

FARM DAIRY INSTRUCTION

The farm dairy instruction service has operated at full staff strength during most of the year under review. While, during the later months of the financial year, a slightly increased petrol allowance for this work was possible, the service was still limited to a certain extent by the need for petrol conservation. Nevertheless, most Farm Dairy Instructors accomplished much in the way of shed improvements and the general layout of yards and surroundings.

For some time, however, it has been apparent that the percentage of unclean dairies in a number of districts is far too high and a much stricter standard of inspection is required. Mr. W. G. Batt, Special Inspector, Hamilton, who, early in 1945, in company with local Dairy Instructors and Farm Dairy Instructors, checked up on standards being followed, extended his tour of inspection to the South Island. In this visit he was accompanied by the Assistant Director of the Division. Meetings with Farm Dairy Instructors were held at various centres and the information imparted was helpful and instructive. A conference of Supervising Officers held in Palmerston North during May, 1945, at which discussions and exchange of ideas relative to farm dairy instruction took place, also assisted to put the work on a better footing. To effect the desired improvement, however, some Instructors may need further tuition, and it also appears that the service may not be wholly effective until additional Special Inspectors and also a Supervisor of Farm Dairy Instruction are appointed, thereby ensuring closer and more adequate supervision.

In the course of their duties Farm Dairy Instructors made 102,144 visits of inspection, instruction, and advice to farm dairies during the year, representing an average of about 1,350 visits per officer. In respect of milking-sheds, 33.6 per cent. were classified as good, 51.7 per cent. as fair, and 14.6 per cent. as bad. The classification percentages for milking-machines were 40.1, 41.5, and 18.3 per cent. respectively. These figures make it quite clear that there is considerable room for improvement in the condition of both sheds and machines.

The number of new milking-sheds erected during the year was 836, while the number substantially reconstructed was 898, compared with 777 and 874 respectively in 1944-45.

The amount of repair and renovation work carried out last winter was to some extent limited by the availability of cement. The dairy industry, however, was very fairly treated, being placed relatively high on the priority list. Farm Dairy Instructors were able to see that such quantities as could be made available were used to the best advantage by making recommendations for releases in accordance with the urgency of the work requiring to be done.

GRADING OF MILK AND CREAM

Grading of milk by the curd test has been carried out satisfactorily at the majority of cheese-factories throughout the Dominion. The Superintendent of Cheese Instruction reports, however, that certain factories were not always carrying out daily milk grading, thus making it necessary to issue a warning regarding compliance with the regulations. With the exception of the Waikato, the methylene-blue test was being carried out satisfactorily in all districts. In the Waikato, however, this test appeared to be done only spasmodically in some cases, and apparently the managers concerned did not realize that the reductase test had to be done every day. Here, again, attention was drawn to the provisions of the regulations.

The Superintendent of Butter Instruction, in reporting on cream grading, also draws attention to the fact that the grading is carried out satisfactorily in all districts except the Waikato, where, because of the absence of zoning, competition for supply is most keen between dairy companies operating over the same territory. To attract supply in such cases the tendency is to adopt a more lenient standard of grading, which is the cause of the majority of grading complaints. For the purpose of uniformity and to ensure that cream is classified according to quality, Dairy Instructors make frequent checks throughout each season at all creameries. Advantage is also taken on these occasions to stress the importance of impartial grading if the confidence of suppliers is