 110,000,000 pounds of ground beef annually.