

STORY: THE THREE LAREIRAS

In the late forties, what is now known in my town as the "**Fábrica de Quesos de Acevedo**" was born, thanks to Doña Victorina Hierro García, granddaughter of Antonio, the progenitor of an extensive family: the Hierro family.

Thanks to the initiative of Talita, as Victorina Hierro was known, the first producer of artisan cheeses in the region emerged, all thanks to her dedication.

Talita was an entrepreneurial woman ahead of her time. She began making cheese in three cauldrons, on three lareiras, distributed in three locations: Acebedo, Mosteiro, and Pambre. Thus, the cheese we know today as the country cheese was born. A soft paste that had to be carefully watched to avoid burning. Pure delight for the palate.

It was in 1950 when the first generational change occurred, with the management of the factory passing to the marriage formed by Domingo Rey Casas and Amalia Hierro García, in the same house where Talita, Amalia's niece, had started her journey as an artisan cheesemaker.

Doña Amalia Hierro García and Don Domingo Rey Casas, founders of the Cheese Factory, with a very rudimentary manufacturing industry, managed to maintain Talita's traditional recipe. The country cheese continued to be marketed for more than 15 years.

The first sign of modernization in the production processes was a couple of iron pumps, barely known at the time, used to extract water from two artisanal wells. Later, the couple acquired a steam production boiler, also fuelled by firewood. This steam quickly heated the milk, avoiding the dreaded "smoking" in the pasteurization process.

In the late fifties, electric power arrived in the then Municipality of Acebedo del Río, replacing the



existing power source. With it came industrial electricity, and it was then that the factory received its first cream separator and motorized beater.

On November 14, 1973, the couple Domingo Rey and Amalia Hierro sold all their assets to Manuel Feijóo Martínez and his wife Celsa Hierro, my grandmother and Amalia's direct niece. This ended the previous lease, marking the beginning of a new era under the name Quesos Feijóo, who began the major transformation of the factory.

In 1974, **Quesos Feijóo S.L.** was born, with little left of Talita's flame but much of the family recipe: **quality, craftsmanship, and tradition.** The fundamental pillars, the three lareiras, where Celsa and her daughter Manuela Feijóo Hierro would later inherit the business.

Almost seventy years later, Manuela Feijóo Hierro, my mother, takes the direction as the current manager of the company.

Manuela is the latest example of this legacy. In just eight years leading the factory, she has expanded the business creating seven new cheese varieties recognized nationally and internationally.

The story of Quesos Feijóo continues to be written every morning around six o'clock. Now, the Lareiras in the house are extinguished, and the smell of coffee announces a new day. Around a table, Manola, José Manuel, my dad, and I quickly finish breakfast to continue what Talita started seven decades ago.

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