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Fred S. Mendel, a Saskatchewan-based meat packer who actively built markets for Saskatchewan's livestock as meat products, was born on December 18, 1888, in Recklinghausen, in the Ruhr Valley of Germany. He expanded his father's meat-wholesaling business into a meat-packing empire with branches in Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Bulgaria. Mendel and his family were forced to leave Germany when the Nazis began their persecution of Jews in the 1930s.

He came to Saskatoon and acquired a building in 1940, where he launched Intercontinental Packers; he also built a packing enterprise in Australia, hence the name Intercontinental. Initially Mendel's company specialized in canned hams for the United States market (called him "The Ham Man"), but a trade embargo ended that business, and for the next five years the firm focused on providing bacon for Britain—one of Canada's contributions to the war effort. Saskatchewan farmers entered the hog business, and the Mendel plant prepared the Wiltshire sides for transport to Britain...

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