

Milk Powders, Including Buttermilk Powder.—During the season some knowledge has been gained by Auckland officers in the testing and grading of various types of milk powders. The manufacture of milk-powder products has developed or is developing so rapidly, particularly in the Waikato and North Auckland districts, that considerable work will be involved in grading all milk powder for export, and it will be difficult to devise the best method of sampling for grading. Some work has been done in the drafting of composition standards for all the different types of milk powder, but a good deal remains to be done to evolve a scheme which is not too cumbersome and yet is efficient.

Dairy-produce Grading Charges.—To meet the present increased costs of providing the grading service the Division found it necessary to increase its charges from the previous rates of 1d. per box of butter and 1½d. per crate of cheese graded to 0·0263d. per pound of butter and 0·0124d. per pound of cheese manufactured, the new charges to be payable on total manufacture as disclosed in the annual accounts and balance-sheets of dairy companies.

The old rates and system of charging had remained unaltered since 1932 and over recent years there had been an increasing loss to the Department through the increasing cost of providing the service.

At its meeting in August, 1948, the New Zealand Dairy Board, on behalf of the industry, agreed to the increased rates and to the change in principle by charging on total manufacture instead of on produce graded.

The changes in rates and system operated from 1st August, 1948. Authority for the change was given in the Dairy-produce Regulations 1938, Amendment No. 3 (Serial number 1949/13), which completely replaced Regulation 35 of the old regulations.

BUTTER INSTRUCTION

Manufacture.—The greater part of butter manufactured was of a good standard and seemed to possess sound keeping-qualities.

Feed flavours, notably land cress, were more prevalent this spring, and in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty districts, where the taint imparted to cream was most pronounced, butter manufactured during that period was not up to the usual standard of quality.

Irregular colour in butter from some districts has been more evident and has been responsible for a lowering of the grade. It is obvious that this trouble has increased with the more speedy handling of cream, the speeding-up of the buttermaking process, and the more general use of large churns. Faults in colour are undoubtedly primarily connected with the solubility and incorporation of salt, but this is by no means the only factor, and temperature control, both at churning and earlier during cream treatment, is a relevant factor. The companies who have least trouble are those where the above points are watched carefully and where due care and attention are given to churning technique.

Unwashed Butter.—Several factories have not been washing butter. This appeals to some managers because it increases yields, saves time, saves refrigeration, and because the flavour of unwashed fresh butter is generally better.

One company does not wash its butter because the water-supply is unsatisfactory.

Although experiments in New Zealand have proved that unwashed butter does at times keep as well as washed butter, it is considered that it would be dangerous if butter were not generally washed. New Zealand's reputation for quality dairy-produce has been built on factory practice which included the thorough washing of butter, from which it is considered there should be no departure at the risk of losing that reputation. Every opportunity of discouraging the production of unwashed butter is therefore taken and the assurance of managers that it will be discontinued has been obtained.